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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE PHENOMENON OF SHORTAGES OF INDIAN
TEACHERS AS DESCRIBED BY TRIBAL COLLEGE LEADERS IN TEACHER
PREPARATION

By:

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Dissertation

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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in Educational Leadership

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ABSTRACT

In Montana, less than 3% of K-12 teachers are American Indian (Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2009). The lack of Indian teachers, which was the problem identified for this dissertation, is of great concern to educational leaders. The shortage of Native American teachers can be correlated to problems in the education of K-12 students (Reyhner & Eder, 2004) as evident in the data on achievement gaps, dropout rates and participation in higher education. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to describe the experiences of tribal college leaders in preparing Indian pre-service teachers through the lens of the phenomenon of shortages of Indian teachers. It was hoped that such descriptions could inform educational leaders on possible, efficacious means to increasing the number of highly qualified Indian teachers in Montana.

The themes that emerged within the research constructs that framed the study were:

Research Construct	Themes
Education as a moral obligation and legal imperative	Being prepared and welcomed Teacher pay is an issue
Indian education by American Indians	Traditional practices: it's about the students Our students have many strengths Community connections are essential
Assimilation and the historical impacts of Indian education	Culture is really important We know the history, but now what Living in two worlds? It's personal
Partnerships, networks and relationships	Partnerships: purposeful or convenient We are kinda weak on data Where are the support and leadership?

The results of this study suggested that (a) there still exists a need among various educational entities to recognize the value of Indian teachers and to allocate financial support for this valued resource through teaching salaries, and various forms of postsecondary aid; (b) tribal colleges do not typically receive adequate funding or state support for their teacher education programs; (c) there is a perception that Indian teacher candidates are not always welcomed into schools for field work; (d) there is a need for leadership and data from multiple sources to support tribal colleges in preparing Indian teachers; and (e) tribal college teacher preparation programs often work with limited partnerships that are mainly based on convenience. Ongoing work to address Indian teacher shortages may keep the state's attention focused on its most serious educational need, improving the quality of American Indian education.

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I want to thank the participants of my research. You all shared such insightful stories and descriptions. I am so grateful for your honest and reflective responses. I hope that our journey and work in teacher preparation at a tribal college continues.

I also owe a huge thank you to my faculty and friends at Salish Kootenai College who have supported me throughout my program. The education department is a wonderful place for preparing future teachers. Thank you for your work, dedication and patience with me. Stacey, thank you for your peer review and knowledge of research. Mary, thank you for listening, consoling, coaching, and always being there for me with great ideas and support. Carol, you are an incredible editor and I very much appreciated your insightful comments. Cynthia, you are an awesome transcriber, educator and scholar. Alice, I truly appreciate all your support and wonderful leadership. Thank you all! Lastly, Dr Merle Farrier, how can I say enough to let you know what a tremendous mentor, educator and friend you are to me? You are my inspiration to always do my best.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Sean O'Dell for being the best partner ever. We make a great team, and I am so grateful that you are my soul mate, and my best friend. Thanks for always believing in me!

I also want to thank my children, Bram and Caitlann. You are both such wonderful kids and I appreciate the sacrifices you made while I embarked on this challenging but rewarding adventure.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Dr. Richard and Merylann Best. I thank you Mom and Dad for the encouragement you gave to me throughout all of my life, and for all that you do for our family. You have been the best role models, and I appreciate your love and support. I love you!

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND FOCUS OF THE STUDY

Introduction to the Study

Despite efforts at the national, state and community level, shortages of Indian teachers exist in Montana and nationally. The shortage of Native American teachers can be correlated to problems in the education of K-12 students (Reyhner & Eder, 2004) as evident in the data on achievement gaps, dropout rates and participation in higher education.

Research indicates that instruction informed by a child's home and community culture is critical to supporting a sense of belongingness that ultimately impacts academic achievement (Banks, 2003 & Osterman, 2000). Educators who are from different cultural perspectives than the children they teach, "render it difficult to *see* the cultural identities shaping the behaviors and achievement of their students" (Moore, 2004, p. 19). In a review of research on Indigenous education in the United States, Castagno and Brayboy (2008) advocate for the following policy and practice:

Schools and school districts...recruit and retain more Indigenous teachers who are members of the local community and have a strong foundation in promising practices for reading and literacy teaching; collaborations between university teacher preparation programs, tribal colleges and school districts in tribal communities will facilitate this [culturally responsive schooling for Indigenous youth]. (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008, p. 19)

The call for academic role models in the American Indian community is not new, as it relates to education from preschool to college. McDonald (1978) decries the absence of American Indian academic role models as evidenced through the lack of student aspirations at the primary grade level. He contends that there are too few professional role models such as lawyers, doctors, and teachers for grade school students to emulate. This sentiment is seconded by Teba (1990) who claims, "the lack of role models in Native American communities and in the classroom and in visible positions of leadership negatively influences youth to pursue education and professional careers" (p. 89).

The need for Indian students to be educated by American Indian teachers has been documented in federal reports and studies on Indian education since the 1920's. To date, there has not been substantial progress in the meeting this directive at either the state or national level.

Problem Statement

Introduction

The history and current status of Indian education in the United States and specifically in the state of Montana provided the context of the research problem for this study. For many complex reasons, the Native American experience in western educational systems has been neither as positive nor productive for Native cultures as it has been for other cultures. After centuries of immersion into western education, the data on Indian education indicates that the education for Indian students lags far behind the education of other cultures at both the national and state levels.

Status of Indian Education Nationally

On the national level, research devoted to the study of Indian education highlights the discrepancy between Indian and non-Indian student achievement (Brayboy & Castagno, 2009; Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Freeman & Fox, 2005; Reyhner & Eder, 2004). According to Deyhle and Swisher (1997), “The database pointing to the poor achievement of Indian children began to be built in the 1930’s by individual researchers working with one or more tribes” (p. 119). Today, federally funded organizations review standardized test scores of Indian and non-Indian students in an attempt to more fully understand the achievement gap between Native and non-Native students. One federal agency that analyzes and reports national data on Indian education is the National Center for Education Statistics on behalf of the United States Department of Education, Office of Indian Education. The report produced by this agency, *The National Indian Education Study*, claims to be the only nationally representative assessment of American Indian students and is authorized under Executive Order 13336, American Indian and Alaska Native Education. This order was enacted in order to improve the educational outcomes for Indian students. One part of the study, conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, provides information on the academic performance of fourth and eighth grade students in reading and mathematics. The second part of the study is a survey that describes the school-based native language and cultural experiences of the students participating in the national assessments.

National Achievement Testing

Approximately 10,000 American Indian and Alaska Native students participated in the 2007 reading and mathematics assessments conducted by the National Center for

Education Statistics. The results of these data were compared to data collected in 2005. According to the 2007 National Indian Education Study, the overall average mathematics scores for grades 4 and 8 for American Indian students showed no significant change since 2005, and were lower than the scores for non-American Indian students in 2007 (Moran, Rampey, Dion, & Donahue, 2008). The average reading scores for American Indian fourth and eighth graders also showed no significant change since 2005, and were lower than the scores for non-American Indian students in 2007 (Moran, Rampey, Dion, & Donahue, 2008). Such results are discouraging, as not only are American Indian students achieving below their peers for the most part, they are not improving despite increased efforts to employ mainstream, standardized, remedial and scripted educational programs (Brayboy & Castagno, 2009).

National Dropout Rates

American Indian and Alaska Native students have a dropout rate that is twice the national average, and is the highest rate compared to all ethnic and racial groups in the United States (Northern Arizona University, 2009). Approximately 3 out of 10 Indian students drop out of school before graduating from high school. In 2006, a higher percentage of American Indian/ Alaska Native young adults left school (15%) than did their White (7%), Black (11%), Asian (3%), and Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander (7%) peers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006).

National Absenteeism Rates

In 2006, 66% of American Indian/Alaska Native eighth grade students reported that they were absent at least once in the preceding month; this is a larger percentage of students reported being absent from school than students of any other race/ethnicity

(National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). In comparison, 55% of White students, 55% of Black students, 57% of Hispanic students, and 36% of Asian/Pacific Islander students reported that they were absent from school at least once in the preceding month (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). High absenteeism is often a precursor to dropping out of school (Reyhner, 2006).

National School Suspension Data

Another indication of student achievement is data on school suspensions. Prior research has substantiated that students who have been suspended from school are at higher risk for other poor school results, including dropping out of school (Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, & Fernandez, 1989). In 2004, 7% of American Indian/Alaska Native public school students in kindergarten through 12th grade were suspended; this number was higher than that of Whites (5%), Hispanics (6%), and Asians/Pacific Islanders (3%) but was lower than the suspension rate of Blacks (15%) (Office for Civil Rights, 2008).

Status of Native Education in Montana

In 2001, the U.S. Civil Rights Commission's study on Indian education in Montana reported that Indian children in Montana public schools are not provided with equal educational opportunities.

Despite several decades of state legislation, education initiatives, and other attempts to address the education of Indian children in Montana, Native American parents, grandparents, and students continue to wait eagerly for true equity in education... There has been much rhetoric, many pronouncements, and considerable effort by the state of Montana to address issues involving Indian

education. Despite all this activity, it appears to the Montana Advisory Committee that results have been negligible. Indian children still drop out of school too frequently, and often before high school; their achievement levels are lower; and their graduation rates and advancement to higher education wholly inadequate.

(Montana Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2001, p. 6)

Federal Indicators of Achievement

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), a component of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, is a state's measurement of progress in achieving state academic standards that outline what students ought to be able to know and do. Each spring in Montana, students in grades 3 through 8 and Grade 10 are assessed in reading and math. Students in Grade 4, 8, and 10 are also assessed in science. AYP is measured using the test scores in reading and math, and additionally using participation rates, attendance, and graduation rates. Test scores are analyzed for 10 specific student groups including race/ethnicity, family income, limited English proficiency, and students with disabilities. A school makes AYP only if each of the student sub-groups within the school meets the federal performance targets for reading, math, participation, attendance and graduation. The No Child Left Behind Act identifies 41 categories for a school to meet in order to make AYP (Juneau, 2009).

According to 2008 data, 81% of the 35 school districts on Montana's reservations did not make AYP (Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2009). The Montana Office of Public Instruction 2007-2008 data indicate that 54 of the 231 schools in Montana that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) had 50-100% American Indian student

populations. Furthermore, 31 out of 133 school districts that did not make AYP had 50-100% American Indian student populations (Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2009).

Montana Dropout Data

The achievement gap between Indian and non-Indian students is further delineated by the Montana Office of Public Instruction's analyzed dropout data.

In the past five years, American Indians represented only 11% of the total 7-8 [grade level] school enrollment, but accounted for 69% of the dropouts. In high school, American Indian students account for 10% of the enrollment but make up 23% of the dropouts. (Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2009, p. 1).

For 2006-2007, the dropout rate for one year was 7% for Indian youth compared to 3% for White students (Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2009).

Montana Indian Teacher Data

The Montana Office of Public Instruction 2005-2006 American Indian Education Data Fact Sheet states that only 2% or 263 American Indians are among 10,464 certified teachers in Montana public, private and tribal schools. This can be compared to the fact that 11% of students in K-12 public schools in Montana are Indian (see Table 1). In Montana's 35 school districts on the seven Indian reservations, 62% of the children are Indian with only 3% of the certified educators being Indian. Thus, the percentage of Indian teachers is less than half the percentage of Indian people in the Montana population, and one-fifth the percentage of Indian students in Montana public schools. Therefore, the primary need of the target population is more Indian teachers who are better prepared and equipped to meet the educational needs of Indian youth.

Table 1

Full Time Equivalent (FTE) 2004-2006 Data

Professional Group	2004-2005	2005-2006
American Indian Administrators	3.3% (21 of 629)	3.4% (22 of 641)
American Indian Teachers	2.5% (254 of 10,223)	2.5% (263 of 10,464)
American Indian Paraprofessionals	8.6% (166 of 1922)	8.2% (161 of 1957)

(Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2009, p. 1)

Summary of the Problem

The problem addressed by this research, the lack of Indian teachers in Montana, was vast in both magnitude and importance. An inadequate education impacts all persons of all cultures; however, all indicators of educational achievement at the national and state levels repeatedly identify the Native American population as distinguishable from other populations based upon the degree of education attained. Not only does this clearly identifiable lack of education within a subpopulation present unsolved moral issues for those who lead the nation, state, counties, cities, and school districts, but more importantly, the very question of life itself is at stake for those who fail to receive an adequate education just as life itself is at stake for those who fail to have access to an adequate diet.

One logical factor that may increase the educational success of Indian students is to increase the number of Indian teachers (Reyhner & Eder, 2004). To fully address educational equity in the state of Montana, every attempt must be made to provide more Native American teachers for Montana youth, particularly Native American youth. The

current status of less than 3% Indian teachers employed in Montana's schools must be examined.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the phenomenon of Indian teacher shortages in Montana from the perspectives of leaders who are involved in the preparation of Indian teacher candidates at a Montana tribal college. More specifically, this research was designed to describe the lived experiences of leaders from Montana's tribal college teacher preparation programs in order to gain multiple perspectives on the preparation of Indian teachers and the phenomenon of the lack of Indian teachers in Montana. It was hoped that such descriptions and stories could inform present and future educational leadership in Montana on the essence of the problems related to the preparation, graduation and employment of Native teachers, as the shortage of Indian teachers has been shown to be related to the educational success of Indian students (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). Therefore, the overarching intended outcome of this research was to explore one efficacious factor, the provision of more Indian teachers, as a necessary component to create the capacity for Montana to provide an educational system in which the attainment of education is indistinguishable by culture or race.

Research Question

The research question guiding this study was: How do leaders in teacher education from Montana's tribal colleges describe their experiences in preparing Native pre-service teachers as perceived through the lens of the phenomenon of shortages of Indian teachers?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study was grounded within the Montana Constitution, as the Montana Constitution provides particular recognition for its obligations to Indian education in Article X, section 1(2) (Montana Legislative Services, 2009). This portion of the Montana Constitution was the impetus for House Bill 528, The Indian Education for All Act (MCA 20-1-501) in which the Montana Legislature appropriated funds to fulfill the promises made in the Montana Constitution of 1972. The act funded two priorities: (a) to increase Native and non-Native students' knowledge of Montana Indian histories and cultures; and (b) to address the achievement gap of Montana Indian students. Based on data collected for this Act, there is overwhelming evidence, including statistics on the achievement gap and dropout rates for Indian students, that indicates that public education has not met Indian people's needs. The impact of students dropping out of school causes great concern to stakeholders at every level including parents, educators, employees, government and the general public.

It is the responsibility of all communities to see to it that their most prized resources-children-receive the best education possible...to ensure that they will have an equal chance to be contributing members of their communities and of society. (National Indian Education Association, 2009, p. 1)

The fundamental purpose of education is to sustain and enhance the quality of life. Students who drop out of school are more challenged to achieve success and find fulfillment.

The general well being of communities is predicated on the possibility that all citizens, regardless of their economic and social status, can improve their lives.

The dropout problem also threatens the future of American political institutions, including sovereign tribal governments. The demands of democratic governance require an educated and well-informed citizenry to make knowledgeable decisions about the increasingly complex social and political problems faced by contemporary society, which are even more complex on American Indian reservations. (Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2002, p. 5)

Dropout rates are an indication of a problem; however, the focus of most research on Indian dropout rates has situated the Indian student and family as the problem. Research on the “Indian problem” often embraces the assimilatory view of education and places the Indian student in a deficit mode in which he/she is compared to white students (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997).

Studying the formal education of Indians was a necessary step in the many educational experiments that sprang from the first attempts to formally educate Indians in colonial America. Nearly 400 years later, assimilation may not be the explicit goal, but the perplexities in Indian educational achievement still remain as a major field of inquiry. (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997, p. 115)

Therefore, this study was designed to provide meaningful information through scholarly research (Creswell, 2009; Eisner, 1998) on an area of Indian education that has not been extensively researched, Indian teacher preparation, from the described experiences of leaders at Montana’s tribal colleges. Indian teacher preparation is an important component of the Indian Education for All Act for two primary reasons: (a) the percentage of Indian teachers is less than half the percentage of Indian people in Montana, and one fifth the percentage of Indian students in Montana’s public schools

(Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2009); (b) research indicates that achievement gaps can be addressed for Indian students through the provision of qualified Indian teachers (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008).

Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions of terms were utilized:

American Indian, Native American, Indian. Someone who has blood degree from and is recognized as such by a federally or state recognized tribe and/or the United States. Blood quantum (the degree of American Indian blood that a person possesses) is not the only means by which a person is considered to be an American Indian. “Other factors, such as a person’s knowledge of his or her tribe’s culture, history, language, religion, familial kinships, and how strongly a person identifies himself or herself as American Indian or Alaska Native, are also important. In fact, there is no single federal or tribal criterion or standard that establishes a person's identity as American Indian” (U. S. Department of the Interior, 2009, p. 1). The terms Indian, Native American and American Indian will be used interchangeably; specific tribal names will be used whenever possible.

American Indian Youth/Native student. Young people who are between the ages of 5 and 19, or are in grades kindergarten to 12th grade, and who meet the aforementioned definition of Native American (U. S. Department of the Interior, 2009).

Educational Leader. An individual who can apply specialized knowledge and expertise to improve teaching effectiveness and educational program development, promote the success of all students, and obtain excellence in education through the

creation and implementation of an educational vision that is supported by the pertinent social, political and cultural community (Sergiovanni, 2007).

Federal Indian Trust Responsibility. Legal and moral obligations between the United States government and federally recognized tribes under which the United States “has charged itself with moral obligations of the highest responsibility and trust” (U. S. Department of the Interior, 2009). The federal Indian trust responsibility was built on the special relationship between the United States government and Indian tribes in which nearly a billion acres of land were exchanged for certain services (including education), protection from invasion, and self-government (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997). “The federal government’s obligation to honor this trust relationship and to fulfill its treaty commitments is known as its *trust responsibility*” (Pevar, 1992, p. 26).

Federally Recognized Tribe. An American Indian or Alaska Native tribal entity that is recognized as having a government-to-government relationship with the United States, with the responsibilities, powers, limitations, and obligations attached to that designation, and is eligible for funding and services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (U. S. Department of the Interior, 2009).

Phenomenological research. A form of qualitative research in which the lived experiences of individuals regarding a particular concept or phenomenon are described and examined to gain an essence of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Quality education. In Montana, the educational program specified by the accreditation standards provided for in 20-7-111 which represents the minimum standards upon which a basic system of free, quality public elementary and secondary schools is built (Montana 59th Legislature, 2005).

Tribal college. An institution of higher education that is formally controlled or has been sanctioned or chartered by the governing body of an Indian tribe or tribes (PL 95-471). Most tribal colleges predominantly serve Native American students, are usually located on a reservation, and serve a dual role of cultural preservation and restoration, and education to build skills for success in mainstream society (Carney, 2007).

Delimitations

Although the challenges in Indian education have a national impact, this dissertation was delimited to Montana and those tribal institutions of higher education in Montana that prepare Indian teacher candidates. A second delimitation concerned the selection of participants. Purposeful selection was used to identify participants for the study based on meeting all of the following criteria: (a) the individual was employed by a tribal college in Montana in a program that offered an associate's degree program in teacher preparation; (b) the individual was considered a leader in the teacher preparation program as either a department chair, department head or program coordinator; and (c) the individual was willing to participate in an interview with the researcher and provide other documentation.

Limitations

Due to the nature of this study, there was no generalizability. "Phenomenology does not allow for empirical generalizations, the production of law-like statements, or the establishment of functional relationships" (van Manen, 1990, p. 22). Van Manen (1990) cautions phenomenological researchers that the desire for generalizations can lead one away from clearly understanding the uniqueness of human experiences.

Another limitation of the study was to define “Native American.” For the purpose of this dissertation, the federal definition as provided from the Department of the Interior was used. However, the researcher was aware of the challenges that pertain to this definition. “Virtually no other racial or ethnic group is in the position of relying on the federal government for their definition” (Carney, 2007, p. 9). This researcher was aware that in addition to the federal definition, each tribe provides conditions for determining membership; individual choice is also another level of determination. Individual choice is particularly relevant when individuals apply for teacher licensure as there were no pre-determined racial descriptions or definitions of Indian or Native American; applicants self-selected and may have used other definitions to identify their race or ethnicity. Therefore, the broadest definition was chosen for this dissertation to order to include enrolled members of federally recognized tribes, members of state recognized tribes, and first and second generation descendants thereof.

Summary

A review of national and state data on Indian student achievement indicated that the educational needs of Native American students were not being adequately met. According to the 2005 report, *Status and Trends of Education of American Indians and Alaska Natives* by the National Center for Educational Statistics, in addition to, and, perhaps, as a result of educational inequities, American Indians had an unemployment rate three times greater than non-Indians, the highest death rate for ages 15-19, and the highest percentage of special education placements (Freeman & Fox, 2005). Additionally, Native youth were the students who are the most affected by school

violence, and least likely to have access to core academic programs (Freeman & Fox, 2005).

Although research and data can inform educators and educational leaders about some of the issues pertaining to Indian education, it should be noted that such research has often used a deficit model that has positioned youth and their families as ‘the problem’ (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997, p. 126). Therefore, the research proposed by this dissertation, situated within an appropriate context, may provide information on the factors that hold the potential to enhance Indian student learning, specifically those issues related to the preparation, graduation and employment of Indian teachers. This study built upon existing knowledge, without bias or blame, in order to provide educational leaders with information to ensure greater student success for Native youth through the provision of more Indian teachers.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

One of the primary objectives of a literature review is to frame the research within a scholarly and historical context (Boote & Beile, 2005). “This endeavor should enable the researcher to synthesize the literature, gain a new perspective on it and clarify what has been done and still needs to be done” (Boote & Beile, p. 7). The literature review for this study was conducted to inform the researcher about the history of education for Indian students in the United States, and specifically in the state of Montana. As the review of the history of Indian education unfolded, four themes emerged to guide the structure for the literature review and the subsequent research design and questions. The four themes were: (a) education as both a moral obligation and a legal imperative; (b) Indian education by American Indians; (c) assimilatory philosophies and practices; and (d) governmental and non-tribal relationships.

The first theme of the literature review framed the overall context of the problem and significance of the study: education is an ethical responsibility and to deprive a person of a quality education is to deprive that individual quality of life. The second theme arose from the literature: the history of Indian education began well before non-Native influences, and a resurgence to Indian “ownership” of education is a vital process for Indian education today. Assimilation of Indian people to Euro-American culture, the third theme, was the primary goal of early Euro-American educational practices and philosophies, and continues to impact Indian education today as Indian educators navigate their relationships with both Native and non-Native organizations, agencies and

boards. The nature of such relationships provided the context for the fourth theme of the literature review.

Education as a Moral Obligation and Legal Imperative

Education, to be education, must serve the common good, that is, serve all people (Farrier, 2008). If education is not serving all people, then it is not serving human nature, since all people share in the same nature, the same dignity. As such, education is a moral obligation (Farrier, 2008). The Western concept of a moral obligation can be traced to the meaning of “moral” as taken from the Latin word “ethics.” A moral principle, as qualified by the Oxford Dictionary, is based on a standard or rule that differentiates between right and wrong conduct, and directs human behavior to a positive end.

Education is such an end.

Education is such a powerful and efficacious means to direct human nature towards a positive end that the Territory of Montana established the first mill levy in Montana for the provision of public education. The Montana Constitution followed suit by guaranteeing public education for all youth. As stated in the 1884 Constitution of the Territory of Montana:

The experience of mankind has demonstrated that the happiness, prosperity and permanency of a country is measured by the intelligence of its people. No surer or better means for the dissemination of knowledge among all classes of society has ever been devised than the one here presented. This Constitution commits the State fully and unequivocally to the perpetual maintenance of public free schools; opens the school doors unconditionally to all between the ages of five and twenty-one years. (Montana Constitutional Convention, 1884, p. 4)

When re-written in 1972, the Montana Constitution again addressed the importance of education. “It is the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person. Equality of educational opportunity is guaranteed to each person of the state” (Montana Legislative Services, 2009, p. 24).

Additionally, the Montana Constitution provided particular recognition of its obligations to Indian education in Article X, section 1(2). “The state recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of the American Indians and is committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity” (Montana Legislative Services, 2009, p. 24). This portion of the Montana Constitution was the impetus for House Bill 528, The Indian Education for All Act (MCA 20-1-501) in which the Montana Legislature appropriated funds to fulfill the promises made in the constitution of 1972. The Indian Education for All legislation was a historically significant action for the education of both Native and non-Native students in Montana. The act funded two priorities: (a) to increase Native and non-Native students’ knowledge of Montana Indian histories and cultures; and (b) to address the achievement gap of Montana Indian students.

The educational status of Indian students was addressed by the Montana legislature in 2005, as the legislature was charged with defining a “quality education.” The result of this directive was Senate Bill 152, in which a quality education was defined in addition to addressing the needs of Indian students. In a letter to Montana Attorney

General Mike McGrath regarding the status of the legislative directive, Governor Schweitzer wrote,

In addition to the directives to define what is meant by quality education and craft a funding system related to that definition, the Montana Supreme Court affirmed the district court's conclusion that the State of Montana had failed to implement Article X, section 1(2) of the Montana Constitution, to "recognize the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians" and commit in its educational goals the "preservation of their cultural integrity." (Schweitzer, 2005, p. 3)

This legislation, in addition to many other actions, reflects the importance that Governor Brian Schweitzer placed on enhancing governmental and educational relations between Indian and non-Indian people in Montana. The Indian Education for All Act represents a change in the view of Indian education for the future, and a recognition that in the past, formal public education for most American Indians has not only been negligent, it has "too often been used as a weapon against tribal cultures forcing students to choose at a young age between being Indian and being educated" (Ambler, 2009, p. 10).

Formal public Indian education in the United States was based on an imposed system of dominance and assimilation (Deloria, 1978). "Indian education has been built on the premise that the Indian had a great deal to learn from the white man; the white man representing the highest level of achievement reached in the evolutionary process" (Deloria, p. 10). Indian education has always been a part of Indian culture, as indeed, education is a part of all cultures' transmission of knowledge. However, the roots of many current public educational practices for Native Americans can be traced to early

Indian-white relationships. Before the implementation of assimilating educational practices that were intended to diminish Indian culture, language, and ways of life, Indian people educated their children using an approach that was consistent with their customs, traditions, and surroundings (Fletcher, 2008). “Indian children knew who they were, where they came from, and how to live” (Fletcher, p. 1). After generations of an educational system that was intended to destroy Native American culture, many Native Americans have been denied access to the fullness of human life that is achieved through quality, culturally responsive education (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997). “The federal education policies affecting American Indian people undermined Indian cultures in a fundamental manner that military conquest, fraudulent land transactions, and poverty could not” (Fletcher, p. 5).

The generational impacts of federal Indian education policies have resulted in an educational system that is viewed as an antithesis of who Indians are rather than a means to illuminate who they are (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997). There are very few instances in which public education is substantively controlled by and responsive to the Native American communities, parents or children that it is intended to serve; as such, Native education may be viewed as a failure as measured by numerous indices (Christensen & Demmert, 1978; Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Office for Civil Rights, 2008). The historical conditions of such failures are documented nationally in reports and studies conducted by the United States government such as the *1928 Meriam Report*, the 1969 report, *Indian Education: A National Tragedy, A National Challenge*, the 1973 US Commission on Civil Rights report, *The Navajo Nation: An American Colony* and the 1991 Department of Education report, *Indian Nations at Risk: An Educational Strategy for Action Final*

Report. Current statistics on achievement gaps, dropout rates, and graduation rates also highlight some of the problems in Indian education (Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2009; Moran, Rampey, Dion, & Donahue, 2008).

The following historical synopsis of Indian education is not meant to be an exhaustive summary of all of the past events, but rather an examination and reflection upon pivotal historical policies, practices, and current research that have shaped current educational practices, philosophies and attitudes. The three remaining themes of the research construct are embedded within this review.

History of Indian Education

Introduction

The history of formal, public education for Native Americans is both complex and unique to Indian people. Public education in the United States developed differently for American Indians than it did for other cultures and ethnicities (Szasz, 1988) and the history of Indian education is not well understood by the majority of people in America (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997). However, a historical perspective on Indian education, particularly from Native views and research, is critical to gaining a comprehensive view of the current problems and strengths in Indian education today.

In order for educators and policy makers to understand why the various programs in Indian schools exist and why certain curricula are more likely to lead to success, they must know about the past failures and successes of Indian education. They must know the roots of Indian resistance to schooling and the educational empowerment that Indians are striving for. (Reyhner & Eder, 2004, p. 12)

Indian Education by American Indians

Pre-European Contact

Education has always been a part of the lives and cultures of Native Americans (Trafzer, Keller, & Sisquoc, 2006). Traditionally, knowledge was passed from generation to generation to teach the skills and beliefs needed for life. “Tribal elders, grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, singers and storytellers imparted knowledge through the oral tradition and practical instruction...Indian people throughout the Native universe listened to and learned from others...Knowledge was never static” (Trafzer, Keller, & Sisquoc, 2006, p. 5). A body of knowledge was created by all Indigenous people that was the foundation for the transmission of culture. Most of this knowledge was transmitted through oral traditions in individual homes and communities until the introduction of non-Native educational practices and institutions.

Prior to contact and the various stages of assimilation policies, American Indian people raised and educated their children in a manner unique to their peoples, consistent with their customs and traditions, and adapted to their specific surroundings. Indian children knew who they were, where they came from, and how to live. They knew how to survive and maintain their cultures, languages, stories and rules of order. (Fletcher, 2008, p. 1)

Post-European Contact

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, five Indian tribes created their own schools to deliver a public education to their youth. The Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Muskogeas and Seminoles taught their children to read and write their respective languages. “The five southern tribes controlled their own schools and

curricula. They used their institutions to strengthen their political and economic sovereignty and became the precursor of tribally owned and operated schools of the twentieth century” (Trafzer, Keller, & Sisquoc, 2006, p. 9). In 1841, the Cherokee established a school system with 11 schools to teach reading, writing, math, bookkeeping, English, geography and history (Reyhner & Eder, 2004). “By 1852 the Cherokee Nation had a better common school system than the neighboring states of Arkansas and Missouri” (Reyhner & Eder, p. 55).

Mihesuah’s study of the Cherokee’s educational system reported that by 1852, over 11,000 students were enrolled in 21 schools (Mihesuah, 1993). Mihesuah’s research primarily focused on the Cherokee Female Seminary. Although Mihesuah explored an important and often overlooked aspect of early Indian education, her research was limited, as it primarily focused on those students who were not considered “traditional” in their culture, but were instead already assimilated into European culture. The Cherokee Female Seminary curriculum did not contain any Cherokee culture, but instead provided students with academic knowledge from a European perspective. The students studied astronomy, grammar, geography, physics, Latin, Greek, botany, algebra and music (Mihesuah, 1993). Even though the education provided by the Cherokee Female Seminary and other Cherokee schools upheld the philosophy of assimilation, the federal government was not supportive of the Cherokee schools. Instead the government advocated for an “industrial” or “domestic arts” education that encouraged manual-labor and other work considered appropriate for Indian men or women (Reyhner & Eder, 2004).

Assimilation: Christianize and Civilize

The earliest educational efforts provided to American Indians from non-Indians were primarily from religious groups who sought to Christianize and “civilize” those who were considered pagans and savages (Reyhner & Eder, 2004). (The reference to Native Americans as “savages” reflects the attitudes of many non-Indians during this time and does not represent the researcher’s beliefs.) During the colonial period and the early years following the American Revolution, Christian denominations led the cause for Indian education; their efforts were supported and often funded by the state.

From the arrival of the white man up until the last two decades, Indian education has rested in the hands of church and state. Through their combined influence, the Native American has been systematically denied his Native identity. Two eras emerge: the period of missionary domination from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, and the period of federal government domination from the late nineteenth until the mid-twentieth century. (Thompson, 1978, p. 3)

The first recorded school to provide instruction to Indian children was established in 1568 in Havana, Cuba, by the Society of Jesus. Jesuit missions provided education to Indians as a means of protecting them from slavery and to “re-socialize them” (French, 1981). Re-socialization, another term for assimilation, was a process designed to alter Indian culture in order to create a usable work force (French, 1981).

Disparities emerged, however, over the specific role of the Catholic Church and the state regarding their respective roles within the larger supervised segregation

program. Apparently, the church opposed the civil exploitation of Indian labor, a situation which often resembled outright slavery. (French, p. 219)

Other early attempts by religious factions to educate Native Americans were initiated in 1611 by the French Society of Jesus. The Jesuits sought to assimilate Indians through mission schools and communities by teaching children French customs, in addition to Christianity, reading and writing (Reyhner & Eder, 2004). Following this, the Protestant missionaries created Indian schools in 1617 in order to prepare Native children for a civilized life (Thompson, 1978). Soon, a cadre of Christian groups began competing to provide Indian education (Thompson, 1978). “In all, thirteen religious groups (Hicksite Friends, Orthotop Friends, Baptist, Presbyterian, Christian, Methodist, Catholic, Reform Dutch, Congregational, Episcopalian, American Board of Commissions for Foreign Missions, Unitarian, Luthern) served some two hundred thousand Indians in seventy-three agencies” (French, 1981, p. 245). Adding to their fervor, the government provided fiscal appropriations to support their work. “As early as 1819, Congress appropriated money to missionary societies and to individuals in the forefront of the effort to Christianize Indians” (Thompson, 1978, p. 4).

In her research on colonial Indian education, Margaret Connell Szasz (1988) described the belief held by and promoted by Euro-Americans that a Christian education could deplete Indian culture. Christians viewed the assimilation of Indians as a positive action to save the Indian’s soul and life. However, American Indians were much more tenacious in retaining their culture, thus causing the federal government to employ other means to assimilate them into the Euro-American culture.

The model of “total immersion” became more popular as it promised better results in the cause to assimilate Indians.

Government authorities came to believe that it was nearly impossible if not impractical to force Indian adults to change their ‘savage’ ways and adopt the white Euro-American culture. They determined, therefore, that it would be more efficient to focus on the youngest generation. (Voyer, 2006, p. 24)

The curriculum and policies focused on teaching religion and English language, assigning Christian names, and banning Native dancing and traditions (Szasz, 1988, p. 203).

Federal Indian Education Policies and Practices

The power of education to influence and shape one’s culture – one’s identity – was recognized by the American government in its efforts in the 1800’s to deal with the “Indian problem.” The term “Indian problem” was used by the federal government and other non-Indians to describe the challenges that early Euro-Americans faced in their expansion of American territory (Fletcher, 2008). The United States government employed various strategies to deal with the conflicts between Indian and non-Indians; eventually the government chose to assimilate Native Americans into “white culture” instead of further attempts to directly exterminate them.

First, it [assimilation] was cheaper and involved the loss of fewer lives and property. Indian language and culture and the Indian race would be bred out through intermarriage or even disease. Second, it would allow the Europeans and especially the Americans a little wiggle room in the court of morality. (Fletcher, p. 2)

The policy of assimilation through education was documented in 1889 by Thomas Jefferson Morgan, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs who stated, “We must either fight Indians, feed them or else educate them. To fight them is cruel, to feed them is wasteful, while to educate them is humane, economic and Christian” (Central Michigan University, 2009, p. 2).

In “exchange” for land and trade concessions with Native Americans, the United States government created what it termed a trust relationship with Indians. “Trust” in this sense was defined as the “unique legal and moral duty of the United States to assist Indians in the protection of their property and rights” (National Indian Education Association, 2009, p. 2). The details of the trust relationship differed from tribe to tribe, but overall it provided justification for Congressional powers over Indian affairs. Based on principles of *trust responsibility* in which the United States government assumed a position of trust in exchange for land and trade concessions, education was a means to fulfill treaty commitments and honor its relationship with Indian people (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997). “Thus treaties and subsequent executive orders, congressional acts, and court decisions formed the legal basis for federal recognition and responsibility for Indian education” (Tippeconnic & Swisher, 1992, p. 75).

Congressional powers were documented in 1789 in the United States Constitution and included the responsibility for Congress to preserve, protect, and guarantee Indian rights and property (U. S. Constitution). In exchange, services would be provided to Indian people to improve both social and economic conditions (National Indian Education Association, 2009). Hundreds of treaties were written, resulting in the federal government ending wars and acquiring land. For Indians, the treaties provided a means

for confirming and retaining sovereign rights over what had been allotted to them as documented in The Constitution of the United States (U. S. Constitution). Many treaty negotiations with the tribes contained provisions for the education of Indian youth by the American government in exchange for Indian lands. The tribes who refused this offer were still provided, or forced with, American educational programs and policies (Fletcher, 2008). “The generally horrendous ‘system’ of American Indian education created by the treaty provisions and federal statutes and regulations existed from the early treaty times all the way through the 1970s” (Fletcher, 2008, p. 3).

During that same time, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Edward P. Smith, advocated for boarding schools in which students would leave their homes and reservations and become immersed in English. Boarding schools were operated by both religious and secular organizations in hopes of creating a more “civilized” individual assimilated into “American” life. For example, “The purpose of the Ursuline sisters who staffed the St. Labre Mission schools was to take charge of ‘poor debased’ children, remove them from a ‘beastly life’ and raise them up to the path of virtue and civilization” (Reyhner & Eder, 2004, p. 119).

The federal government funded the first boarding school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1878 at an abandoned military post on the advice of Captain Richard Henry Pratt who believed that Indians could learn best through formal schooling when segregated from their families and culture. “In an isolated institutional setting, Pratt planned to destroy what he termed ‘savage languages,’ ‘primitive superstitions,’ and ‘uncivilized cultures,’ replacing them with work ethics, Christian values, and the white man’s civilization” (Trafzer, Keller, & Sisquoc, 2006, p. 13).

According to the federal government, Pratt's school was a success; Congress acted upon these beliefs and utilized other abandoned military posts to create more Indian boarding schools including Haskell Indian School in Kansas and the Moravian Mission School in Alaska (French, 1981). Boarding school experiences were as varied as their environments, but all of them extensively changed the lives of thousands of Native youth. Some boarding schools represented the most horrific examples of assimilational abuse, and the effects of this abuse have been attributed to the development of intergenerational problems among Indian people and in Indian education (Trafzer, Keller, & Sisquoc, 2006).

The American Indian boarding school experience is layered with deep meaning that cannot be understood simply by framing the schools, administrators, and teachers as good or evil...For too many children, their days at school were filled with the blues, but most persevered and grew as a result of their experiences. Like heroes of old Native American stories, the children who attended boarding schools were forever changed, but they also emerged victorious, champions of their cultures, languages and peoples. (Trafzer, Keller, & Sisquoc, 2006, p. 29)

In her phenomenological study of boarding school experiences, Voyer (2006) described eight themes from the interviews of 10 former boarding school students: (a) loss of parenting; (b) regimentation of boarding school life; (c) manual labor assignments and expectations; (d) receiving half of an education; (e) separation and adjustment; (f) loss of language and traditions; (g) appreciation for the experience due to hardships at home; and (h) resignation and assimilation. Although Voyer's study was limited to 10 participants and has no generalizability, it does provide intimate and

personal detailed accounts of the lived experiences of these 10 boarding school participants. These lived experiences can provide insight into some of the issues around boarding schools, but do not account for the thousands of other stories. Other problems with Voyer's study included that it was limited to individuals who experienced boarding schools first-hand, all participants were 52-94 years of age, and all participants were located in Oklahoma. Voyer's study provided very limited information about the generational impacts of boarding schools.

Research on the complicated and significant effects of boarding schools was described by Szasz in her 1972 study.

The problems faced by this minority of educated Indian youth did not lend themselves to an easy solution. When they returned to the reservation, they often became an object of ridicule. This situation was complicated by the fact that the training they had received had little or no application to reservation life. Thus, these pupils became the first victims of the either/or policy of assimilation. Their education forced them to choose the culture of the white man or the culture of the Indian; there was no compromise. (Szasz, 1972, p. 13)

Szasz also researched Indian educational programs that were alternatives to boarding schools. Day schools located on reservations were the primary alternative. Proponents of day schools advocated that they were less expensive, and did not require children to be sent away from their home reservation, which would be more acceptable to Indian parents who often protested the taking of their children (Szasz, 1972). Mission schools run by Christians also continued to educate Indian students, and Szasz contended that this was due to the lack of secular school facilities built to serve the number of Indian

children, the establishment of an institutional presence, and the persistence of the churches and Indian people. “Many of those who promoted Indian assimilation, however, predicted that public schools would solve the problems of Indian education” (Szasz, p. 14).

By the beginning of the twentieth century, American Indians were faced with the some of their greatest challenges.

The dual inheritance of the assimilation policies of education and land allotment had already given some indication of their potential to damage, if not destroy a good portion of the Indian people. Nonetheless, no one suggested that they be revised and during the next three decades (1900-1930) their unhampered progress led the Indian to the point of no return. (Szasz, 1972, p. 14)

Many Indians during this time suffered from diseases and early death, malnutrition and starvation, a diminishing land base, and an underfunded school system bent on cultural genocide. As the plight of Indian people, particularly Indian children, became more widely known, an outcry of public protest arose. It was perhaps this public denouncement of the treatment of Indian people that provided the impetus for the research and writing of the 1928 report, *The Problem of Indian Administration*. This document, also known as the *Meriam Report*, encouraged reform in Indian affairs and guided Indian policy for decades (Bertolet, 2007).

Federal Reports on the Status of Indian Education

The 1928 Meriam Report

In 1926, a team of nine specialists in their respective fields were selected to participate in a study on Indian affairs led by Dr. Lewis Meriam. The team was

organized by the Brookings Institute under the direction of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Hubert Work (Szasz, 1972). The team visited over 95 Indian reservations, schools, hospitals, and agencies to investigate six areas of Indian affairs: (a) educational, (b) industrial, (c) social, and (d) medical activities in addition to (e) economic conditions and (f) property rights (Bertolet, 2007).

Meriam relied on a team of experts and gave them adequate time to prepare their conclusions. This thoughtful, thorough approach produced one of the finest studies ever made of a government bureau. The recommendations of the Meriam Report were not designed as a lesson in tactful advice. They pinpointed the glaring weaknesses within the Bureau and offered concrete cures for its shortcomings. (Szasz, 1972, p. 24)

The Meriam Report condemned each of the six areas of governmental work, but stated that the most significant problems, with the most dire consequences, were those in education (Brayboy & Castagno, 2009). To conduct the education portion of the study, Meriam appointed Carson Ryan, a professor from Swathmore who had previous experience with the U.S. Bureau of Education. Like other educators in the 1920's, Ryan was considered an educational progressivist who upheld the philosophy of John Dewey (Bertolet, 2007). It is, therefore, not surprising that Ryan advocated for a total revamping of the Indian educational system.

Boarding schools were easy targets for reform, as the conditions within them were found to be deplorable (Szasz, 1972). "Food, overcrowding, medical service, student labor, teachers, curriculum and discipline—all of these had been subject to attack by the reformers and all of them fell under the sharp criticism of Ryan's pen" (Szasz, p. 27).

Paradoxically, however, Ryan did not advocate for the closure of boarding schools despite the devastating conditions. In her 2007 study on W. Carson Ryan, Bertolet provides a detailed, yet often biased, description of Ryan's work. Regarding the closure of boarding schools, she writes,

Despite the fact that Ryan's progressive education led him to oppose boarding schools on principle, he did not recommend the BIA immediately abandon its off-reservation boarding schools. Showing foresight that boarding school critics lacked, Ryan recognized that until the BIA found a suitable alternative for the thousands of students who attended them, off-reservation boarding schools would have to stay open. (Bertolet, 2007, p. 160)

Although Ryan's stance on boarding school closures was not in the best interest of Indian students, particularly those in attendance, he did make meaningful recommendations about the direction for Indian education. Two of his strongest recommendations were the inclusion of community and culture in the curriculum and the need for qualified teachers.

After his work on the Meriam Report, Ryan was appointed Director of Education for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1930, and began his difficult task of supervising the education of more than 65,000 Indian students (Bertolet, 2007). One of his most challenging undertakings was to design an educational program for Indian youth that incorporated Indian culture. The first task was to define culture and then determine what components of Indian culture could have a positive impact on the education of Indian students (Szasz, 1972). Furthermore, although Ryan advocated for a curriculum with the inclusion of culture, he did not provide for teacher training. "The problem of poorly

qualified Indian service workers might have been solved if there had been sufficient trained Indian educators” (Szasz, p. 111).

Indian Education: A National Tragedy, A National Challenge – The 1969 Kennedy Report

Almost forty years after the Meriam Report, another government-directed committee was convened to examine the issues in Indian education. Spurred by increased pressure from tribal nations to facilitate change in Indian education, the federal government once again investigated Indian education. The results of this study depicted the grave conditions of Indian education and provided over 60 recommendations.

It concluded that the “dominant policy of the Federal Government toward the American Indian has been one of coercive assimilation;” and that this policy “has had disastrous effects on the education of Indian children.” The primary result of Federal Indian policy has been: that schools attended by Indian children have become “a battleground where the Indian child attempts to protect his integrity as an individual by defeating the purposes of the school;” that these schools have failed to “understand or adapt to, and in fact often denigrate, cultural differences;” in addition, that schools have blamed “their own failures on the Indian student,” which reinforces his “defensiveness;” and that the schools have also failed “to recognize the importance and validity of the Indian community,” and the community and child have retaliated “by treating the school as an alien institution.” The effect of this type of schooling on Indian children, the report concludes has been a “dismal record of absenteeism, dropouts, negative self-image, low achievement, and ultimately, academic failure for many Indian

children. For these reasons, the report stated, there has been a “perpetuation of the cycle of poverty which undermines the success of all other Federal programs. (French, 1981, p. 251)

The most significant recommendations made by the Kennedy Report were the inclusion of Indian culture and language into school curriculum, more Indian involvement and ownership of education, increased funding, and the expansion of existing programs (Brayboy & Castagno, 2009). Although it made many of the same recommendations as in the Meriam Report, the 1969 Kennedy Report was a catalyst for a series of important events in Indian education.

The first of these events to address the issues in Indian education was the Havighurst Report of 1970 which provided academic data on Indian students and reported on the lack of Indian cultures and languages in school curriculum (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1973). In 1972 the Indian Education Act was passed, which provided opportunities for funding to create tribal cultural and linguistic programs and support for increasing the number of Indian teachers.

The 1975 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (P.L. 93-638) was passed “to promote maximum Indian participation in the government and education of Indian people, and to support the right of Indians to control their own educational activities” (Reyhner & Eder, 2004, p. 259). It was not until the 1990’s, however, that the effects of self-determination legislation were more fully recognized with the unfolding of 3 events: (a) the Native American Languages Act; (b) the US Secretary of Education’s Indian Nations at Risk Task Force; and (c) the first White House Conference on Indian Education.

The Final Report from the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force reiterated previous reports on Indian education, and supported the need for linguistically and culturally appropriate education delivered by high quality Native teachers (Martin, 1994). “Thus it is imperative that American Indians’ education be culturally relevant in terms of curriculum, instruction, evaluation and governance” (Martin, 1994, p. 14).

A Resurgence of Indian Education by American Indians

“American Indian education continues to be in crisis and perhaps always will be until American Indian people have the necessary resources and take the full responsibility for educating their own” (Fletcher, 2008, p. 3). One example of the development of such resources is the establishment of tribal colleges to further the provision of Native American education by Native Americans.

Tribal Colleges

The history of tribal colleges reflects an arduous but successful journey of trials and tribulations. Writing in 1997, Paul Boyer stated that:

Although the oldest tribal college was started less than thirty years ago, these fledgling institutions are remaking the educational and social landscapes of America’s reservations. They are challenging economic stagnation, and aggressively confronting the devastating impact of alcoholism and drug abuse. Of equal importance, they are reframing tribal traditions that were slipping away.

(Boyer, P., p. 2)

According to The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Special Report of Tribal Colleges (1989) part of the challenge, but also the strength of tribal colleges, is the incorporation of traditional Indian cultures.

Students learn firmly that who they are and what they believe has great value. Rather than being a disorienting experience for students, college represents a reinforcement of the values inherent in the tribal community. Courses in Indian culture...are the bridge to tribal unity and individual pride. (Boyer, E. , 1991, p. 54)

Tribal colleges have created meaningful connections between students' lives and cultures, and their academic or vocational goals. Cultural connections have contributed to the success of tribal colleges. Becenti (1995) described the history of American Indian higher education before the development of tribal colleges, and stated that:

Although significant attempts were made to provide higher education for the American Indian they were destined for failure because their strong cultural values conflicted with the tenets of higher education, especially as it was used as a tool of assimilation. (Becenti, p. 21)

The often dichotomous missions of tribal colleges have stressed the importance of the transmission of cultural knowledge and skills, while meeting the goals of "mainstream" American education. Longie's study of tribal colleges recognized the importance of cultural inclusion and stated that "Culture, or the preservation, restoration and teaching of culture, arguably may be the most critical factor in the success of tribal colleges" (Longie, 2005, p. 161). Longie (2005) also recommended that research on the relationship between cultural integration and student academic success be conducted to determine the extent to which tribal colleges impact cultural revitalization on reservations, and to determine if students who are more assimilated into mainstream culture are more successful at tribal colleges. Overall, Longie's case study of two tribal

colleges indicated that these tribal colleges were successfully transmitting cultural knowledge, and that college operations and business were conducted in ways that reflected their traditional cultures. Although Longie did not identify a particular problem upon which to focus his research, and his case study was limited to two out of 34 tribal colleges, his findings provided further support for the unique culture-based mission and practices of tribal colleges.

Badwound (1990) described the contradictions that can arise from the dual missions of tribal colleges that must include both cultural and mainstream values. “Ambiguity over the mission causes mismatches between organizational values and structures” (p. 258). Badwound’s qualitative research identified the primary issues in meeting cultural goals within tribal college missions as: (a) funding; (b) environmental forces such as tribal politics; and (c) accreditation standards. These three forces can derail a tribal college’s ability to incorporate and transmit cultural knowledge.

Lack of funding was cited as a major threat to the survival of tribal colleges by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in 1989. During the 1960’s and 1970’s tribal colleges accessed funding from multiple and often unreliable sources. With the passage of the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act (P.L.95-471, 1978), federal funds became a primary source of more stable finances (Becenti, 1995). However, such funding was not appropriated at a level to fully support tribal colleges, and the formula was based on student enrollment of the previous year. “As a result of their predicament, tribal colleges operate primarily on ‘soft monies.’ What mainstream institutions consider supplemental funding, such as federal grants, are the primary source of financial support for tribal colleges” (Badwound, 1990, p. 76).

Problems with funding for tribal colleges have been further exacerbated by economic and educational demographics of the student body. Most students who enroll in tribal colleges are often both educationally and economically disadvantaged. Therefore, these students frequently need remedial services, such as developmental studies and tutoring, and they are dependent upon financial aid to pay for their education. Tribal colleges were limited in what they can charge for tuition and fees. Unlike most mainstream higher education institutions that receive funding from state entities and/or endowments, tribal college presidents were the responsible entities for securing funding (Campbell, 2003).

In addition to securing funding, tribal college presidents were charged with fulfilling the college mission and vision with the resources that are available (Krumm, 1997). In Krumm's 1997 study on Native American women tribal college presidents, Janine Pease Windy Boy Pretty On Top described the dilemma that many tribal college leaders face in terms of balancing the budget and having the vision needed to lead a tribal college. She referred to tribal college leaders as visionaries.

Tribal college leadership is the embodiment of a lifestyle, an expression of learned patterns of thought and behaviors, values and beliefs. Culture is the basis of the institution; it formulates the purpose, process, and product. Tribal college leadership is inseparable from culture. (Krumm, 1997, p. 160).

Tribal college leaders were required to be risk takers who dream big, but, at the same time, need to operate within a budget.

At times of peace and prosperity, the words and actions of leaders can drift into the margins of public concern. But at times of conflict and during periods of

dramatic change, when people begin to question their ability to survive, leaders can be central to a community's persistence. (Hoxie, 1994, p. 3)

Another essential aspect of tribal college leadership was the ability to work collaboratively with a variety of tribal and non-tribal entities, both internal and external to the college, to fulfill the mission and vision (Fowler, 1992). Such leadership depended on critical thinking, inclusive decision making, accountability, consistency and the ability to be a positive role model (Campbell, 2005). Personal characteristics included "honesty, fairness, energy, creativity, thoughtfulness, strong work ethic, strong spirituality and good health" (Fowler, 1992, p. 161). The ability to incorporate culture in all aspects of leadership separated tribal college presidents from other post-secondary presidents. "As Sinte Gleska University president Lionel Bordeaux so eloquently stated: 'As leaders we cannot forget the primary purpose for our existence...the strengthening of tribal people through education, and the preservation of tribal history, language, music and entire culture'" (Campbell, 2003, p. 180).

The third challenge facing tribal colleges posited by Becenti (1995) was accreditation. In a study that compared accreditation standards at tribal colleges to those of non-Indian community colleges, McDonald (1982) found that tribal college personnel who participated in his study believed that the present system of accreditation was appropriate for tribal colleges. Interestingly, the participants in the study did not want the Bureau of Indian Affairs nor the federal government to be the accrediting agency, but advocated for continuation of the process as it was being conducted (McDonald, 1982).

Teacher Preparation for Indian Education

To address the need for change in education, one growing trend at tribal colleges was the development of teacher preparation programs that would prepare and graduate more Indian teachers (Blackird, 2004). The history of teacher education programs to prepare Indian teachers started in the early 1930's as a result of the Meriam Report that criticized government-run Indian boarding schools. In response to this report, a program was created to educate and graduate Indian teachers. "The need for role-models - persons who could live as Indians and also appreciate the dominant culture - became a priority" (Boyer, 1997, p. 17). However, this program was short lived, and ended during World War II after preparing 50 Indian teachers (Boyer, 1997).

Blackird's 2004 study explored reasons for the lack of Native Americans enrolling in teacher education programs. This study provided several explanations for the low numbers of Native Americans in teacher education programs. However, since the study was a qualitative case study, it was very difficult to generalize the results. Blackird (2004) did provide suggestions for the recruitment, enrollment, instructional environment, graduation and induction of American Indian teacher candidates. Included in his recommendations, Blackird noted that,

Establishing programs that entice students not only to enter college, but also to be teachers is critical. Students need to be assured that programs exist that will support them academically and socially. The issues of financial assistance and cultural sensitivity and awareness must be addressed. (Blackird, p. 66)

One obstacle for many Indian teacher candidates has been successfully passing the Praxis exams required for licensure (Norris-Tull & Weber, 2002). In a study from the

University of Alaska Fairbanks, the researchers wrote, “As we have become more familiar with the testing environments mandated in ETS guidelines, we have become convinced that the ETS test-taking environment is culturally biased and is most definitely in strong conflict with Alaska Native culture” (Norris-Tull & Weber, p. 9). Praxis exams and other licensure tests were created, “to provide states with a standardized mechanism to assess whether prospective teachers have demonstrated knowledge believed to be important for safe and effective entry level practice” (Educational Testing Services, 2008, p. 7). However, cultural bias may be an important issue in terms of standardized testing.

Teacher Preparation for Indian Education in Montana

Leaders in education have grappled with the concept of requiring a standardized test for licensure. However, due to requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, teacher candidates who are new to the profession must take a standardized test for teacher licensure. During a meeting with the Montana Council of Deans of Education, Dr. Larry Baker from Montana State University voiced concerns about the use of a standardized test that may have excluded Native American pre-service teachers. Other deans agreed, including Dr. Paul Rolland, the Chair of the Deans. The Montana Office of Public Instruction was very supportive of the deans’ concerns and worked diligently with the U.S. Department of Education. However, the need for compliance with the federal requirement for highly qualified teachers was required. Therefore, a three-part assessment of content knowledge was developed in Montana that included the Praxis score, the Grade Point Average for content knowledge courses, and a student teaching evaluation.

Leadership for Teacher Preparation in Indian Education

Leaders are the instruments for change within an organization, and leadership is the essential factor in creating successful change (Brown, 2003). In teacher preparation programs, it is often the dean who is the visible leader and change agent. Few studies have been conducted on leadership in teacher education programs even though there has been substantial research on effective practices and innovations in teacher preparation programs (Brown, 2003). The research on leaders in teacher preparation programs has been focused on mainstream institutions that may or may not enroll significant numbers of minority students. However, such studies can be useful in analyzing leadership issues and then deciding how such information is applicable to a tribal college structure. Brown's 2003 qualitative study on leadership in teacher education programs explored the phenomenon of leadership in the context of educational reform and change. Brown described the following about leaders in education:

...effective leaders are more than managers. They have a vision, develop a shared vision and value the contributions and efforts of their followers. Leaders who develop shared vision...create a common ground that serves to facilitate or compel action. (Brown, 2003, p. 165)

Educational reform is a necessity at all grade levels for Native Americans (Office for Civil Rights, 2008). Maintaining the status quo for Indian education will result in continued educational inequities. However, as Straus (1994) noted, "Mainstream American institutions of higher education have not been change agents –from a positive perspective-in Indian communities" (Strauss, p. 158).

As of 2009, seven tribal colleges in the United States have implemented four-year accredited teacher training programs in order to address the major concern in Indian education regarding the absence of qualified Native American teachers. These seven colleges are: (a) Diné College in Tsaille, Arizona; (b) Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas; (c) Oglala Lakota College in Pine Ridge, South Dakota; (d) Salish Kootenai College in Pablo, Montana; (e) Sinte Gleska University on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation in South Dakota; (f) Sitting Bull College in Fort Yates, North Dakota; and (g) Turtle Mountain Community College on the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation in North Dakota. Salish Kootenai College is the only tribal college in Montana that offers a four-year accredited education program. The six remaining tribal colleges in Montana offer associate degree programs in education with Memoranda of Understanding with non-tribal four year institutions to graduate pre-service teachers with bachelor's degrees for teacher licensure.

Summary

In summary, a plethora of state and federal policies were created to improve Indian education; however, to date, very few have been effectively implemented. “Paradoxically, well-intended policy can produce unintended, and often devastating, results for its supposed beneficiaries. This phenomenon has long plagued Indian education” (French, 1981, p. 10). As indicated in the review of literature, policies that were created with the best of intentions have been based on the expectation that Native Americans would embrace a form of education that was intended to diminish their ways of life. The present educational demands placed on Indian students do not exceed their abilities, but rather they are diametrically opposed to their cultures and ways of life

(Deyhle & Swisher, 1997). The frustrations from participating in such an educational system often result in Indian students choosing to shun education much like any person would do when something threatens their existence. Therefore, fundamental changes in the present educational structure must be made that can provide hope to Native Americans that they do not need to exchange who they are for what others think they should be.

The review of the literature provided the researcher with a construct that was used throughout the study. This construct was organized around four major themes that arose from the review. One common theme woven among all four structures was the need for Indian education to be delivered and “owned” by American Indians. One appropriate fundamental change in the present educational structure would be to substantially increase the number of Indian teachers as they are the holders of trust that needs to be communicated to Indian youth (Brayboy & Castagno, 2009). Many Indian cultures incorporate respect for elders, and thus suggest that Indian teachers may become the most successful transmitters of trust through communicating the importance of education as a means to strengthen Native identity, not diminish it. Therefore, an investigation of the issues in preparing Indian pre-service teachers, to address current shortages of Indian teachers, may inform educational leaders about the means to improve the education for Indian youth.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This dissertation investigated the problem of shortages of Indian teachers by describing the lived experiences of tribal college leaders in teacher preparation. Many national studies, reports and policies have been conducted, written, and analyzed to improve the educational success of American Indian students. However, despite all these attempts, there appears to be inconsistent progress in remediating the educational challenges that Indians have faced for hundreds of years and continue to face today.

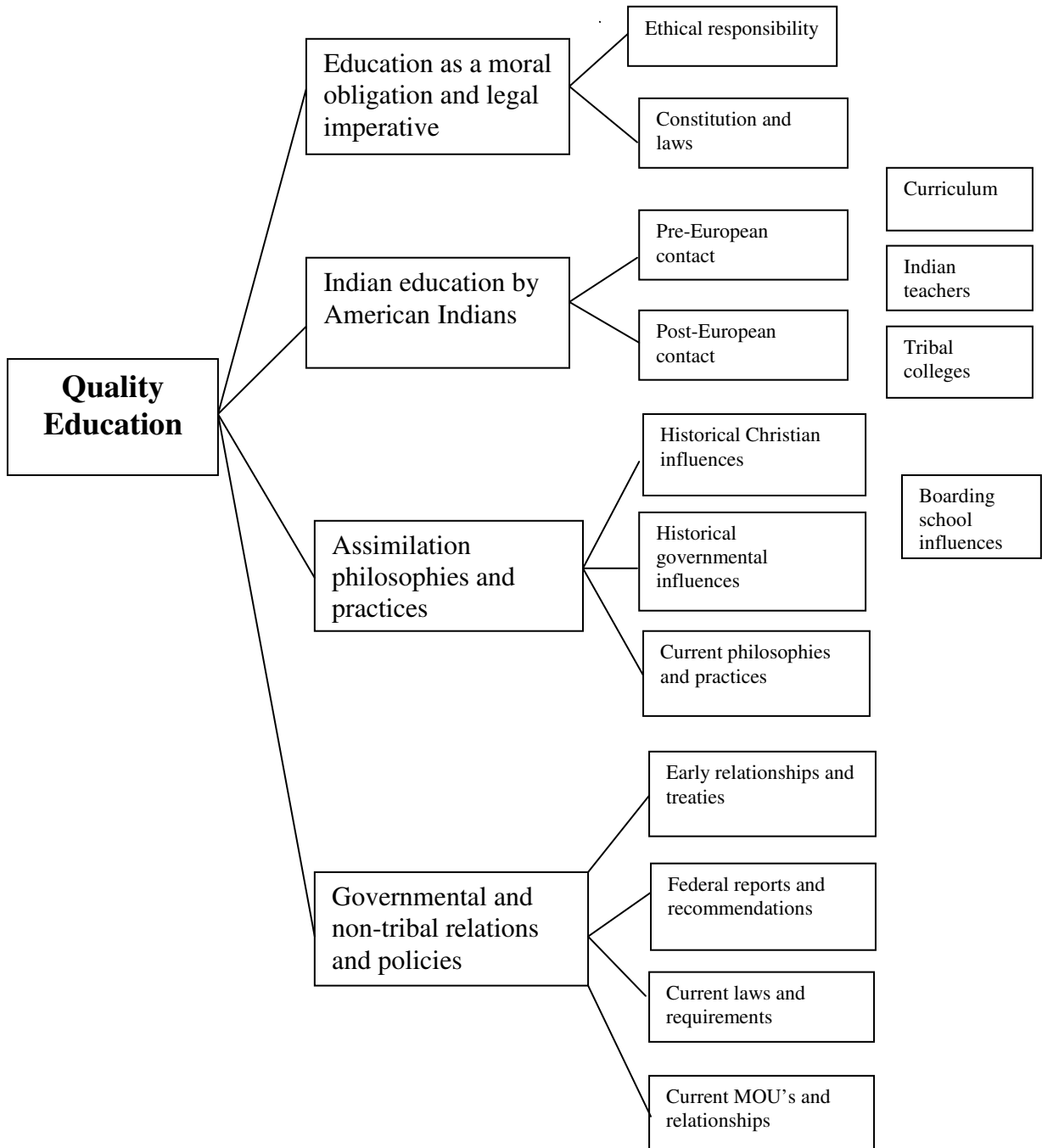
Educational success for Indian students is attainable; the students are not the problem, and stories, studies, and lived experiences tell of the potential these students possess. The problems often lie within the schools and the context of school cultures. One clear recommendation that has been documented repeatedly in research on Indian education was the importance of providing education to American Indians by American Indian teachers (Brayboy & Castagno, 2009). Therefore, this research focused on how the phenomenon of shortages of Indian teachers was described through the lens of leaders in teacher education at Montana's tribal colleges.

Research Construct

The research construct for this study was based on four themes that arose from the review of literature: (a) Education as a moral obligation and legal imperative; (b) Indian education by American Indians; (c) Assimilative philosophies and practices; and (d) Governmental involvement and relationships (Figure 1). These four themes were then delineated into subtopics that were the basis for the interview questions.

Figure 1

Research Construct



Subsequent to the findings, the researcher remained open to modifying the themes to best reflect the actual findings and conclusions based upon this research. However, no changes were made as the themes served as the hypothetical construct to guide both the data collection and analysis.

Research Design

The qualitative tradition in this study was a phenomenological approach. A phenomenological design was chosen to explore, and thus better understand, the perspectives of Montana tribal college leaders related to the phenomenon of shortages of Indian teachers.

The type of problem best suited for this form of research is one in which it is important to understand several individual's common or shared experiences of a phenomenon. It would be important to understand these common experiences in order to develop practices or policies, or to develop a deeper understanding about the features of the problem. (Creswell, 2007, p. 60)

The philosophical tenets that provided the structure for the phenomenological research design and methodology of this study were based on the works of German mathematician Edmund Husserl. Husserl believed that "knowledge based on intuition and essence precedes empirical knowledge" (as cited in Moustakas, 1994, p. 26). Based on this belief, Husserl and Moustakas (1994) described the process of epoche in which the researcher sets aside all judgements and biases regarding the phenomenon, "as a preparation for deriving new knowledge but also as an experience in itself, a process of setting aside predilections, prejudices, predispositions, and allowing things, events, and people to enter anew into consciousness" (Moustakas, p. 85). The practice of epoche was

also referred to as bracketing in which the researcher deliberately reflects on what is known about the phenomenon and then attempts to understand this knowledge.

It is better to make explicit our understandings, beliefs, biases, assumptions, presuppositions, and theories. We try to come to terms with our assumptions, not in order to forget them again, but rather to hold them deliberately at bay and even to turn this knowledge against itself, as it were, thereby exposing its shallow or concealing character. (van Manen, 1990, p. 47).

Epoche encourages the researcher to study the phenomenon more clearly through a process of intentionality allowing for the discovery of new knowledge (Moustakas, 1994). “Intentionality refers to consciousness, the internal experience of being conscious of something; thus the act of consciousness and the object of consciousness are intentionally related” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 28). Two sides of intentionality are noema, the textural dimension of intentionality, and noesis, the textural meaning of the phenomena (Moustakas, 1994).

In the grasping of the meaning of experience, we are engaging in a process of functioning intentionality; we uncover the meanings of phenomena, deliver them from the anonymity of the natural attitude, move them toward an inclusive totality of consciousness. (Moustakas, p. 31)

The interplay of noema and noesis allows the researcher to discover the meaning of the phenomena.

The aim of phenomenology is to transform lived experience into a textural expression of its essence – in such a way that the effect of the text is at once a reflexive re-living and a reflective appropriation of something meaningful: a

notion by which a reader is powerfully animated in his or her own lived experience. (van Manen, 1990, p. 36)

The researcher for this study utilized a combination of the phenomenological approaches described by Husserl, Moustakas and Giorgi. Giorgi (1985) provided a structure and description for interpreting phenomenological research that was valuable for this study. Moustakas's approach to phenomenology did not support interpretations of the research, but rather descriptions of the experiences of the participants. The researcher believed that interpretation of the data was essential to understanding the phenomenon.

The meaning people give to their experience and their process of interpretation are essential and constitutive, not accidental or secondary to what the experience is. To understand behavior, we must understand definitions and the processes by which they are manufactured. Human beings are actively engaged in creating their world; understanding the intersection of biography and society is essential. (Bogdan & Biklen, 2010, p. 35)

Moustaka's procedures of transcendental phenomenology were employed which consisted of the following steps: (a) identifying a phenomenon to study, (b) bracketing out one's experiences with the phenomenon, (c) collecting data from individuals who have experience the phenomenon, and (d) analyzing the data. Specific data analysis procedures are described below.

Central Question

The research question guiding this study was: How do leaders in teacher education from Montana's tribal colleges describe their experiences in preparing Native

pre-service teachers as perceived through the lens of the phenomenon of shortages of Indian teachers? This question arose from the review of the literature and data on Indian education and evolved throughout the study. From this question, two subquestions further refined the scope of this study: (a) What factors, if any, created barriers for Native American tribal college pre-service teachers; (b) What factors, if any, created success for Native American tribal college pre-service teachers?

The interview questions for the qualitative portion of the study were derived from the review of literature and organized around the research construct. Questions were developed to provide the researcher with information on each of the following research constructs: (a) education as a legal and moral imperative; (b) Indian education provided from American Indians; (c) assimilation – historical and contemporary practices and policies; and (d) governmental and non-Indian relationships. Research participants were informed on the purpose of the study so that their responses were framed within the context of the problem – shortages of Indian teachers. The following figures (2-5) represent each section of the research construct and the corresponding interview questions. In addition, general interview questions were asked about the participants' role and work, and follow-up questions were used as needed.

Figure 2

Interview Questions for Research Construct One

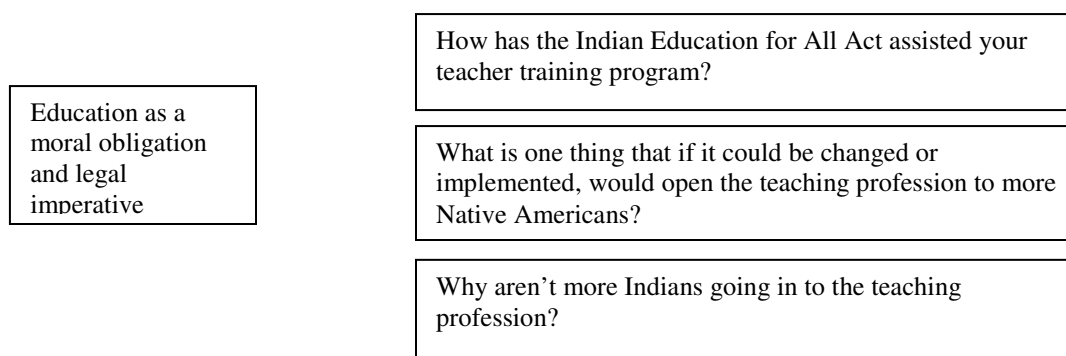


Figure 3

Interview Questions for Research Construct Two

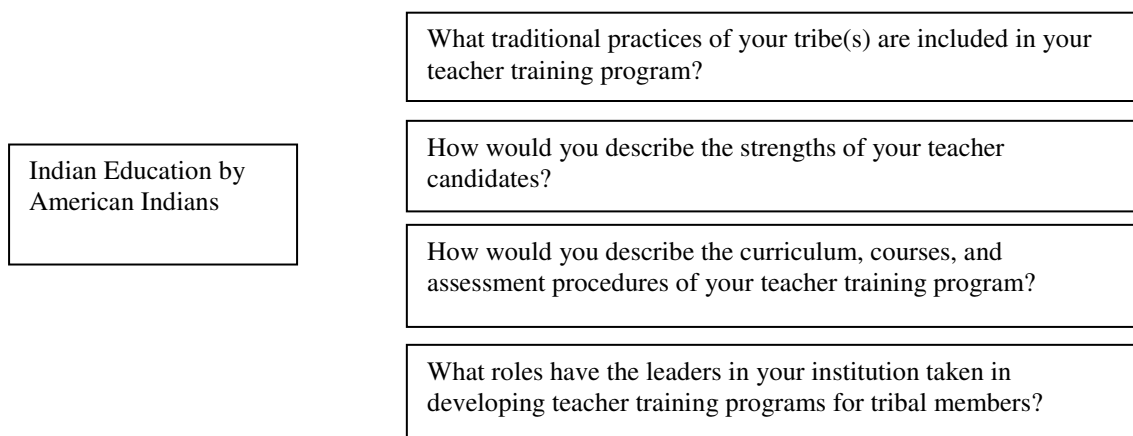


Figure 4

Interview Questions for Research Construct Three

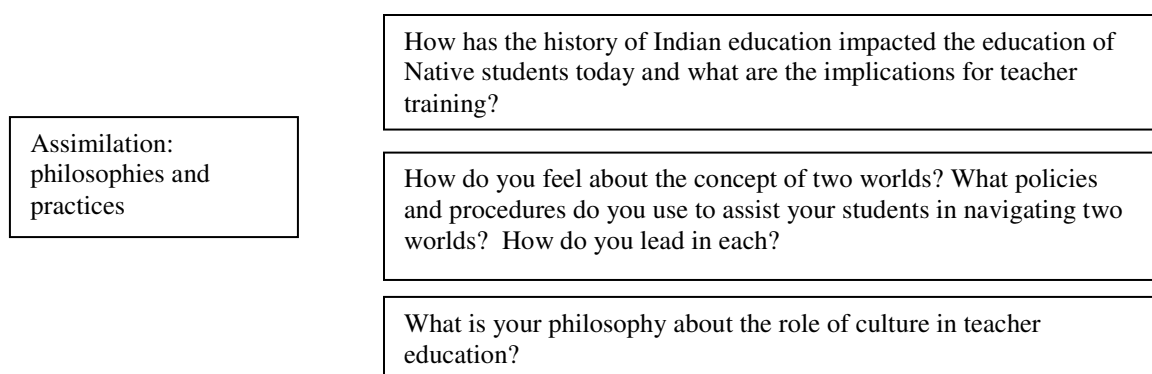
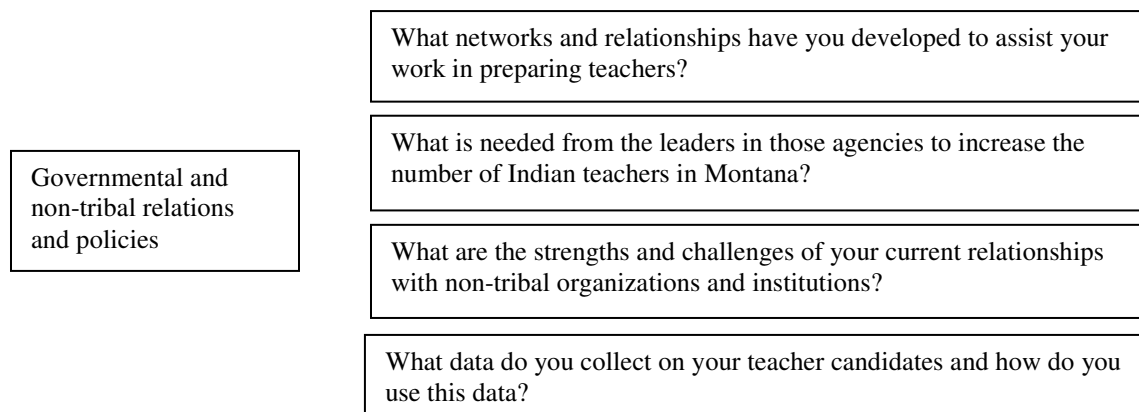


Figure 5

Interview Questions for Research Construct Four



Population and Sample

Participants for this study were purposefully chosen to represent all seven Montana tribal colleges. The seven tribal colleges in Montana and their respective reservations were: (a) Blackfeet Community College located on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in northwest Montana; (b) Dull Knife Memorial College located on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in southeastern Montana (c) Fort Belknap College located on Fort Belknap Reservation in northern Montana; (d) Fort Peck Community College located on the Fort Peck Reservation in northeastern Montana; (e) Little Big Horn College located on the Crow Reservation in southeastern Montana; (f) Stone Child College on the Rocky Boy Reservation in northern Montana; and (g) Salish Kootenai College on the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe's Flathead Reservation in northwest Montana. One individual from each tribal college who was in a leadership position and was knowledgeable about the teacher preparation program was selected to be interviewed. The researcher chose to limit the number of participants to one from each institution due to the limited number of individuals employed at each college who were knowledgeable about the teacher preparation programs. Most of the tribal colleges only had one person working in teacher preparation in a leadership position, while two of the colleges had no one specifically designated to a leadership position for teacher education. The researcher identified potential participants through the college website and with the assistance of Dr. Joseph McDonald who was knowledgeable about each tribal college and the leaders who could provide information on the teacher preparation program.

Based on their experience working at tribal colleges where Native cultures are central to the mission and programs, tribal college leaders had a perspective on education that needed to be heard. Furthermore, such leaders had data, anecdotes and lived experiences that could inform other leaders who wish to prepare future Indian teachers equipped to provide quality education for Native youth.

Data Collection Procedures

Qualitative data were collected through personal interviews and a review of program information and documents. Participants were initially contacted by phone. Interview protocol and standards as described by Fontana and Frey (2000) and Seidman (2006) were used to guide the researcher's interactions with the participants and ensure that the participants were aware of informed consent, the right to privacy and protection from harm (Appendix A). Strategies gleaned from the review of literature were applied to help the researcher gain trust and establish rapport with the participants.

The Institutional Review Boards at The University of Montana, Salish Kootenai College and Fort Belknap Community College approved of this study to protect the rights of the participants. In addition, the researcher informed each participant that he or she could choose not to answer any question. Participants were informed in writing and verbally that they could terminate the interview at any time. Each participant signed and received a copy of the Consent form and Protocol form (Appendix A).

Participants were informed about the phenomenon of interest, the lack of Indian teachers in Montana, to encourage them to respond to the interview questions through the lens of the phenomenon. Interview questions were piloted to ensure face validity and content validity with six individuals all of whom had some expertise with teacher

preparation. Half of these individuals had experience in Indian education at the tribal college level, and half had direct experience in preparing teachers at the state level.

Fontana and Frey (2000) and Seidman (2006) also provided insight into the framing and interpretation of the interview data.

Data Analysis

The qualitative analysis provided ways of studying, comparing and contrasting, and interpreting meaningful patterns or themes that emerged from the narrative and interviews. Meaningfulness was determined by the research questions and problem. The qualitative analysis was conducted by a reduction of the data, visually displaying the data, and then verifying and making conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). More specific phenomenological data analysis procedures as described by Giorgi (1985) were then employed which consisted of the following steps: (a) reading the interview transcriptions in order to gain a sense of the whole; (b) discriminating meaning units from the transcripts; (c) transforming the transcripts through reflection in order to “elucidate the psychological aspects in a depth appropriate for the understanding of the events” (Giorgi, p. 17); and (d) synthesizing the transformed meaning units and integrating them into a structure of the experience (Giorgi, 1985).

Triangulation of the data was conducted to add to the trustworthiness of the study. Data from multiple sources were used in addition to the interviews including college catalogs, program descriptions, memoranda of agreement, and other correspondence with institutions within the Montana University System.

Verification of data was employed through member checks in which the participants were provided with a typed copy of their interview for corrections and

additions. These corrections added to the researcher's confidence that the interviews were accurately recorded and transcribed. A second verification of the interviews was conducted by having each participant review the quotations that the researcher was using as thick, rich descriptions of the themes. Email correspondence was received from all participants approving the use of their quotations.

A peer review conducted by Dr. Stacey Sherwin, Director of Institutional Research at Salish Kootenai College, was utilized to verify the findings from the data analysis. A letter from Dr. Sherwin documenting her work with the researcher is included in Appendix B.

Lastly, the researcher remained clearly aware of her personal experiences through bracketing, journaling, and reflecting in order to conscientiously avoid bias from entering into the data collection or analysis. The process of epoche provided the structure for this self-reflection at the beginning, middle and conclusion of the research.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher acknowledges her bias relative to this study. Being chair of an education department at a tribal college in Montana, this researcher recognized the influence of her experiences in a bachelor's degree teacher education program that was recently accredited by the Montana Office of Public Instruction. Furthermore, the researcher was aware that she was interviewing Native American leaders who were from a different culture. However, the concept of "boundary spanning" was applied as suggested by Goetz and LeCompte (1984) who described "skill in communicating within and across cultural groups" (p. 99). Bias was checked by conscientiously being aware of how data was collected and analyzed, being careful when choosing interview questions to

use only open ended questions that were not leading, and being aware of body language during the interviews. Audio tapes were checked to ensure that the participants were not influenced, and a peer reviewer was utilized as a check for bias.

Summary

In summary, the methodology for this research consisted of a phenomenological design to allow for an in-depth examination of how the leaders of teacher education programs at all seven of Montana's tribal colleges describe the phenomenon of Indian teacher shortages. It was hoped that the descriptions from this study could inform this researcher and other leaders about the preparation of future Native American teachers. Additionally, it was the desire of this researcher to empower these leaders through their stories so that tribal colleges can more strategically prepare Indian licensed teachers for Montana's schools. The data analysis in the following chapter describes the results of this research.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the research focus, data analysis and results of the phenomenological study exploring the lived experiences of tribal college leaders in the preparation of Native pre-service teachers. In this chapter, the demographics of the tribal college leaders selected for this study are described, followed by a description of the data collection process, and an analysis of the data. The research construct described in the previous chapter was used to frame the study during all phases of data collection and analysis.

Participants

The participants for this study were employed at a Montana tribal college in a leadership position and were knowledgeable about the teacher education program. The following is a short description of the participants at their respective place of employment.

At the time of this study, Paula Firemoon was employed at Fort Peck Community College in the position of a Gear Up Project Coordinator. Paula was selected as a participant as she was the former administrator of a professional development/teacher training grant at Fort Peck Community College. Paula had four years of experience at Fort Peck Community College and was knowledgeable about the partnerships between the college and the local schools.

Clarena Brockie was selected as a participant as she was knowledgeable about the history of the teacher training program at Fort Belknap Community College. At the time

of her interview for this study, Clarena was the Dean of Students and had over ten years of experience working at Fort Belknap Community College. In addition, Clarena had six years of prior experience with K-12 schools as the Impact Aid Chair, and was the current Project Coordinator for a professional development/teacher training grant at Fort Belknap College.

At the time of this study, Michelle Curlee was employed at Chief Dull Knife College as the Academic Vice President. Michelle had six years of experience at Chief Dull Knife College that started as a teaching position in communication arts. Michelle had also had experience teaching in public schools. Michelle was familiar with the professional development/teacher training grants that were awarded to Chief Dull Knife College in the past.

Dee Hoyt-Hall was chosen to participate in this study as she was the Department Chair of Elementary Education at Blackfeet Community College. Dee had been employed at Blackfeet Community College for over six years. Dee began her work at Blackfeet Community College teaching readiness skills for college success courses while she was teaching health classes at a reservation school. Dee expanded her work at the college and became the department chair, instructor and advisor for elementary education students.

Roy Stewart, at the time of this study, was an Elementary Education Instructor at Little Big Horn College and was employed there since 1997. In 2000 Roy began teaching courses for the elementary education program. Roy was also considered the department chair and was listed on the college website as such.

At the time of this study, Kadene Drummer was a teaching faculty member at Stone Child College and considered a department head, as there was only one other instructor in the department. Kadene recently completed her doctoral dissertation on the persistence of tribal students attending Stone Child. Kadene began her work at Stone Child College teaching in the business department. She took courses during her doctoral program to become qualified to teach education courses.

Carmen Taylor was the selected participant from Salish Kootenai College, as she had been on the Salish Kootenai College campus for 17 years, originally as the National School Board Association Executive Director. Carmen had worked with K-12 schools around the country, primarily schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and had a historical perspective of the teacher education program at Salish Kootenai College. Soon after her interview, Carmen became the Academic Vice President at Salish Kootenai College.

As a collective group, the participant demographics were as follows:

Table 2

Participant demographics

Gender	Female: 6 Male: 1
Position	Teacher education instructor or department chair: 3 College administrators: 3 Project Coordinator: 1
Work experience at the tribal college	1-5 years: 2 6-10 years: 4 11-20 years: 1
Ethnicity	American Indian: 5 Non-Indian: 2

Interestingly, all participants who were in teacher education, with the exception of Salish Kootenai College, came to the profession after working in another field. Also, one participant was a former pre-service teacher who graduated from a tribal college and four year institution through the support of a teacher training grant. Only three programs had an individual who could be identified as the head of the education program. All department leaders also fulfilled other roles in their positions.

All of the colleges had a teacher education academic program listed in their course catalog with a degree plan, description of the program, and course descriptions. The curriculum at the associate degree level consisted of a general education core, beginning level education courses and a foundation of cultural courses. The purpose of the education programs at the associate degree level, as described in each course catalog, was to enable the students to transfer to or enroll in a four-year baccalaureate program in teacher education. Some programs included a statement that the associate's degree would qualify the students for work as a teacher's aide.

Restatement of the Problem

The problem for this study pertained to the phenomenon of shortages of Indian teachers in Montana as described by tribal college leaders in teacher preparation. Tribal college leaders hold a unique and valuable perspective on the preparation of Indian pre-service teachers. However, few studies have explored the issue of shortages of Indian teachers from the stories and experiences of these key individuals – tribal college leaders who are knowledgeable about teacher preparation.

Data Collection and Methodology

Moustaka's (1994) procedures of transcendental phenomenology were employed, which consisted of the following steps: (a) identifying a phenomenon to study, (b) bracketing out one's experiences with the phenomenon, (c) collecting data from individuals who have experienced the phenomenon, and (d) analyzing the data. Therefore, before collecting data, the researcher engaged in the following activities.

The researcher began the study by following Moustaka's first procedure and identified the problem or phenomenon of interest. The particular phenomenon of the lack of Indian teachers was chosen as the researcher had a professional interest. The researcher is employed at a tribal college in Montana that for the past two years has graduated the largest cohorts of Indian pre-service teachers in Montana from a four-year teacher training program. However, despite the increased number of Indian teacher candidates, the percentage of Indian teachers in Montana had not substantially increased.

The researcher then engaged in the process of epoche, or reflecting and journaling on the problem as described by Moustakas (1994). Multiple essays and the development of the conceptual framework for the teacher education program at Salish Kootenai College were the result of the researcher bracketing out her related experiences and philosophies in teacher education. The process of epoche allowed the researcher to develop a fuller understanding of the problem and issues around Indian teacher education, and provided a mechanism to concretely lay out, and therefore prevent potential researcher bias.

Once the researcher bracketed out the experiences and interpretation of her work in teacher preparation, individuals who also experienced the phenomenon were chosen

for the study. Participants were chosen for the study based on criteria previously described. Interviews were conducted with the participants on their respective college campuses with the exception of the participant from Fort Belknap Community College who was interviewed at Salish Kootenai College at her request, as she was visiting Salish Kootenai College.

The interviews took approximately one hour with some taking more time. The interviews were conducted in February and March 2010. As the interviews and campus visits proceeded, the researcher took field notes to include in the data analysis.

Reduction of the Data

After transcribing the interviews, the researcher read through each interview several times to gain an overall sense of each transcription. The transcriptions ranged from 10 to 16 pages. The researcher also reviewed field notes, course catalogs and other documentation provided from the participants. This first step of data analysis followed Giorgi's approach (1985) in order to gain a sense of the whole context. Next, the researcher highlighted phrases on printed copies of the transcriptions which contained relevant information to the research question in order to discriminate meaning units from the transcriptions (Giorgi, 1985). The transcriptions were then color coded on the computer; each participant's transcription was assigned a color, and that color was used to highlight the meaning units. The transcripts were then printed with the color coding. Each transcription was then cut apart by question and pasted onto a poster. The poster had the following categories: (a) introductory information, (b) program information, (c) closing/summary information, and (d) a section for each of the four research constructs (education as a moral obligation and legal imperative; Indian education by American

Indians; assimilation and the historical impacts on Indian education; and networks and relationships in teacher education). Each research construct contained approximately four interview questions.

The data were then reflected upon several times within the framework of the research construct in order to more fully understand the meaning of the interviews in the context of the research question. The researcher engaged in a process of stepping back from the data to see overall trends and themes, and then moving into the data to gain an understanding of the themes within the individual interviews. This process followed Giorgi's (1985) third step of data analysis in order to study the data in depth while making it more clear to the researcher.

The transcribed interviews were also analyzed using a computer software program, ATLAS.ti by Scientific Software using in vivo coding in order to add to the researcher's confidence that the most appropriate meaning units were selected. In vivo coding allowed the researcher to compare the data using another method. The researcher further reduced the data from the four research constructs into major themes as recommended by Giorgi (1985) as a final stage of data analysis. The following themes emerged within each research construct as depicted in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Research Constructs and Themes from the Data

Research Construct	Themes
Education as a moral obligation and legal imperative	Being prepared and welcomed Teacher pay is an issue
Indian education by American Indians:	Traditional practices: it's about the students Our students have many strengths Community connections are essential
Assimilation and the historical impacts of Indian education	Culture is really important We know the history, but now what

	Living in two worlds? It's personal
Partnerships, networks and relationships	Partnerships: purposeful or convenient We are kinda weak on data Where are the support and leadership?

Data Analysis

Research Construct One: Education Is a Moral Obligation and Legal Imperative

The intent of the interview questions relative to research construct one was to determine how the teacher training programs prepared Indian pre-service teachers to fulfill their legal and moral obligations through laws such as the Indian Education for All Act. Additionally, questions were asked to garner information on the factors that prevent American Indians from choosing teaching careers and what factors could be addressed to encourage more Indian teachers.

Being Prepared and Welcomed

One theme that emerged from the data on the first research construct was that American Indian students need to feel welcomed into the profession and be prepared for college. Being prepared and welcomed are two issues within this theme and were linked together in one theme as they both exemplified the connection between postsecondary education and K-12 education. In reflecting upon the preparation of Indian pre-service teachers before entrance into the teacher preparation program, Kadene Drummer, the department head and a teacher education faculty member from Stone Child College stated,

[we need to make sure] through our public education, that [students] are prepared for college. That's what NCLB is doing...They've got to know how important it

is to be in school so that you learn, not because it's the law, not because it's required, it's so that you can be what you want to be.

Since all seven tribal colleges have open admission policies, all have to work with varying student abilities. At Little Big Horn College, Roy Stewart, who is the department head and faculty member of the elementary education program, commented, "We have courses on reading and writing across the curriculum which I think is very important particularly for these teachers because the reading, when we look at AYP, they really haven't been successful." Michele Curlee, the Academic Vice President at Chief Dull Knife College, also commented that,

... because our students are coming in here needing so much remediation, which to me until we re-spark the flame of learning, the thrill and the will and the energy it takes to learn, we're not going to be able to remediate. Because we, in a sense, have to recapture that 7 year old inside and say this is what you missed but it's not too late... We'll never get better at retention until we realize all the phases, and it's not about retention as much as persistence.

It was apparent in the interviews that tribal colleges not only prepared students with the basic skills and content knowledge needed to be a teacher, but also provided the cultural teachings and social-emotional preparation for the transfer to a four-year program. Since Salish Kootenai College has its own four-year program, the latter issue was not about transferring but rather preparing students for the K-12 school environment for field experience, student teaching and employment. The education department faculty members at SKC have referred to this preparation as helping the teacher candidates walk in two worlds: the Native world of their home cultures and the culture of

predominantly white, middle class public schools. In support of the cultural knowledge provided to students, Clarena Brockie, the Dean of Students at Fort Belknap College, stated,

What we do, everything, centers around our culture. We have ceremonies at the college. We don't separate that. We have our stick games right in the college, we've had our smudging of the buildings, we have our language, our culture, our history. I think our students learn about who they are...We don't force it on the students but students are really interested. They want to know where they are from, they want to know their roots, and know about their language and history.

Kadene Drummer recognized the various elements needed for teacher preparation:

We have to be the professionals as teachers to make sure that our students are getting prepared. They may not have the goals yet but we have to get them the tools for when they get the goals. Help them to goal set early on. It isn't natural for some populations, some cultures, to set goals. That's a middle class, white thing and we need to realize that. It's not that they can't...it's just that it's done with different terminology, different ways.

Drummer continued with her response to state that students in tribal colleges also need to be made aware of their strengths and made to feel welcomed into the profession and schools. "Letting them know that they are capable, making sure they're prepared, welcome them into the profession...being appreciative of the special skills they bring...and the special knowledge that they might bring as a teacher."

Being welcomed into schools and into the profession was expounded upon by Clarena Brockie who made the following comment in reference to the reason for a lack of Indian teachers:

They need to be welcomed into the school, especially when you just have a few Native American teachers. If they're not welcomed they're going to leave. I can bet you on that, they'll leave. If they don't feel welcomed and they don't feel that there's a need for them they'll leave the school and it'll be like it's always been, the same old, same old.

To help students become comfortable in the schools, Roy Stewart suggested,

...if they went out and did an internship within that institution. They did studies on people who did those [internships] and they are usually successful. They [the students] aren't so culture shocked. There's programs out there and we're using as many as we can at Little Big Horn College.

Similarly, Kadene Drummer added,

I think Denise [Juneau] is going to do something; the understanding from OPI is Native people feel welcomed into the profession. That's what I want. I really do believe that. There's no doubt in my mind they are capable but I don't know for sure that they have always felt welcomed.

In contrast with the need for providing pre-service teachers with field experience in public schools, most participants stated that field experience and student teaching were not typically done in reservation schools. One participant stated,

We had to work on that a little bit especially when they got these [teacher training] grants...I think sometimes the managing teacher didn't want to put them

here [on reservation schools]. I don't know if they thought they shouldn't go back to their own schools or whether they thought they didn't have as much control over it or just out of sheer ignorance... There was a period of time where there weren't enough placements back in these schools... And that's when they had to work pretty hard, and they wrote these grants and they went over to talk to school systems to make sure there was going to be placements for these teachers if they wanted to come here... As a managing teacher if you could have them all in the local system, you don't have near as far to drive to check them out... The students want experience in reservation schools because they want to get a job there because in addition if they do have some school loans these areas are part of the areas that you can earn back their school loans.

Teacher Pay Is an Issue

The most consistent response to all interview questions from the seven participants was that the number one reason why more Native Americans were not going into the teaching profession was teaching salaries. At first, this response appeared generic – it could be stated that most people of any race do not choose teaching because of the salaries. However, the uniqueness of teacher pay for American Indians can be found by examining the responses further. Kadene Drummer stated, "...because if they are of the drive to get a four-year degree, they can make a lot more money doing something else. There are plenty of opportunities for them as program directors; it doubles the income." Carmen Taylor, the executive director of the National Indian School Board Association and the Academic Vice President from Salish Kootenai College supported this issue and commented, "Teaching salaries is an issue. If you're

talking to a student that's uncertain about what they want to do and if they look at...salaries and things... it's certainly not at the top of the list for salaries." Clarena Brockie added,

...the pay is really low for teachers in Montana. We know this, everybody knows this. I think that they need to invest more in teacher's salaries, for sure...If we made it more appealing to them, I'm sure that they'd be more interested to go into teaching.

Roy Stewart built upon the reasons for few Indians choosing teaching professions.

The opportunity wasn't presented to them – the status quo...I think there's other professions that appeal to them. Our biggest enrollment [at Little Big Horn College] is business. I think there's job opportunities there...Usually when I ask the students they say they want to work with kids but they don't see it as a career at the moment.

Research Construct Two: Indian Education by American Indians

The research construct of Indian education by American Indians was included to provide the researcher with insight into the issue of educational ownership. From the review of the literature, the most successful Indian education programs were those that were developed and administered by Native Americans. The interview questions posed for this construct were centered around the traditional practices included in the teaching program, the leadership roles taken to develop a teaching program for Indian students, strengths of Indian students, and the structure of the teacher education program. The themes that emerged from these questions were, "Traditional practices: it's about the

students” “Our students have many strengths” and “Community connections are essential.”

Traditional Practices: It's About the Students

When asked about the traditional tribal practices that were included in the teacher preparation program, all participants were very pragmatic and brief in their responses.

Kadene Drummer stated,

It varies because it has to do with the students. Where I am not Native American, [the students] have to include that and we integrate it throughout the program. It may be musical things. It may be arts. It may be the language. Of course, we have people from different tribes here and so then they are inclusive of that. It may be the games, it may just be the family traditions. Sometimes it's somewhat the religion. And [the students] just blend it in all kinds of ways, whether it be classroom presentations, lesson plans, examples that they're talking about.

In contrast to Kadene Drummer's student directed approach, Roy Stewart stated,

We [the elementary faculty] teach Indian education, and each student has to take a Crow language course. This past year, we had Crow Day, and Parades and Clan Day. One of the things the instructors and I did was like on a Friday, for half a day we have them go along and write about what they see, the traditional colors, the attire. There are Head Start children in the parade and I ask them “How does that make you feel?”

Instilling a sense of pride and identity was a major theme among all tribal colleges; this is true in general for tribal colleges not just in teacher education but in fulfilling the mission of the colleges. Disconfirming evidence of this question was

provided by one participant who did not agree that any traditional practices were included in the program.

Our Students Have Many Strengths

Participants were asked about the strengths of their students as often the students were viewed as the problem (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997). When responding to this question, the emerging theme was that the students had many strengths. Perhaps, the one strength most often noted was that the pre-service teachers were from the reservation, and knew the schools, the cultures, the students, and the families they would be teaching.

Roy Stewart stated,

When they [pre-service teachers] leave here and go on to a four-year, they have a knowledge of culture and an understanding they can work well with the students. We grow up here, live here, die here and so you understand the families, the discipline issues. There's families that have alcoholism, poverty, you grow up with that. So you realize, a non-Crow would probably have a hard time to work with students. They don't see the behind the scenes activity that goes on with kids sometimes. They just see Bob is a bad kid; he's not coming to school... They [tribal college students] understand the environment. When they do come back with that four-year degree, they have that knowledge what they're up against.

Michele Curlee noted that in addition to culturally relevant knowledge, there was a need for multicultural experiences.

Although I do believe that for our future teachers to be really excellent teachers on the reservation, they do need that other cultural experience at some point but it could be fulfilled in a lot of different ways so that there are bridges...we want our

teachers that come back to the reservation or stay here to become teachers to have a full experience of the outer world too, so they can be bridges for their students. The danger of doing everything in house or keeping it totally full circle is then you don't have fully, worldly experiences...you don't want to become a closed society either in the drive to preserve, and help and maintain... you always want to expand your horizons rather than narrow them.

Community Connections Are Essential

A strong theme which emerged from the interviews was the need for teacher education programs to be connected to the community. All seven tribal college mission statements include a component on meeting community needs. For example, at Stone Child College, a guiding principle in their course catalog included, "Collaborate with other institutions and agencies in furthering the interests of the college and community" (Stone Child College, 2010). Michele Curlee spoke to the importance of community connections in education.

How can we make education also be owned by the Cheyennes? Because unless a community owns their educational system, it...can become an instrument of deconstructing of community. And whereas if it's community based, and community involved and community understood with community input, it can be a real builder of community. So, I think that, and we are far from that because I think on reservations you still see the majority of the community, whether it's openly expressed or not, really questions whether the public education is a good thing for the people or not. Until communities are empowered, and I think that can be the real positive thing about American education when it is community

run, but wisely, with people in the community that fully understand how culture and education can complement each other.

Clarena Brockie described her experiences at Fort Belknap College to reach out to the community.

We've gone out in the community to get people involved in the teacher ed program, we've done news releases, we've got the radio station so we've talked about the teacher ed program on the radio to try to get people to take advantage of the opportunity [to enroll in a teacher education program]. Because we don't have a teacher ed program, a four year program at Fort Belknap College but through this [teacher training] grant we can collaborate to provide that service that's really needed in the community. So we are always working on trying to get more Native teachers. Harlem school still doesn't have that many Native teachers, and they should because they have 90% enrollment of Native American students. But, there's more [Indian teachers] now than there's ever been. So we're working with the community, working with the tribe to stress to them the importance of the program.

Research Construct Three: Assimilation and Historical Impacts on Indian Education

The significance of the third research construct was to determine the impacts of the historical and assimilative educational practices in Indian education on the preparation of Indian teachers. To analyze this issue, the interview questions asked the participants to reflect on their thoughts about the historical influences on teacher preparation, the role of culture in the teacher training program, and the concept of two worlds.

Culture Is Really Important

All participants acknowledged that the role of culture in teacher preparation was very important. Clarena Brockie supported this concept by stating,

I think that's who you are. You can't take that away from who they are. I think that students do better if they can identify who they are and to show how important that is and they're getting their education and what that means to what they can carry back to their community as an educator and knowing that it is just not in the classroom, that education, as far as culture, it's how they're brought up. They're learning all the time about their culture.

Additionally, Paula Firemoon the Gear Up Project Coordinator at Fort Peck Community College recognized the need for culturally relevant teaching strategies.

The teacher needs to understand the culture because it's going to give them a better understanding into how the students learn, why the students behave the way they do, why they aren't learning. You know, everything. They need to understand the culture and part of that culture is the socio-economic situation that our students are in.

Carmen Taylor commented on the visible signs of cultural learning, "From the student work that's on the walls when we come to the advisory committee meetings, I can see where there is the integration of tradition and culture from the reservations."

Culture is an important component of all tribal college programs, as reflected in the college mission statements; it is particularly important in teacher education to address state and national standards. Dee Hoyt-Hall, the education department chair at Blackfeet Community College stated,

We all have to integrate Blackfeet culture into all our curriculum. All our classes have to have a part of the Blackfeet cultural tradition. But it's open to how all instructors want to integrate that part into the curriculum that you're teaching. I try to connect with any of the major events, like the Bear River Massacre, Days of the Blackfeet, some of the big events that I try to incorporate that into our curriculum in all classes. Some people say it can't fit into our math classes but we actually found different ways to bring that into our math program also.

Participants expanded upon the concept of culture in greater detail compared to the question on traditional practices. Participants also referred to the issue of culture being "driven by the students" more so when asked about the traditional practices than the question on culture and teacher preparation.

We Know the History, But Now What?

All participants were very knowledgeable about the history of Indian education and were able to describe the past atrocities experienced in Indian education, particularly regarding boarding school experiences. Roy Stewart noted,

One hundred and thirty some years of education that we had to do the European way. There are some good things out of that and some bad things. I think that the Carlisle was the first boarding school and if you look at some of the interviews of those who came out of that, they were taught to live, eat right, set their food - very military. The success wasn't great.

In addition, the participants related the past experiences in Indian education to potential reasons why Indian education suffers today. Dee Hoyt-Hall told the following story and stated her beliefs on the historical impacts of Indian education.

I guess my mother was affected by this; she's 78 years old and she was taken from her twin brother. They were stripped and placed into boarding schools or foster homes and never able to celebrate their birthday. I think they were 5 years old when they were split apart. I think they finally got to celebrate their birthday when they were 65. She says she remembers getting stripped and never getting to see her brother, her braids cut off and so what I see now from that is those grandmothers about my mom's age are raising their great great grand babies to go into the schools. So it's a whole realm of 'is school important?' Well, back then it was a place where you had to go, so we're seeing generations of why we as educators had to get out there and say, 'let the grandparents know that education has come a long way from way back when they had to go...and got punished for speaking their language or using their sign language.' We as educators...have to make sure that the teachers that are going out into the schools will have a better understanding about why little Johnny is going to miss school because his 85 year old grandmother is raising him and to her school is a place where you get disciplined. We have to work on letting them [the grandparents] know that education is something that all children need to get, and it has changed so much and it's not a place where abuse might take place nowadays. In a round about way that with more education out into the public, and working with grandparents, and getting everybody's awareness that education has changed, we as educators have to make sure little Johnny gets there.

There was a recognition among all participants that the history of Indian education impacted education today, but few solutions to the problems were provided other than the aforementioned suggestions by Dee Hoyt-Hall.

Living in Two Worlds? It's Personal

Another related topic to the history of Indian education was the concept of two worlds. The concept of two worlds was not completely supported in the interviews. Some participants argued that there are more than two worlds to navigate, and others postulated that the concept of two worlds does not affirm the value of Native life experiences; Native experiences may be viewed as “less important than” white culture. The descriptions of the lived experiences of those who felt that there were two worlds were very personal. Dee Hoyt-Hall expanded upon her beliefs of two worlds.

This is a really good question for me because when I went to get my master's degree I got approached about Blackfeet education...They asked if I wanted to be a part of a program, that I had to write a little statement to see if I was qualified... I said the reason why I would like to be a part of the doctoral program is because I was raised in two different worlds meaning that my mom was Blackfeet and my dad was white military. Growing up I would be told from my mom, she would say don't look at me when I'm talking to you, and my dad being military, you had to look him in the eye. So I did grow up in two different worlds. My sisters and brothers are enrolled members. I'm not an enrolled member, I'm a descendent. That was kind of hard to take.

Carmen Taylor provided insight into her concept of two worlds and leadership when she was asked how she led in two worlds.

Very carefully. I think it has to be gently. I don't know if that's the best description but in my own mind, I've been around people, who, they're just so adamant about only the Indian side of things, and then I've been around people where they kind of think the whole Indian thing is a bunch of hogwash, and I don't think either is necessarily the way I would go with it...I keep thinking of that word, nurturing gently. They talk about servant leadership and that's how I view leadership. I view it as your being there to serve...I have talked about how I think mothers are sometimes natural leaders because you have to learn to mediate and all those skills, and I think I almost see the female side as being a way to that grandmotherly thing as being important qualities to being able to talk about leadership and dealing with two worlds.

A faculty member from Salish Kootenai College who is responsible for field placements referred to teaching the students to walk in two worlds by valuing the students' cultures, backgrounds, and prior experiences but also instilling the ability to be successful in the public school system.

Disconfirming evidence about the concept of two worlds can be depicted in the description from another participant.

I have a different background and that's probably why I get lost in that question. My background is probably a lot different than a lot of the people who feel like they have to walk in two worlds. I was born off the reservation; I did my early childhood, you know, first through fourth grade off the reservation. I didn't attend a reservation school until I was a senior in high school...I went away and I was actually all the way out in what they call the Mormon placement program.

So I left my home and went and lived with Caucasian people, or white people in a bigger city setting and I grew up. Besides my early formative years, my middle school and high school I spent in a big school system where being Native American was a novelty because everybody was like, you know, it was different. I didn't feel like I walked in two worlds because I kind of like grew up in two worlds. I didn't feel prejudice until I came to the reservation.

Research Construct Four: Networks and Relationships

The fourth research construct was developed to explore the existing and potential relationships that tribal colleges utilized to support the preparation of Indian teachers. The interview questions in this construct focused on the types of partnerships in which tribal colleges engaged, and the strengths and challenges of these partnerships. The importance of this construct became apparent when the researcher bracketed out her professional experiences with various agencies, organizations and institutions that assisted in the development and implementation of the teacher education program at Salish Kootenai College. All tribal colleges have a close relationship and network through such venues as the American Higher Education Consortium. However, a different story exists between the Montana tribal colleges and those institutions within the Montana University System. For example, on the Montana Council of Deans, the only tribal college represented is Salish Kootenai College. Even though all tribal colleges are encouraged to participate on the Dean's Council through a recent amendment in their by-laws, no other tribal colleges have done so.

Partnerships: Purposeful or Convenient?

After reviewing the transcriptions for the fourth research construct, a common theme emerged on how partners were selected for the tribal college teacher education programs. Most participants referred to 2+2 programs (two years are completed as an associate's degree at the tribal college and the last two years are completed at a four-year institution) as a needed component to allow their teacher candidates to continue with their bachelor degree. Roy Stewart stated,

They have a better chance completing a two year degree here and go onto a four year degree there than starting at the four-year. Two years as opposed to four years. Math and biology are out of the way. We prepare them enough so that they know what to expect when they go on to a four-year college. They know the challenges, but they don't have to do all four years there, only two. This motivates them.

However, it appeared that none of the partnerships for 2+2 programs were strategically and purposefully planned, but rather memoranda of agreements were developed and based on factors such as location, availability or knowing someone. Michelle Curlee confirmed this and stated, "We've been in a lot of discussions so actually on our end, we've just been waiting for someone to come along and start working with us to create some new pathways and get students..."

One complication that can arise from partnerships that have not been based on a common vision or plan is related to sustainability. Only one of the programs that needed to partner with a four-year institution had one consistent partnering institution, but rather

most had several potential partners. Dee Hoyt-Hall described the multiple partners with Blackfeet Community College.

We do have articulation agreements with most of the Montana universities as far as once they leave here with the AA degrees, they accept our AA's straight across when they go into their program...I try to build networking and communication with all the education departments in elementary throughout the Montana universities and tribal colleges.

Not all participants felt that the partnering institutions were highly supportive of the tribal programs and students. Clarena Brockie expressed her experiences.

The administration [of the four year institution] says, "yes, we can do this cohort" but faculty is saying, "we're overloaded. They [the administrators] want us to VisionNet, they want us to do all this other stuff but we're not getting paid, we're overworked." So they are dragging their feet...we sure have a hard time getting our transcripts evaluated, getting our individual plans, tracking our students...The turnaround time was really slow and they had internal problems. I can't really say they didn't want to work with us. I think it was internal issues they had with themselves but I wish they would have told us about it earlier.

Even though strategic planning was not consistently conducted, it was something desired as noted by Michelle Curlee. "So I would really like us to build a vision and then network and have multiple pathways for our students. That's kind of where I'm at and it's just a beginning."

Participants mentioned the strengths from the partnering institutions that were also important to note. Kadene Drummer described her experiences.

We have a very strong relationship with Northern...And we have a Native American liaison person there...and so if we have any paperwork type problems or issues with teachers, we go through her rather than the teacher directly maybe. And the students can go to her as a counselor but then I also have my own personal bridge with the teacher education department...and their administration as well as several administrators here.

Roy Stewart provided the following, “As far as working, we do a lot of collaboration with MSU Billings as far as the transfer. They have scholarships there. They recruit our students and are good at coming back with feedback and telling us how some of our students are doing.” Roy added, “The one thing that the state of Montana has done that helps students go on to a four-year institution is the Native American fee waiver. The Big Sky Teacher Program [a teacher training grant from the U. S Office of Indian Education] pays their tuition and offers a stipend.” Paula Firemoon spoke about the strengths of the program at Rocky Mountain College. “..the curriculum is standards-based, state-based. It meets the requirements...the people at Rocky were very up to date. They’re very up to date as far as understanding what teacher qualifications are.”

We Are Kind of Weak on Data

When asked about data and program assessment, most participants responded similarly to Michele Curlee.

Well, we are sadly lacking...and that’s because we haven’t really tracked. The universities know how our students do once they get there but we really don’t know. We don’t have any firm data other than anecdotal like, ‘oh did you hear so and so is back at Busbee now?’

Similarly, Kadene Drummer stated,

We try to track those going to Northern and track that, but our data collection stuff seems to get dropped and not be complete. We do a good job in some areas and not always a complete job; it's not consistent.

Drummer did see the need for student assessment.

We have a whole assessment plan and I'm kind of an assessment fruitcake. I've been doing it for about 15 years and went to a lot of training and I am big into assessment because I think it helps me be a better teacher and I need to know when I go to do articulations, and I need to know what they [students] know and what they don't know.

Paula Firemoon was cognizant of the data collected through such sources as the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) that is comprised of nine surveys covering student, personnel and financial data and is collected during three separate periods. However, she noted that "it's information, it's not data that I have."

Roy Stewart from Little Big Horn College concurred with Paula Firemoon's statement and stated, "I'd like to get graduate rates. I have an idea. The bulk go to MSU Billings. Some go to Rocky and a few to Bozeman."

The exception to this data discrepancy was Salish Kootenai College, with a four-year degree. SKC did gather, analyze and report data from several sources and for various reasons; however, the most significant reason for data analysis was for accreditation purposes. Program assessment data provided information for SKC and other stakeholders on program strengths and needs, and was gathered through sources such as course evaluations, employer surveys, student assessments, and an annual

Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats Analysis (SWOT). A comprehensive assessment plan was developed at SKC for the purpose of meeting accreditation standards, but also provided the program staff and leaders with information on how the program and teacher candidates were functioning. Furthermore, such data was imperative when seeking funding or other resources. A lack of data could be a contributing factor to the inconsistent resources provided to tribal colleges in support of teacher training. One type of data that Salish Kootenai College did not yet collect concerned the students who transferred from another tribal college. These students were not tracked separately so there was no data on how well these students did as a group once they became accepted into SKC's teacher education program.

Where Are the Support and the Leadership?

One common theme which emerged among all participants was the critical need for various forms of support for the programs and students. However, all participants spoke to the inconsistent and scarcity of resources, leadership and financial support for the students and the programs. Dee Hoyt-Hall spoke of such program support. "Funding is very important, being able to take our programs and say hey we have the funding to back this up." Additionally, Roy Stewart commented on the need for student support.

Students are facing so many financial aid issues and people blow you off and they don't exactly tell you your financial aid is there for you. And that's what they depend on: money. I did a survey one time with the MSU-Billings dean, and that was the number one issue-limited funds...it also showed child care would be an issue when they transferred to a four year college. The extended family, grandma,

siblings, cousins, all play a role in helping students here at Little Big Horn College take care of their children.

Carmen Taylor suggested that loan forgiveness programs could be a financial support for the students. Clarena Brockie also noted that, “We need to make sure they have enough funding to get through the program because I am finding that students who are possible participants – they don’t want to get into the program because it’s not funded.”

All of the tribal colleges had at some time applied for and received funding from the U.S. Office of Indian Education Professional Development Grants. In fact, quite possibly, all of the Montana tribal college teacher preparation programs were initiated with funding from this source. One of the purposes of these grants was to provide financial support for pre-service teachers who are able graduate within two to three years with a bachelor’s degree in education. The grants have provided much needed fiscal support for the students and teacher training programs, but they are limited to four years, with the fourth year supporting graduates in their induction year of teaching. After the end of the project, the college must reapply for funding. However, the inconsistent nature of applying every three to four years in a competitive funding cycle does not allow the institutions or partnerships to become self-sustaining. Dee Hoyt-Hall described her experiences with the teacher training grants.

You know with grants, the quarterly reports, and you have to make sure the grants are running efficiently. I think ...it wasn’t a priority for the new leaders coming in. They wanted to look at the campus. We just ended up losing the grant and the students suffered.

None of the participants referred to the agencies or organizations at the state level that could provide support or leadership such as the Montana Office of Public Instruction, other than references to the Indian Education for All Act. Carmen Taylor suggested that funding from the Indian Education for All Act could be used to support colleges and universities.

...the funding, it's at the K-12 level. It would be nice if there was more funding to help out the colleges and universities. Create some of those programs and resources that they could use to be part of the teacher training programs.

The apparently haphazard implementation of Indian Education for All at the tribal college level was highlighted by the comments from Michele Curlee.

We haven't really been able to bring it back full circle into that, and that has more to do with the fact that we don't have a full time faculty member devoted to teacher education. We need a department before we can get consistent.

One possible reason for the lack of participation by tribal colleges on councils such as the Council of Deans or higher education consortiums may be that there is not a designated teacher education leader. Most programs had a Project Director or Coordinator to fulfill grant responsibilities; however, when the funding ended, so did the position in many cases. The need for educational leadership was reflected in the situation depicted by one participant.

I was actually one of the 20 participants and the individual who was in charge of the teacher grant at that time was elected to our tribal executive board...And as a result they needed someone who could just oversee the students for a while. So, for the last 6 months of the grant I kind of filled those shoes. I wasn't the

traditional college student and in fact this was a change of life career change, mid life career change. And I had worked in administration of previous grants and had worked in areas of finance and bookkeeping and one day I just decided I wanted to go back to college at the age of 49...I was somewhat of the mother hen of the teachers and I was always there advising them and encouraging them and making sure everyone did their assignments. I kind of took on a leadership role inside of the teacher's trainee cohort. So then when there were six months to finish on the grant...I didn't have any problem doing the administration of it; I was more or less the education advisor for the education students.

This participant's experience also indicates the strengths of, and the need for, student leaders within the teacher preparation programs.

Summary

The analysis of data conducted to examine tribal college leaders' experiences with the phenomenon of the lack of Indian teachers in Montana provided the researcher with meaningful insights regarding the issues of preparing and supporting Indian teacher candidates. The themes that emerged from the interviews afforded the researcher with the ability to make conclusions and recommendations for educational leaders and future researchers. It was hoped that the insights from this study could inform educational leaders in Montana on potential, efficacious means to improving the conditions that will encourage more Indian teachers who in turn can improve the K-12 educational success rate for Indian youth.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The focus of this research was to explore the phenomenon of the lack of Indian teachers in Montana through the described experiences of tribal college leaders who prepare Indian teacher candidates. Meaningful themes emerged from the data analysis that the researcher synthesized into the following recommendations for educational leaders and implications for further research.

Discussion

The review of literature provided the researcher with research constructs that were utilized throughout the study. The constructs allowed the researcher to explore the research question in depth, related the research back to the literature review, and provided a structure and context in order to fully address the research question and subquestions.

Themes emerged from the data within each research construct as follows:

Research Construct	Themes
Education as a moral obligation and legal imperative	Being prepared and welcomed Teacher pay is an issue
Indian education by American Indians:	Traditional practices: it's about the students Our students have many strengths Community connections are essential
Assimilation and the historical impacts of Indian education	Culture is really important We know the history, but now what Living in two worlds? It's personal
Partnerships, networks and relationships	Partnerships: purposeful or convenient We are kinda weak on data Where are the support and leadership?

The Themes and Phenomenon Related to the Research Question

The research question guiding this study was: How do leaders in teacher education from Montana's tribal colleges describe their experiences in preparing Native pre-service teachers as perceived through the lens of the phenomenon of shortages of Indian teachers? From this question, two subquestions further refined the scope of this study: (a) What factors, if any, created barriers for Native American tribal college pre-service teachers; (b) What factors, if any, created success for Native American tribal college pre-service teachers? The following narrative describes the researcher's analysis of the research question in the context of the research constructs.

Construct One: Education Is a Moral Obligation and Legal Imperative

In order for the state of Montana to meet its moral and legal obligations, American Indian students need to be provided with a quality education. A quality education for these students includes opportunities to be educated by teachers who are from their cultures, as the research on Indian education indicates that this is how American Indian students learn best. Therefore, efforts to provide more Indian teachers is a moral and legal obligation.

When describing their experiences in preparing Indian pre-service teachers, the participants stated that the teacher candidates needed to be both prepared for their work as a future teacher with the knowledge and skills, and also welcomed into the profession and the schools in which they may be employed. Therefore, these issues were seen as two related and critical factors to be addressed to ensure pre-service teacher success. Welcoming the teacher candidates mainly involved the ability for the students to be able to do their field experience and student teaching on reservation schools. It also included the

attitudes of school leaders, on and off the reservations, who employ and create a supportive environment for Indian teachers.

The preparation for successful teacher candidates included both academic content and cultural knowledge. The ability to master content knowledge in some subjects was a challenge, partly as a result of the open admission policies at tribal colleges.

Remediation of skills was often needed for those students who had low skills in reading, writing or mathematics; such skill building is a part of the tribal college experience and may be one reason why tribal colleges have a high graduation rate. Preparation for the transfer to a four-year program was also seen as a needed skill.

Cultural knowledge was the teacher candidates' strength; the candidates knew the communities, cultures, families and situations in which they would be working. This knowledge was viewed as essential to develop empathy for students and families, and to have skills in modifying teaching strategies while still having high expectations.

A strong theme that emerged from the data was the need for field experience in reservation schools. Although participants were not clear why students were not typically allowed or encouraged to do either field work or student teaching in reservation schools, it was seen as an important factor that could increase the students' skills in teaching in reservation schools, and would provide a way for students to determine the suitability for a career in teaching.

It was also recorded that teacher candidates needed to be welcomed into the profession when seeking employment. All participants recognized the dire need for more Indian teachers, and stated that Indian teachers fulfill an important role in educating Indian students and providing positive role models!

A final factor that could encourage more Indian teachers related to the pay of teachers and the financial support of Indian teacher candidates. Many Indian students who graduate with a four-year degree are able to earn higher wages in places other than public schools. Many become program directors, curriculum developers, or other professionals for the tribes. Therefore, one factor that may open the door to more Native Americans in teaching would be to increase the salaries and the financial support for postsecondary education. This finding also suggested another issue, that of guidance or advising. Students needed to be well advised regarding salary comparisons before committing to teacher education. In addition, they needed opportunities to examine whether their choice for becoming an educator is founded on principles other than financial.

Indian Education by American Indians

When asked about issues of Indian education by American Indians, the participants agreed that the need for more Indian teachers was critical. However, when asked about the roles and actions that the leaders within their college took to develop a teacher training program, many were unsure of the specifics, and all mentioned grant funding. Nothing was strategically planned. Carmen Taylor discussed the meetings and concerns that the tribal college leaders at SKC voiced: would there be jobs for the students, would they be welcomed into the schools, and where would they house such a program. These discussions continued until grant funding was applied for and received. SKC was successful in using the grant funds and the partnership with The University of Montana Western to develop and accredit its own elementary education program. However, it was the strong leadership from President Dr. Joseph McDonald who inspired

and led others at the SKC towards the development of the teacher training program. Institutional leadership was important in reducing potential barriers for pre-service teacher success.

Without strong leaders who are knowledgeable and responsive to Indian education creating a vision, developing action plans, and delegating appropriate resources for a teacher training program, little can be done to educate and graduate more Indian teachers from tribal colleges. Furthermore, as stated by Roy Stewart and others, without tribal colleges providing at least the first two years of the teacher program, the success of Indian pre-service teachers would be even less. This was due in part to the remediation of skills provided by tribal colleges, and the fact that the students can get their first two years of general education requirements completed while living on their home reservation. It was also due to students' connections to the community and to their families who were a source of support. It was mentioned in the interviews that many teacher candidates chose teaching because they were family oriented. These students had strong family ties, responsibilities, and could not pack up and leave their families for an extended period of time.

The community connections served the students well as they could discern who they would be teaching. Such community ties could also be viewed as a resource to build community capacity. Teacher candidates brought their skills, knowledge and talents to the schools, and were a valuable resource for the K-12 students and community.

It was also noted that the strengths of the pre-service teachers needed to be highlighted. The teacher candidates needed verification that they were valued, capable, and contributed to the learning community. The building of one's confidence and

abilities in tandem was a factor that could increase a teacher candidate's potential for success.

Lastly, the data analysis supported previous research that Native Americans teaching Native students provided a large missing piece to providing quality education. In other words, the very presence of Native teachers provided a cultural form of approval of education.

Assimilation and Historical Impacts

Participants were well versed in the history of Indian education, but few were able to describe how the history impacted their teaching training program or today's education of Indian youth in general. Most stated that education was not a positive thing for Indian students in the past but they were not sure how to move beyond this. One participant noted that there needed to be more communication about education today to inform the parents, grandparents and great grandparents that education is not today what it was in the past. However, there were no strategies on how to accomplish this goal other than word of mouth. There was some recognition of the gains made in the tribes having some influence over the education of their youth. However, until there is more Indian ownership in education through school boards, administration, and staffing, the history of Indian education continues to influence peoples' perceptions. The value of Montana having a state level superintendent of schools who is Native American was recognized as a huge milestone.

Another perceived factor for increasing teacher candidate success was the need for a culturally responsive education that is balanced with the demands and requirements for public education teaching and licensure. Salish Kootenai College provided an

example of how faculty members address the issue of ensuring that teacher candidates maintain their traditional, cultural lives while being successful in the culture of the schools. This work is focused on teaching professional dispositions that include professional attire and behavior, communication skills, and relationship-based abilities such as conflict resolution. These skills are not meant to diminish the cultural knowledge or responsibilities of the students, but are intended to teach needed skills for success for those students who may be foreign to such dispositions.

Networks and Relationships

One of the biggest programmatic factors indicated in the data to increase the success of more Indian teacher candidates was related to the partnerships and support of the teacher training programs at tribal colleges. Partnerships between tribal colleges and four-year institutions were primarily based on convenience with little strategic planning conducted beforehand. Grant funding became the “tail wagging the dog.” Funding was needed for the support of the program and students, but the grants did not allow time for strategic plans to be developed nor did they allow for sustainability of the programs. Suggestions emerged from the data that highlighted potential factors for the success of future partnerships and memoranda of agreements between tribal and non-tribal institutions. Student and program funding was one important factor. Students needed financial support for college tuition, childcare, transportation, books, and other educational costs. Programs needed educational resources, travel funds, professional fees, and a full time education chair.

Another factor for program partnership success was active recruitment for Indian teacher candidates done collaboratively between the tribal college and the partnering

four-year institution. The transfer of courses and course equivalencies needed to be conducted prior to the partnership. Students needed to be tracked by both institutions. Open and ongoing communication was critical regarding state and licensure requirements, and student issues. The tribal colleges wanted to know how the students were doing at the four-year institution. The tracking was conducted in the form of student narratives and anecdotes, but also needed to be done quantitatively. The collection and analysis of student and program data was critical for Salish Kootenai College. Pre-service teachers from the other tribal colleges were not tracked upon graduation from the tribal college, nor when they transferred to the four-year institution, upon graduation at the four-year and during the first year of employment. Additionally, data needed to be gathered on the teacher candidates at multiple points in order to, not only assess student growth and skills, but to inform the programs of their effectiveness. The Montana Office of Public Instruction was one suggested entity that could assist with the data process.

Conclusions

The following five conclusions summarize and highlight the researcher's synthesis of the data analysis: (a) there still exists a need among various educational and community entities to recognize the value of Indian teachers, and to allocate financial support for this valued resource through teaching salaries, and through various forms of postsecondary aid such as grants, scholarships, and stipends; (b) tribal colleges do not typically receive adequate funding or state support for their teacher education programs; (c) there is a perception that Indian teacher candidates are not always welcomed into schools for field work or the teaching profession in general; (d) there is a greater need for

leadership from multiple sources to support the preparation of Indian pre-service teachers; and (e) tribal college teacher preparation programs often work with limited partnerships that are based on convenience.

Although the interview questions were created and posed without intended bias, the researcher anticipated that the responses would be both theoretical and practical. However, after reviewing the data, the researcher concluded that the responses were very much bound in practicality. Therefore, the recommendations that the researcher drew from the concluding statements were also based on pragmatic actions that leaders and future researchers can implement to more fully understand and make needed changes to provide an efficacious educational system for all of Montana's students.

Recommendations

Based on the themes that emerged from the data analysis and the synthesis of these themes into practical applications, the researcher made the following recommendations.

1. There needs to be a greater recognition throughout various educational entities regarding the value of Indian teachers with strategic plans based on quantitative and qualitative data to address the need for more Indian teachers.
2. There needs to be a greater recognition of, and coordinated support for, the role that tribal colleges and four-year institutions play in the teacher training process.
3. Indian teacher candidates need to be welcomed into the teaching profession through well-planned, comprehensive, educational, and professional activities, and with financial support during the teacher education program and employment.

4. There needs to be a more inclusive leadership composition for Indian pre-service teachers.
5. Tribal college teacher preparation programs need to network with one another in addition to partnering with non-tribal institutions.

Tribal colleges play a vital role in the post-secondary education of Indian students, as indicated in the research. However, many tribal colleges face multiple challenges, including funding, that preclude them from being even more successful. Many times, the need for funding drives program development, partnerships and leadership. The most consistently used funding source for teacher preparation at the tribal college level is through the U. S. Office of Indian Education Professional Development grants that do not allow the programs to be sustainable. A recommendation needs to be made to Office of Indian Education regarding their funding cycles that do not allow students time to graduate. Typically, complications arise in the students' lives that interfere with program completion in the designated time frame. All tribal college teacher preparation programs in Montana need a consistent department with a designated leader, and consistent funding can assist with this need. One of the biggest obstacles for tribal college participation on teacher preparation councils was the lack of a consistent or designated person. Also the lack of consistency created challenges for the teacher candidates.

All tribal college teacher education programs should be fully funded in order to strategically recruit, educate, graduate, and induct more future, highly qualified Indian teachers. Support for tribal college teacher preparation programs also needs to occur in ways other than fiscal. Participants in this study acknowledged the benefits of Indian

Education for All, but felt its implementation was often haphazard. Consistent and strategic support or resources from the Indian Education for All Department at the Montana Office of Public Instruction could be used to build the capacity of the teacher preparation programs at the tribal college level.

Another recommendation from this dissertation is the need to more openly welcome Indian pre-service teachers into the schools and the teaching profession by providing field placements in reservation schools. Teacher candidates need to be able to do their field experiences early in their programs to determine the suitability and vocational interest in a teaching career, and to gain hands-on experiences and build skills in working with students. They need to learn about the community resources, and be able to student teach in schools in which they will be eventually teaching. Additionally, such activities need to be well planned and strategically implemented to ensure that field placements work for students, the schools, and the colleges.

Additionally, the researcher recommends involving leaders at varying levels to support Indian teacher candidates. Leadership from tribal college presidents is essential, as these leaders are in a key position to assist with the creation of the vision, mission and goals of the teacher preparation program, and delegating adequate resources needed for its successful implementation. Leadership is also essential at the department level. Many times, the tribal college teacher education program is not included in meetings or functions at the state level as there is no one at the college or in the department to invite other than an administrator who fills many roles and does not always have the time to devote to teacher education. Leadership at the student level is also critical. For Indian education to become more fully owned by Indians, more Indian leaders need to be

educated for and welcomed into such leadership positions. Student leaders can also build bridges of support for those students who may be struggling or facing challenges.

The final recommendation from this research is to create a network of support from various agencies and institutions for tribal college teacher preparation programs. Tribal colleges first need to network with each other, through potential organizations such as the Montana Indian Education Association or the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC). The challenges that tribal colleges and tribal college teacher candidates face can be initially addressed through such networking. Tribal colleges can support one another in teacher preparation as they do for other purposes.

Furthermore, tribal colleges need to network through existing systems in the state such as the Montana Council of Deans or the Higher Education Consortiums. SKC needs to take a leadership role to assist with this as this institution can be a bridge between the tribal colleges and the non-tribal institutions and organizations.

Partnerships between tribal colleges and four-year institutions need to be developed purposefully and strategically, and implemented with student and program data informing both parties. Data needs to be gathered and analyzed at all levels: at the university or four-year institutional level and at the tribal college level. Both need to collect data on student numbers to better gain a sense of how many students are graduating, transferring and becoming employed and where they are becoming employed.

Data is also needed for measuring program effectiveness. Teacher programs at the tribal college level need to identify program outcomes, and develop systems for measuring the outcomes for student learning and for program effectiveness. In 2010, Dr. Sheila Stearns, Commissioner of Higher Education in Montana provided a directive to

the Montana Council of Deans to track data on those students who transfer to the four-year program from a tribal or community college. Dr. Stearns' vision supported the need for better tracking of students who come to four-year programs or institutions as this is not the current practice, and addressed the state initiative for a comprehensive P-20 system of education in Montana.

Implications for Further Research

The phenomenon of the shortages of Indian teachers in Montana would benefit from quantitative and qualitative research that explores the experiences of Native American teachers, and the success these teachers are having in PreK – 12 schools. Although there is ample research on the benefits of education that is culturally relevant and delivered by an individual who is from one's own ethnicity or background, there still exist barriers to the implementation of such research. Such research conducted within Montana could provide educational leaders with data on Native teachers' preparation, career goals, and strengths and challenges.

In addition, the data on student transfers from two-year to four-year institutions should be analyzed from the perspective illuminated by this phenomenon after the first year of collection and every year thereafter. Data is valuable only to the degree it is analyzed; therefore, an annual analysis would encourage the collection and refinement of the appropriate data. These data can serve to make timely improvements and adjustments to the strategies created to increase the number and quality of Indian educators. Ongoing annual work with these data would also keep the state's attention focused on its most serious educational need, improving the quality of American Indian education. If the goal in Montana is to address the achievement gap between Indian and non-Indian students,

one viable means to do so is to encourage more Indian teachers. Therefore, the educational leaders in our state need to gather and analyze data, provide leadership, and allocate resources to ensure that more qualified, licensed Indian teachers are able to enter the teaching profession. We cannot continue to accept the status quo, and then expect the performance of schools and students to improve.

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APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

STUDY TITLE

A mixed method study of the factors pertaining to shortages of Native American teachers that have the capacity to inform Montana's Educational Leaders on possible efficacious means to improving educational success for American Indian students.

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Special Instructions to Participants

This study may contain words that are new to you. If you read or hear any words that you are not familiar with, please ask the researcher who will be interviewing you to explain them to you.

Purpose

You are being asked to participate in a research study examining what factors have the capacity to inform educational leaders on the factors that can lead to more Native Americans teachers.

You have been chosen for this study as you have insight into educational issues facing Indian students and prospective Indian teachers from a Montana tribal college perspective.

Procedures

Thank you for agreeing to a face to face interview with me. This interview will take about one hour and will be audiotaped. I will also be taking notes as you answer questions.

You will be asked a variety of questions about Indian teacher education, including Indian culture in post-secondary programs, and the impact of assimilation on Indian education.

A detailed analysis will be done with the data provided by your interview.

After the interview, you may choose to provide the researcher with documents regarding your work, such as college catalogs, course schedules, or general program information.

You will need to sign the consent form (attached) in order to participate in this study. You will sign one form that you may keep and one form that I will keep.

Risks/Discomforts

Although no risks or discomforts are anticipated, answering the research questions may cause you to think of feelings that may make you sad or upset. If this happens, you may stop the interview and take a break. The interview can proceed when you feel comfortable. If you wish to terminate the interview completely, you may do so with no negative consequences. You will be asked if the researcher can use the information that you provided up to this point or if you wish to withdraw completely from the study and not allow the researcher to use your information. If this happens, the researcher will ask if you can provide the names of other individuals who may be able to complete the interview.

Benefits

Your contribution to the study may assist the field of Indian education, particularly post-secondary and teacher education. You will also receive a copy of the study once it is completed. A small gift, such as a beaded key chain will be provided as a token of appreciation.

Confidentiality

Your identity (name, position and affiliated tribal college) will be used in my findings unless you specifically request otherwise.

Your data and information will be released only with your written consent. If you agree, I will use quotations from the interview in my research findings.

You will have the opportunity to review any quotations and qualitative data before my final draft.

If you wish that your interview and identity remain confidential, only the researcher and dissertation chair will have access to the locked files that connect your name or institution with the data. Your signed consent form will be locked and kept separately from the data.

The audiotape of the interview will be transcribed by the researcher or a professional hired transcriptionist. The tape will be erased after the study has been approved. The transcriptionist will sign a statement guaranteeing confidentiality.

Compensation for Injury

Although only minimal risks are foreseen in taking part of this study, the following liability statement is required on all University of Montana forms to inform and protect you.

In the event that you are injured as a result of this research, you should individually seek appropriate medical treatment. If the injury is caused by the negligence of The University or any of its employees, you may be entitled to reimbursement or compensation pursuant to the Comprehensive State Insurance Plan established by the Department of Admission under the authority of M.C.A. Title 2, Chapter 9. In the event of a claim for such injury further information may be obtained from The University's

Claims representative or University Legal Counsel. (Reviewed by University Legal Counsel, July, 6, 1993).

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal

Your decision to take part in this research is entirely voluntary.

You may refuse to take part or you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are normally entitled.

If you choose to withdraw, you may do so at any time.

You may also choose not to answer any questions during the interview.

Questions

If you have any questions about the research now or in the future, you may contact Cindy O'Dell at 406-275-4752 or Dr. John Matt, my dissertation chair, at 406-243-5610.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Chair of the IRB through The University of Montana Research Office at 406-243-6670.

Participant's Statement of Consent

I have read the above description of the research study. I have been informed of the risks and benefits involved, and all my questions have been satisfactorily answered. Furthermore, I have been assured that any future questions that I have will also be answered by the research team. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study. I understand that I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Printed Name of
Participant: _____

Participant's
Signature: _____

Date: _____

RELEASE FORM

Permission to use quotations

The purpose of this form is to secure permission to use quotations from the interview conducted as part of a research study on the factors that can inform educational leaders in Montana on the efficacious factors, if any, that can improve educational success for American Indian students conducted by Cindy O'Dell. The undersigned (participant of the study and originator or the quotation) hereby grants permission for Cindy O'Dell to utilize quotations by the undersigned to be reported in her research study.

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Form: A mixed method study of the factors pertaining to shortages of Native American teachers that have the capacity to inform Montana's Educational Leaders on possible efficacious means to improving educational success for American Indian students.

Date: _____ Time: _____ Male: _____ Female: _____

Institution: _____ Ethnicity: _____

Position: _____ Longevity: _____

Opening Statements:

Thank you for agreeing to take time from your busy schedule to participate in this research study. There are a few things that I would like to make sure you understand before we get started.

- I will be asking you some general questions and writing notes as we proceed. You will also be audiotaped during the interview.
- If you provide permission, I will be using your name, position and institution in my dissertation.
- No direct quotes from you will be used in the study without your prior permission. When quoted, your identity, location, and place of employment will remain confidential unless you give me permission to use them.
- If you hear any terms during the interview that you would like to have defined, please let me know.
- There are no correct answers to the questions that I will be asking you. What is important are your thoughts, feelings and experiences. The intent is to hear your thoughts, feelings and experiences, not to make judgments on your responses.
- You may withdraw or terminate the interview at anytime. You may also choose not to answer any particular question.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Begin by telling me about your position and work at _____.
2. Tell me how your teacher training program started and how you became involved in it.
3. What traditional practices of your tribe(s) are included in your teacher education programs?
4. How would you describe the strengths of the students in your teacher training program?
5. How would you describe the curriculum, courses and assessment procedures of your teacher training program?
6. How has the history of Indian education impacted the education of Native students today, and what are the implications for teacher training?
7. How do you feel about the concept of “two worlds?”
8. What policies or procedures do you use to assist your students in navigating “two worlds?”
9. How do you lead in each?
10. What is your philosophy about the role of culture in teacher education?
11. What role have the leaders in your institution taken in developing teacher training programs for tribal members?
12. What networks and relationships have you developed to assist you in your work in preparing teachers?
13. What data do you collect on your teacher candidates, and how do you use this data?
14. What are the strengths and challenges of your current relationships with non-tribal organizations or institutions?
15. What is needed from the leaders in those agencies to increase the number of Indian teachers in Montana?
16. What is one thing that if it could be changed or implemented, would open the teaching profession to more Native Americans?
17. How has the Indian Education for All Act assisted your teacher training program?
18. Why aren't more Indians going into the teaching profession?
19. Is there anything else that you would like for me to know about you, your program, your institution or your students?

APPENDIX B

PEER REVIEW



Salish Kootenai College

P.O. Box 70
Pablo, MT 59855
Ph. (406) 275-4800
Fax (406) 275-4801



April 20, 2010

Dr. John Matt & Dissertation Committee of Cindy O'Dell
The University of Montana
32 Campus Drive
Missoula, MT 59812

Dr. Matt & Committee Members:

It has been my pleasure to work with Cindy O'Dell as a peer reviewer for her dissertation, *An Investigation of the Phenomenon of Shortages of Indian Teachers as Described by Tribal College Leaders in Teacher Preparation*. I independently coded Ms. O'Dell's transcripts, and we met several times to discuss the coding structure. We discussed the ways in which her coding structure supported or contradicted her constructs, as well as the meaning of the themes that emerged from the coding and analysis of her transcripts. I believe she has presented appropriate codes, themes and structure of the data.

I also met with Ms. O'Dell to discuss the findings of her study in light of the importance of her topic to the success of tribal college teacher preparation programs. I encouraged her to further emphasize the important findings of her study, including issues at the program, institutional, and state levels.

Ms. O'Dell's research provides a significant contribution to understanding of the problem of lack of American Indian educators in Montana's K-12 education system. I hope to see the discussion and possible implementation of the recommendations that resulted from her work.

Sincerely,

Stacey Sherwin, PhD, RN
Office of Institutional Research
Salish Kootenai College