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Attitudes Toward Higher Education And Acculturation Amongst Native American College Students

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ATTITUDES TOWARD HIGHER EDUCATION AND
ACCULTURATION AMONGST NATIVE AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

by

Darlene Marie Wilcox
Master of Education, Montana State University, 1986

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the University of North Dakota
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Grand Forks, North Dakota
May
1999
This dissertation, submitted by Darlene Marie Wilcox in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

(Chairperson)

[Signatures]

This dissertation meets the standards for appearance, conforms to the style and format requirements of the Graduate School of the University of North Dakota, and is hereby approved.

Dean of the Graduate School

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DEDICATION

To the ones that gave me life:

Tunka sila Wakan Tanka
Grandfather, the Great Spirit
"The Creator"

My parents:

William (Billy) Wilcox
and

Lucille (Red Willow) Wilcox
ABSTRACT

This study was designed to investigate attitudes and acculturation levels at a tribal community college to see if they differ from those at a four year state institution. In this study, the NACSAS (Native American College Student Attitudes Scale), and the NPBI (Northern Plains Bicultural Inventory) were administered to Native American college students at both types of colleges.

Results show that there were significant differences between the schools on the subscale of the NPBI, in the "European American Cultural Identification" (EACI) category, and on the NACSAS, on the "Perceived Racism" category. There were more students classified in EACI subscale at the four year state college than the tribal community college. On the Perceived Racism subscale the tribal community college students scored lower than the four year state college students as hypothesized. On the "College Enthusiasm scale on the NACSAS, the difference was not significant. There were more students at the tribal community college who were classified as being Traditional and Marginal than at the four year state college. In the Bicultural category, there are more students at the four year state college than at the tribal community college.
The study suggests that Perceived Racism and level of acculturation are important factors to consider when looking at retention and attrition rates of Native American college students, and these are important factors to consider for future studies.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The pursuit of higher education has been very challenging for Native American college students and has resulted in a variety of conflicting issues for both students and academic institutions. The Native American college student encounters cultural, educational and racial problems that the average non-Native American college student does not. Higher educational institutions with Native American students have to deal with students who are typically: (a) racially and culturally different from the majority culture, other minorities, and other Native Americans, and (b) often financially and educationally disadvantaged (McDonald, 1990).

Overcoming cultural barriers to advanced education is very difficult for many Native American college students. Historically, many of these students come from families or tribes who have suffered tremendous cultural, spiritual, social, emotional and economic loss. These losses are intergenerational and are continued in the lives of the Native American college students today. These college students come from communities where there are disproportionate levels of violence, alcoholism, child abuse
and neglect, and other symptoms of distressed families. These problems are on the rise and becoming the norm in some communities.

From 1979-1992, 4,718 American Indians and Alaskan Natives (Native Americans) who resided on or near reservations died from violence—2,324 from homicides and 2,394 from the suicides. During this 14 year period, the overall homicide rate for Native Americans was about 2.0 times higher, and suicide rate was about 1.5 times higher than the U.S. National rate. Native Americans residing in the southwestern United States, northern Rocky Mountain and Plains states, and Alaska had the highest rates of homicide and suicide (www.cdc.gov/ncipc/natam.htm, 1999).

These students also come from diverse tribal nations that are located either in rural or urban communities. The diversity of Native communities, as well as the great contrast between the urban and rural circumstances of Native people, makes it difficult to generalize the reasons for the high drop out rate of Native American students. Native Americans are the most under represented minority group in terms of college success in the United States (NCES, 1990). These students drop out of college at an average rate of 80-85 percent nationwide (Astin, 1982). This attrition rate is higher than for any other minority group, and much higher than that of the majority culture (NCES, 1990).
According to a recent study, 25.4 percent of Native high school students who should have graduated in 1992 dropped out of school—the highest percentage of all racial and ethnic groups in the U.S. (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1994, p. 34). The numbers have improved in the recent years for Native American college students with the establishment of tribal community colleges and different Native American support organizations at the state universities.

High rates of attrition and low levels of attainment convinced college administrators that some form of academic intervention was necessary (Cross, 1983; Friedlander, 1982; Kulik, Kulik & Shwalb, 1983). To reverse the attrition and attainment trends, administrators provided various tutorial services and summer high school-to-college transition programs for minority students.

Some of these programs are well known to Native Americans. The "Indians into Medicine" (INMED) and "Indians into Psychology Doctoral program" (InPsy.D) programs at the University of North Dakota (UND), Grand Forks, North Dakota are known for their support of Native American medical doctors, psychologists, nurses, and other health professions. The UND INMED program has graduated more Native American doctors out of its program than any other program in the nation. It also has a summer high-to-college transition program. There are various other programs such as
this on many campuses across the nation. However, the numbers of Native American college students attaining advanced degrees is still low. For example, in the field of psychology, very few Native American (Indian) psychologists have completed doctoral level training in the United States. LaFromboise et al. (1996) suggests that the ratio of American Indian psychologists to American Indians is 1:8333, approximately one-fourth the ratio of majority culture psychologists to majority culture members (1:2213). The percentage of female American Indians completing a Ph.D. is almost negligible.

Another source, the Directory of Ethnic Minority Human Resources in Psychology (American Psychological Association, 1990) indicated that in 1990 there were only 22 American Indian women holding doctoral degrees and working in various facets of mental health. The American Psychological Association (APA) 1991 membership survey reported 39 women out of 110 American Indian members (American Psychological Association, 1991). Unfortunately, these sources report only those who hold membership in the APA and are limited by members' willingness to respond to surveys. These numbers will also improve with the help of different programs such as Diversity Project (DP) 2000, a program that recruits ethnic-minority honor students into psychology careers. This program provides mentors at APA conferences. Noted Native American psychologists, Joseph Trimble, Ph.D. and Beth Todd-
Basemore, Ph.D., have mentored DP 2000 students (APA, 1999). Psi Beta—the national honor society in psychology for community college students—established DP 2000 in 1994 to increase the representation of people of color in psychology. The project held two days prior to APA’s Annual Convention—hosts 25 top students who attend workshops that help them plan psychology careers. They also attend convention sessions. To date, 72 students have participated in the program (APA, 1999).

Major changes in Native education have occurred in the past two decades. The notorious boarding schools, which took Indian children from their families and tribes and attempted to make Anglos out of them, are now mainly gone. More Indian youth are enrolled in schools and colleges that are either run by tribal leadership or in which tribal views are important to decision making (Hodgkinson, 1992).

There has been a major increase in college attendance, indicated by the increase in the numbers of Natives taking the SAT—from 2,662 in 1976 to 18,000 in 1989. Of the 103,000 Native who were in college in 1990, about half were in two year colleges and half in four year colleges. The 24 Tribal Colleges, most of which offer two year programs, have rapidly increasing enrollments.

This is a period of great possibilities for Native Americans. After centuries of misinformation, the average American has now gained a limited knowledge about the
historical mistreatment of Natives, the importance of treaty rights, and the differences in world views between Americans of European descent and Native Americans.

McDonald (1990) stated that Native American people have begun to adopt a view that survival on all levels (i.e. financial, cultural, tribal) will require the achievement of self-determinism in as many arenas as possible. Native Americans have further concluded that successful completion of higher education for its individuals may well become a significant factor toward achieving self-determinism. Direct support may be provided through sharing of skills learned as a result of training in such fields as law, medicine, mental health, education, or politics. Professionally trained Native Americans may provide indirect support merely by acting as role models of success and hope for Native American youth.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate attitudes and acculturation levels at a tribal community college to see if they differ from those at a four-year state institution. This study developed from the McDonald (1990) study, which began to identify and quantify those factors, or cluster of factors, which Native American college students felt hamper their efforts toward academic success. McDonald (1990) developed the Native American College Student Attitude Scale (NACSAS) as an instrument for
Native American college students attending four-year state institutions. It is hoped that the data from this study, as with McDonald's study, will provide university and tribal community college staff and others invested in Native American college student retention with empirical evidence for establishment of effective policies and procedures appropriate for Native American students.

In this study, the NACSAS was administered to students at a Tribal Community College and a four-year state institution. This four year state institution was North Dakota State University (NDSU), located at Fargo, North Dakota. The Tribal Community College was Sisseton Wahpeton Community College located at Sisseton, South Dakota. The NACSAS scores and the Northern Plains Biculturalism Inventory (NPBI) score were compared.

Because individual tribes, their histories and culture vary widely, it is important to put Sisseton Wahpeton Community College and the Sioux and Chippewa tribes in context.

**Brief History of Sisseton Wahpeton Community College**

Sisseton Wahpeton Community College, a tribally chartered institution, is a tribal effort to meet the unique post-secondary educational needs of the members of the Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe and other residents of the Lake Traverse Region. Courses are offered at its main campus at Old Agency Village on the Lake Traverse reservation in
Sisseton, South Dakota, at several locations in the seven districts of the reservation, and other Dakota, Lakota sites located with the traditional lands of the Dakota people.

Sisseton Wahpeton Community College is fully accredited by the North Central Association of College and Schools, and its Nursing Program is accredited by the South Dakota board of Nursing. SWCC is a member of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (SWCC, 1999).

Background History of the Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota People

The Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota people once belonged to the Upper Sioux group and were located in the Lac Qui Parle region of Minnesota. During the Uprising of 1862, they scattered and moved to other areas. Under the provision of a treaty of 1867, the Sisseton agency was established. In 1867, the Sisseton and Wahpeton Sioux were granted reservations in the Lake Traverse and Devils Lake areas of Dakota Territory. In 1851, the Sisseton Wahpetons signed a treaty ceding all claimed lands in the states of Iowa and Minnesota except for land along the Minnesota River. This treaty came about as the result of white settlers pushing westward for better farm land. Today, a lot of the reservation land that was given to the Sisseton Wahpeton is owned by non-Native people, as the result of tribal members selling their land. Because of the diminishing land base on most reservations, the land owners must go through tribal committees in order to sell their land. The tribe has the
right to buy these stated lands before anyone else. Many of the reservations are now what you call "checkerboard". There are Native and non-Native landowners.

Background History of Chippewa Tribe

The Chippewa are known as the Ojibwa, and they form one of the principal branches of the Algic (Algonquin) stock of Native Americans originally located on the upper eastern coast of the United States. They now are mainly in the states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Some however, are located in North Dakota, and they are the Turtle Mountain Chippewa. The Turtle Mountain Chippewa are mainly mixed bloods, consisting mainly of French, Chippewa and other Indian tribes, and are sometimes called Metis. They are connected to the Canadian tribes (Cree) that are located near their reservation. Because the Turtle Mountain Chippewa reservation is near the location of the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks, ND and North Dakota State University at Fargo, ND, (four year state universities) there is a high percentage of Turtle Mountain Chippewa enrolled at these colleges compared to other tribes. As the result of the differences between the Chippewa and Sioux tribes, and because it is known through oral and written history that the Sioux and Chippewa are enemies, there is sometimes a feeling of "mistrust" or other types of negative thought that separates the two. However, my personal experience is
there are some who do not seem to mind and only tease each other about this.

Literature Review

Although there has not been much research on Native American students, their attitudes, level of acculturation and success in education, it is important to review what has been done and place it in the broader context of theory, culture, and the history of research with Native Americans. First, I summarize bicultural theories, the psychological impact of the clash of cultures and the importance of instruments such as the NBPI and NACSAS. Then I highlight what is known about Native American attitudes towards education and issues of attrition and retention. I then revisit some of the issues which limited the effectiveness of research with Native Americans in the past. This includes the necessity of being culturally sensitive and giving the research back to the tribal communities. Finally, I end with the research questions of this study.

Biculturalism Theories

Utilization of NBPI is important because information concerning level of acculturation is believed to be related to treatment philosophies, psychotherapy styles, and community intervention (D.W. Sue, 1981; S. Sue & J.K. Morishima, 1982). Acculturation has been defined as changes in the original cultural patterns of groups that have continuous, first-hand contact with one another (Redfield,
Group-level acculturation is accompanied by changes in individual or psychological acculturation (Graves, 1967). The stress that often accompanies acculturation has been examined during the precontract, contact, conflict, crisis, and adaptation phases of the process (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987).

New stressors begin to appear in the contact phase, and acculturative stress typically increases during the conflict phase. However, the degree of culture/behavioral change is often greatest during the crisis phase, and it is during this phase that homicide, suicide, family violence, or substance abuse may accompany the attempted adaptation (Berry & Kim, 1988).

The adaptation phase has several possible modes of resolution, including assimilation to the dominant society, previously referred to as a non-traditional outcome because the original culture has been lost or relinquished. A bicultural solution exists when an integration occurs that permits both retention of the original culture and separation from the dominant-society emphasizes a traditional outcome of the acculturation process.

Marginality will often occur when the traditional culture is retained and the dominant society culture is not accepted. Marginality will almost always include some mixture of traditional culture and dominant-culture characteristics. Some authors have described a fifth
orientation for Native Americans--transitional--in which individuals are bilingual but question traditional values and religion (LaFromboise, Trimble, & Mohatt, 1990).

Since many motives exist for acculturation, one must determine whether the process has been voluntary or involuntary. It is also important to determine whether the process has been undertaken in a context of traditional resources and support network associations, shelters, extended families, and availability of original culture group members (Dana, 1993).

Berry and Kim (1988) suggested that mental health problems will be least intense with biculturality and progressively increase in severity with assimilation, traditionality, and marginality outcomes of acculturation. In this connection, Berry and Kim provided a framework of the major variables that may affect the relationship between acculturation and mental health. This framework includes the phases and modes of individual acculturation previously described. There are also different types of acculturating groups, including indigenous peoples, immigrants, refugees, ethnic groups, and sojourners. Moreover, the dominant society may accept pluralism or be relatively tolerant or prejudiced, and thus facilitate the acculturation process or render it even more difficult.

In societies where pluralism is accepted, there will be established social support networks to facilitate
acculturation in an atmosphere that is accepting of
diversity. However, in a prejudiced society, there may be
discriminative policies with regard to employment, housing,
medical care, and political rights (Dana, 1993).

Frequently, in rural areas there is little interaction
between neighboring Native and majority cultures. Rural
Native students often attend small community or reservation
schools, in which they constitute the majority, if not the
entirety, of the student population. In the transition to
middle school, high school or college, however many Native
students experience the reverse for the first time. They
become a minority in schools that are predominately White.
Often they experience a clash of cultures.

**Cultural Discontinuity.** Theories of cultural
discontinuity have their origins in the anthropological
studies of ethnic minority groups within a dominant,
majority culture. According to students of cultural
discontinuity theory, minority children, have been initially
raised in a distinctive culture of their own, are often
thrust into a school system that promotes the values of the
majority culture—not those of their own. If the resulting
clash of cultures continues, the minority child may feel
forced to choose one culture at the expense of the other. A
tragic paradox emerges—success (in school) becomes failure
(in the community) and failure becomes success. Moreover, it
has been argued that failure is not simply the passive act
of neglecting to complete required tasks, but that it may be
a status that is actively pursued by ethnic minority
students in order to preserve their culture of origin
(McDermott, 1987; Spindler, 1987).

**Psychological Impact of Biculturalism.** Park (1928) and
Stonequist (1935) developed the argument that individuals
who live at the juncture between two cultures and can lay
claim to belonging to both cultures, either by being of
mixed racial heritage or born in one culture and raised in a
second, should be considered marginal people. Park suggested
that marginality leads to psychological conflict, a divided
self, and disjointed person. Stonequist contended that
marginality has certain social and psychological properties.
The social properties include factors of migration and
racial (biological) differences and situations in which two
or more cultures share the same geographical area, with one
culture maintaining a higher status over another. The
psychological properties involve a state that DuBois (1961)
labeled double-consciousness, or the simultaneous awareness
of oneself as being a member and an alien of two or more
cultures. This includes a “dual pattern of identification
and a divided loyalty.... (leading to) an ambivalent
attitude” (Stonequist, 1935). Words used to describe the
marginal person, such as “apple”, “banana”, or “oreo”,
reflect the negative stereotype when applied to people who
have intimate relationships with two or more cultures. The
common assumption, exemplified by the positions of Park (1928) and Stonequist (1935), is that being in two cultures is psychologically undesirable because managing the complexity of dual reference points generates ambiguity, identity confusion, and normlessness. Park also suggested, however, that the history and progress of humankind, starting with the Greeks, has depended on the interface of cultures. He claimed the migration and human movement inevitably lead to intermingling. Park described the individual who is the product of this interaction as the "cosmopile", the independent and wiser person. In other words, even though marginality is psychologically uncomfortable for the individual, it has long term benefits for society.

Goldberg (1941) and Green (1947), in their responses to the marginal human theory, suggested that people who live within two cultures do not inevitably suffer. Both authors suggested that being a "marginal person" is disconcerting only if the individual internalizes the conflict between the two cultures in which he or she is living. In fact, Goldberg perceived advantages to living at the border between two cultures. According to him, a marginal person may: (a) share his or her condition with others of the same original culture; (b) engage in institutional practices that are shared by other "marginal" people; (c) experience no major blockage or frustrations associated with personal, economic,
or social expectations; and (d) perceive himself or herself to be a member of a group. Goldberg argued that a person who is part of a subculture that provides norms and a definition of the individual's situation will not suffer from the negative psychological effects of being a marginal person.

LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993) suggest that in order to be "culturally competent", an individual would have to: (a) possess a strong personal identity; (b) have knowledge of and facility with the beliefs and values of the culture; (c) display sensitivity to the affective processes of the culture; (d) communicate clearly in the language of the given cultural group; (e) perform socially sanctioned behavior; (f) maintain active social relations within the cultural group; and (g) negotiate the institutional structures of that culture.

Cultural competence is viewed as being a multicontinuum of social skill and personality development. For example, an individual may be able to perform socially sanctioned behavior in two cultures with great ease but have difficulty negotiating diverse institutional structures. It is assumed that the more levels in which an individual is competent, the fewer problems they will have functioning effectively within two cultures.

The underlying assumption of all assimilation models is that a member of one culture loses his or her original cultural identity as he or she acquires a new identity in a
second culture. This model leads to the hypothesis that an individual will suffer from a sense of alienation and isolation until he or she has been accepted and perceives that acceptance within the new culture (Johnson, 1976; Sung, 1985). This person will experience more stress, be more anxious, and suffer more acutely from social problems such as school failure or substance abuse than someone who is fully assimilated into that culture (Burnam, Telles, Karno, Hough, & Escobar, 1987; Pasquali, 1985). The gradual loss of support derived from the original culture, combined with the initial inability to use the assets of the newly acquired culture, will cause stress and anxiety.

Native American Attitudes Toward Education

McDonald (1990) found several articles that addressed the attitudes that Native Americans have held toward education. Many of these attitudes were formed over centuries, long before the European invasion (Morey & Gilliam, 1974). Authors who have addressed this issue have focused on two main points. The first point suggests that Native Americans were not without education prior to the European invasion (Jeanotte, 1981; Morey & Gilliam, 1974; Whiteman, 1978). The second point suggests that Native Americans have actually looked favorably upon their young people receiving formal (Western, Judeo-Christian) education (Heath, 1972; NACIE, 1980; Wax, Wax, & DuMont, 1964; Wright, 1989; Zintz, 1969).
According to Whiteman (1978), most Native American parents feel responsible for teaching their children tribal values, customs, religion, and general knowledge. Whiteman pointed out that this education begins the day a child is born and never ends, much unlike the formal education in Western society.

Wilson (1983), in a review of literature pertaining to Native American education, notes that many Native Americans have recognized that an education in the white world could benefit the individual as well as the tribe. Wilson presents a relevant quotation collected in a study by Kickingbird and Kickingbird (1979): "go to school, not to help yourself, but to help us" (Wilson, 1983, p. 5).

Jeanotte (1981) describes the period of self-determination for Native Americans (with emphasis on education) as beginning in 1960. Jeanotte noted that during this period, Native Americans had begun to assume more responsibility for their own affairs and future. The achievement of self determination requires that Native Americans obtain the appropriate education and skills to achieve autonomy in the white world. The need for increased academic success among Native American students becomes a necessary goal in achieving self-determinism (Buyer, 1989; Lyric, 1987; 1974; 1969).

Psychocultural Perspectives. In an early psychological study of Native American college students, Artichoker (1957)
administered the Mooney Problem Checklist to Native American college students attending four-year colleges in South Dakota. Artichoker's study was among the first to provide data concerning personality characteristics and the impact of acculturation on Native American college students. Artichoker postulated that bilingualism was a measure of acculturation and would be a determining factor among the data.

Data from the study suggested that the bilingual students appeared to have more troublesome problems than the English-only (more acculturated) students (Artichoker, 1957). Some of these troublesome problems for bilingual students included: (a) insufficient high school preparation; (b) greater degree of homesickness; and (c) greater perception of racial prejudice stress (Artichoker, 1957). Rooney (1985) provided evidence that the more acculturated Native American student seems to have less difficulty than less acculturated students.

Other problems that Native Americans experience are the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs. This can contribute to even more problems that the Native American students will encounter while pursuing their educations. Researchers have found that Native American students were significantly different in their causal attributions of drinking problems than majority culture students (Jones-Saumty, Dru & Zenner, 1984). Native Americans students tended to view alcoholism
as an environmentally produced disease more so than their Caucasian counterparts.

Attempts to address problems in Native Americans. McDonald (1990) summerized suggestions to help improve the problems that Native American college students encounter. Proposed remedies included: (a) tribal colleges; (b) Native American Studies programs within white university systems; and (c) special training for instructors, administrators, and counselors on Native American issues.

Tribal community colleges have been relatively effective in retaining and educating Native American students (Boyer, 1989; CFAT, 1989; Tijerina & Biemer, 1988; Larocque, 1987). These reports cite several differences in philosophy and method between most tribal colleges and non-tribal colleges that permit them greater success with Native American students.

Boyer (1969) provided an overview of the evolution of the tribal college system as well as insight into their formula for success. He points out that although education in the cultural context of the student is not a new concept, it was not attempted with Native Americans until recently. Instead, reports Boyer, educators' goals included assimilation and acculturation of Native Americans into the majority culture, resulting in the high attrition and failure rate in colleges.
Boyer reported that tribal colleges also provide education for students that will provide immediate employment opportunities on that reservation. Thus, the pursuit of and receipt of a degree from a local tribal college is seen as relevant for the individual as well as for the community (Boyer, 1989).

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (CFAT, 1989) conducted a two-year evaluation of tribal colleges in the United States. Their report was favorable and encouraging and made the following conclusions: (a) tribal colleges appeared positive in providing positive learning experiences among students accustomed to failure; (b) tribal colleges promote and stress Native American values; (c) tribal colleges typically provide valuable services to the surrounding community (e.g., high school equivalency, child day care, and adult education programs); and (d) tribal colleges are often centers for the conductance of valuable social/cultural research.

Wright (1986) conducted a study on students enrolled in a tribal college in Montana. He found that the majority of these students were female (73%), and 71% were older than 25 (significantly older than the national college student average of 20 (Asten, 1982). Students were asked about the factors which contributed to their decisions about going to a tribal college and the results were: (a) tribal colleges were typically closer to home; (b) availability of needed
programs and services offered by tribal colleges; and (c) comparatively lower educational costs. Students indicated that quality of education, company of other tribal members, and family concerns were also factors seen as strong features for attending tribal colleges (Wright, 1986). Wright (1986) concluded that despite meager financial and logistical support, tribal colleges in Montana were making significant strides in demonstrating educational success with Native American college students.

The success of Native American/Indian Studies programs in non-tribal colleges has also been demonstrated (CFAT, 1989; Jeanotte, 1981; Medicine, 1975; Voyich, 1974). Among the recommendations listed as a result of Wilson's (1983) study were suggestions for the enlargement and development of Indian Studies Programs. Wilson's data suggested that successful Native American college students: (a) were able to educationally explore their heritage; (b) retained pride in their heritage while receiving their educations; and (c) reported these factors to be important in contributing to their academic successes.

Native American college student respondents in Wright's (1986; 1989) research indicated Native American Studies Programs to be their second most satisfying college factor (90% of respondents indicated these programs were satisfying experiences for them).
Jeanotte's study (1981) found Indian Studies Programs were an important factor in Native American college student retention. Jeanotte (1981) reported that Indian Studies Programs were available in 210 colleges (as of 1980).

In summary, the success of tribal colleges and Indian Studies Programs in both tribal and state universities is of great importance. These relatively new approaches to the education of Native American students are providing hope in a historically dismal endeavor (McDonald, 1990).

Attrition and Retention

In an effort to provide minority and disadvantaged students with equal access to post secondary education, the federal government passed the Higher Education Act of 1965. For the first time, students could qualify for government grants and loans on the basis of need rather than strictly on merit and for the first time, large numbers of Black, Hispanic, and Native American students began seeking admission to predominantly White institutions of higher learning (Bynum & Thompson, 1983). With raised levels of consciousness, college admissions officers actively recruited under represented minorities to their campuses. Enrollments for these targeted groups rose substantially, and the hopes of solving the economic and social problems of minorities through education rose as well (Hill, 1983).

High rates of attrition and low levels of attainment convinced college administrators that some form of academic
intervention and research on causes of attrition were necessary (Cross, 1983: Kulik, Kulik, & Shwalb, 1983). Researchers began to ask, "What is wrong with the student who drops out?" They proceeded to identify a number of precollege and at-college factors associated with college persistence.

**Precollege Predictors of Persistence.** Highest in impact among the precollege predictors are student characteristics and family characteristics (Astin, 1975; White & Bigham, 1982). Student characteristics that claimed to have the largest impact on at-risk minority student persistence are: (a) academic preparedness, which includes high school grade point average (GPA) and class rank, the taking of college preparatory courses, and the development of good language skills and study habits (Myers, 1983; Tinto, 1975); (b) adaptability, defined as the ability to adjust to a new environment, different value system, and in the case of predominantly white campuses--ethnic minority status (Bennett & Bean, 1984; Patterson & Sedlacek, 1984); (c) commitment to educational goals (Farrell & Pollard, 1987); (d) perception of progress toward educational goals (Martin & Martin, 1980); (e) willingness to seek academic assistance (Abrams & Jernigan, 1984); (f) self-confidence (Sowa, Thompson, & Bennet, 1989); and (g) reasons for pursuing a college degree (Stage, 1989).
Family characteristics have also been reported to affect minority student persistence in college (Tinto, 1975). In particular, parental socioeconomic status and level of education are highly correlated with retention, as are parent's expectations of and influence on their children (Astin, 1975; Coulson, 1981).

At College Predictors of Persistence. The strongest at-college determinants of persistence have been found to include: (a) the living environment; (b) the classroom experience; (c) academic advising; (d) extracurricular activities; (e) financial support; and (f) faculty involvement (Astin, 1985; Donovan, 1984; Ross & Roe, 1986; Sowa et al., 1989). Simply stated, student interactions with peers, advisors, and faculty: (a) increase satisfaction with the institution; (b) create a sense of belonging; and (c) strengthen commitment to the institution's educational goals and standards. The result is increased involvement in learning, as measured by students' reported amount and quality of study time (Donovan, 1984). Virtually all researchers and implementers of academic retention programs are in agreement on these points, frequently using Tinto's (1975) terms "academic integration" and "social integration" to identify two key components in the retention model. Whereas the first five at-college factors are self-explanatory, faculty involvement warrants additional explanation (Levine & Levine, 1991).
Based on Astin’s (1985) research conducted 20 years ago and based on 5 million students from more than 1,200 institutions, quality interaction with faculty seems to be more important than any other single college factor in determining minority student persistence. Because minority students tend to be more passive than are their nonminority counterparts (Astin, 1985), minority student involvement with faculty is considerably less (e.g., less question asking and fewer post lecture conversations and clarifications; see Heilman, 1981). Classroom interactions between faculty and students clearly favor nonminority class members to whom more complete answers are given and to whom more complex questions are directed (Trujillo, 1986). This latter observation parallels one that has been previously documented both for lower achieving school children and for children whom teachers are led to believe are lower achievers (Good & Brophy, 1977; Good, Cooper & Blakey, 1980).

The term faculty involvement is not limited to experiences in the classroom but also refers to active faculty participation in academic retention programs, from their design to their implementation. When such tasks are left solely in the hands of nonacademic staff members, retention and attainment-level gains are not likely to follow (Astin, 1985). In brief, the number, the kind, and the quality of faculty/student interactions bear heavily on
both academic success, and social satisfaction (Donovan, 1984). Student characteristics and family characteristics complete the constellation of factors that predict persistence among at-risk minority students. Clearly, initiatives that place sole blame on the victim (the student) and that fail to recognize the strategic role played by the faculty are incomplete responses to the minority student attrition problem (Levine & Levine, 1991).

The factors that affect persistence are important to isolate because they give direction to those who design academic programs aimed at improving the retention rates of at-risk minority students. Although some of these variables are remediable (e.g., academic preparedness and self-confidence), others are not (parents' level of education and socioeconomic status). Unfortunately, no standard model of essential student/family characteristics and how they interrelate can be found (Dunston, Richmond, & House, 1983).

The available research on Native American college students has indicated that attrition is commonly viewed as the most significant negative factor in Native American higher education. McDonald (1990, p. 5) stated:

Native American self-determinism in education has become a driving force in attempts by tribes to improve their own condition. Native Americans have always provided an education for their children in their own cultural context, but many now admit that formal,
western education of their youth is crucial for both group and individual economic, social and cultural survival.

Efforts to better understand the attrition crisis in Native American higher education has spawned some recent research. This research, however, is seldom published, making it difficult to obtain. The efforts of tribally controlled community colleges and Indian Studies Programs in both tribal and state colleges has provided hope and a model of success. Native American students show a higher graduation rate in tribal colleges than in other colleges, and endorse their college experience as most satisfying when Indian Studies Programs are available (McDonald, 1990).

Retention. Previous research gives varying weight to the importance of finances in the persistence decision. In Bean and Metzner's (1985) test of their model, they found finances to be ranked 25th out of 26 variables in terms of the total influence of one variable on another. Tinto (1987) suggested that the indirect influence of financial support affects persistence.

Previous literature also emphasizes the strain of multiple roles of non-traditional students but does not really explore the burden of living alone, which may imply less social support. More non-persisting students were employed than persisting students, which is consistent with the results of several other studies (Lenning, Sauer, &
Beal, 1980; Morgareidge, 1988; Pantages & Creedon, 1978). Nonpersisting students devoted nearly eight hours more per week to employment than persisting students.

The current trend in research for the field of student persistence is the development of prediction models of attrition. However, more descriptive information for this particular Native American student population is needed in order to have the foundation necessary for model development. Understanding the characteristics of this group can offer valuable information for the design and implementation of services that will optimize use by those who need them.

The study of student adaptation to college has concentrated on the characteristics of the individual student and on the interaction between the student and the college environment as predictors of student retention. However, Cabrera, Nora and Castenada (1993) suggested that factors external to the institutional experience are important considerations in predicting college student success. They specified that student's family is an influencing factor. Based on their hypothesis, the conceptualization of student retention issues can be expanded by integrating the study of intergenerational family dynamics and college student retention issues.

"The family is the primary and most powerful system to which a person ever belongs" (McGoldrick & Gerson, 1985,
Individual family members are inextricably bound through cognitive, affective, and behavioral patterns to the family relationship system (Framo, 1992; Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1991). One's family experience therefore affects one's relationships and events throughout life. The intergenerational theme of loyalty pertains to the degree to which the student must conform to the family's covert or overt expectations or risk experiencing family sanctions.

Indian people of all lifestyles seem to follow a predictable pattern when accessing their support systems (Lewis, 1984). The extended family support system is the first helping source sought. Spiritual leaders and tribal community leaders are next, and finally, as a last resort, the mainstream health care system (or university support services) is approached for assistance.

In general, Native American people are reluctant to seek Western professional therapeutic services. Ho (1987) suggested that a cultural emphasis on endurance and non-interference along with mistrust of non-Indian service providers may explain this hesitancy. As Indian people are exposed to a wider range of services offered by mental health providers or university support services, and as more Indian people work in these settings as professionals, attitudes towards such services will become more positive.
Summary of Past Research Literature on Native Americans

McDonald (1990) and others have highlighted some of the literature and problems with past research efforts with Native Americans. The McDonald (1990) literature review found difficulties in obtaining accurate research on Native Americans because of: (a) early inaccuracies of European anthropologists and historians, which consisted primarily of observation and based speculation in the 1820's; (b) inaccurate census taking; (c) research data on Native Americans contradicts itself because so little exists and because many reservations have a variety of people representing different tribes living there; and (d) a lack of Native American researchers.

LaFromboise and Plake (1983) list several additional difficulties encountered when attempting research with Native Americans. Foremost among these is an attitude of bitterness that Native Americans have developed after years of being studied with impunity and insensitivity by social researchers. LaFromboise and Plake (1983) state that social researchers have long been intrigued by Native Americans and have studied them according to their own agenda.

The researchers' agenda have frequently not included the best interests of Native Americans. Complaints in this vein against social researchers by Native Americans include the following points. First, researchers have often conducted research that benefitted their own career
aspirations and provided little or no benefit for those studied. Second, social researchers have made inappropriate interpretations of information gathered, thereby misrepresenting those studied. Third, researchers seldom provided tribes editorial rights to any material published, which often contained culturally sensitive information (LaFromboise & Plake, 1983). As a result of these problems, many tribes have restricted or totally denied access of social scientists to their people (LaFromboise & Plake, 1983).

To summarize, Native Americans have proven a difficult population to study. These difficulties typically arise from language and other cultural disparities between researchers and subjects, as well as methodological obstacles including sampling, validity, and data interpretation issues. The convenience of having potential Native American participants on campus does not alleviate these difficulties; it adds new ones (McDonald, 1990).

Research Questions

Overall, this study is designed to increase our knowledge base about factors which may affect Northern Plains Native American Indian students retention and attrition in college. This study is particularly interested in the relationship of level of acculturation type of college attended and attitudes. While this presentation of research topics to expand the research knowledge base about
Native American college students can be lengthy, it does not encompass all issues relevant for evaluation. The creation of new knowledge should be pertinent to the needs of the people it purports to further describe. Therefore, this study not only encourages future investigation of issues facing Native American college students, but also encourages investigation of issues facing Native American people in general.

The following questions were addressed in this study:

1. Are the attitudes identified by NACSAS (Perceived Racism and College Enthusiasm) different depending on the type of college the students attend (Tribal versus State)?

2. Are the scores on the NPBI different depending on the type of college the students attend?

3. What is the relationship between Native American students' level of acculturation and the type of college they attend?

4. Is there a relationship between scores on the NPBI and Perceived Racism regardless of the type of college attended?

5. Will "Bicultural" students score high on college enthusiasm regardless of the college attended?

6. Will "Traditional" students' "college enthusiasm scores" differ by the college they attend, high college enthusiasm for the tribal community college students and low college enthusiasm for state college students?
CHAPTER II

METHODS

Statement of the Problem

This study was designed to assess what effect acculturation as measured by the Northern Plains Biculturalism Inventory (NPBI) and a variety of demographic measures has on student attitudes. It was also designed to compare Native American college student attitudes as measured by the Native American College Student Attitudes Scale (NACSAS) at a four-year state university and a tribal community college. Since the NACSAS was developed to assess Native American College students' attitudes in four-year state universities, this study began to qualitatively explore potential problems or ambiguities in its use with Native American Tribal Community College students.

Descriptive Statistics

One hundred twenty one Native American college student responses were obtained for this study. From this group, only 116 were used since five questionnaires were incomplete. Of the 116 student responses, 65 were from SWCC (out of 129 students enrolled) and 51 (out of 110 Native American students enrolled) from NDSU. At SWCC, 70.3% of the participants were female and 29.7% were male. At NDSU, 66.7%
were female and 31.4% were male. The difference between schools was not significant.

For each school, participants identified membership in many different tribes. Twenty separate tribal affiliations were named. I decided to collapse these into three general categories: Sioux, Chippewa, and Other. Tribes included in the Sioux category were Cheyenne River Sioux, Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux, Rosebud Sioux, and other Sioux tribes. In the Chippewa category, tribes included White Earth Chippewa and Turtle Mountain Chippewa. For tribes that were categorized as Other, students were members of the Comanche tribe, the Three Affiliated Tribes (Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara) and Navajo Nation. At SWCC, 93.7% of participants were classified as Sioux, 4.5% as Chippewa, and 1.5% as Other. At NDSU 23.6% were Sioux, 68.6% were Chippewa, and 6.0% were Other. Significant differences were apparent in the tribal categories that students are affiliated with between the two colleges (SWCC and NDSU). This may be due to the fact that the majority of students at SWCC were members of the Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota Nation since SWCC is located on the Sisseton Wahpeton Indian reservation. At NDSU, the majority were Chippewa reflecting proximity to the Turtle Mountain and the White Earth Indian reservations.

Descriptive statistics for other demographic information and attitudinal scales are detailed by college in Tables 1 (SWCC) and 2 (NDSU). Students in the two
colleges were compared as to age, GPA, work hours, and hours spent with family. There appeared to be a difference in age especially among older students. When looking at the raw data, 12 participants from SWCC were over 40 years of age, Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Variables and NACSAS and NPBI Scores for SWCC Native American College Student Sample

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N (65)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>29.37</td>
<td>11.83</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKHOUR</td>
<td>22.90</td>
<td>15.69</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMHOUR</td>
<td>38.19</td>
<td>39.51</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AICI</td>
<td>40.92</td>
<td>9.46</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EACI</td>
<td>31.72</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERCRAC</td>
<td>19.63</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLENTHE</td>
<td>33.62</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1. GPA = Grade Point Average
2. WORKHOUR = number of hours working per week.
3. FAMHOUR = number of hours spent with family per week.
4. AICI = American Indian Cultural Identification
5. EACI = European American Cultural Identification
6. PERCRAC = Perceived Racism
7. COLLENTHE = College Enthusiasm
ranging from ages 41 to 62. At NDSU, only two students were in this category. Not only were students at SWCC older, they were more varied in age. The differences were not however, significant ($t = 1.51; df = 113; p = 0.135$).

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Variables and NACSAS and NPBI Scores for NDSU Native American College Student Sample

<table>
<thead>
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<th>SD</th>
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</tr>
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<td>PERCRAC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLENTH</td>
<td>32.51</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>51</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note 1. GPA = Grade Point Average
2. WORKHOUR = number of hours working per week.
3. FAMHOUR = number of hours spent with family per week.
4. AICI = American Indian Cultural Identification
5. EACI = European American Cultural Identification
6. PERCRAC = Perceived Racism
7. COLLENTH = College Enthusiasm

Sixty percent of SWCC students had GPA's in the 2.0 range, with 40% from NDSU in this category. In the 3.0 GPA
range, 61.5% of the participants were from SWCC and 38.5% from NDSU. In the 4.0 GPA range, two students were from SWCC and none from NDSU. The differences between schools were not significant. Table 3 shows the amount of time spent with family (FAMHOUR) and at work (WORKHOUR) for each school. Of those who answered the work question, there were fewer SWCC participants who did not work (10) than NDSU participants who did not work (19) (Chi-square = 5.23, df = 1, p < 0.022).

Of the 49 students at SWCC who answered the work question, 28 (57.1%) worked 20 or more hours per week; of the 45 NDSU students who answered the work question, only 13 (28.9%) worked 20 hours per week or more. The difference in Table 3

Means and Standard Deviation of FAMHOUR, WORKHOUR variables for SWCC and NDSU

<table>
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<td>WORKHOUR:</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWCC</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDSU</td>
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hours worked between the two schools was significant ($t = 3.102; df = 92; p = 0.003$). On the other hand, the difference in hours spent with family was not significant ($t = -.490; df = 82; p = 0.625$).

Correlations between the NPBI and NACSAS subscales and demographic variables are reported for SWCC participants in Table 4 and for NDSU participants in Table 5.

Participants

The participants in this study were Native American college students attending an Indian tribal community college in South Dakota (SWCC), located on the Sisseton, South Dakota Indian reservation and Native American college students attending a four year, state university (NDSU) in Fargo, North Dakota. The criteria for inclusion as Native American consisted either of racial/ethnic preference recorded on admissions information, financial aid information, or by having proof of being enrolled in a federally recognized tribe. A list of Indian students was solicited from the Office of Multicultural Affairs of NDSU. In addition, a list was solicited from the tribal community college's Office of Admissions and Records. Names were given as part of the general record; however, addresses could not be given because of the colleges' confidentiality policies. An arrangement was worked out so that the research packets
<table>
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<th>EACI</th>
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*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001
Table 5

NDSU Correlation Coefficients for Demographic Variables, NACSAS and NPBI Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>AICI</th>
<th>EACI</th>
<th>COLLENTH</th>
<th>PERCRAC</th>
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<td>-.44**</td>
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*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001
were sent to the NDSU Multicultural Affairs Office and to the SWCC designated staff who then put mailing labels on the research packets and sent them out to the students. The questionnaires were administered on site and/or were mailed out to the Native American college students during the Fall of 1997.

The research packets were mailed out later to the Native American college students who were not reached on site. A site visit by the Principal Investigator was made to designated classrooms at Sisseton-Wahpeton Community College and to the Native American Student Association at NDSU to solicit additional participation in the study after fewer than 75 students per college completed the questionnaires by mail.

Students were requested not to put their names on any of the questionnaire forms and were advised to fill out only the consent forms with their names and addresses which were filed separately from the questionnaires. In addition, they were requested to return the forms to the Principal Investigator when completed to receive a $5.00 honorarium in appreciation of their participation. Students who did not return their questionnaires were sent reminder letters. The completed questionnaires were sent to the Principal Investigator's research assistants at the UND Indians into Psychology Doctoral program for data entry. After the information questionnaires were entered, the raw data was
returned to the Principal Investigator for analysis. All aspects of this study were reviewed and approved by the University of North Dakota and NDSU Institutional Research Boards and the SWCC President and Dean of Students prior to any data collection.

The information from the tribal community college students was especially important as the NACSAS has not been used previously in tribal community colleges. This information may suggest a need for future modification of this instrument so it will be more appropriate to tribal community colleges. During one of the site visits, the Principal Investigator wanted to arrange for one or two focus groups of students at Sisseton-Wahpeton to talk about items on the NACSAS which students felt were inappropriate or ambiguous in their school setting. This was not done due to the students being too busy to gather for groups. Some of the students did, however, make comments on the questionnaires regarding which items they felt were not appropriate for the tribal community college setting. These comments will be given to the person who designed the instrument of the NACSAS, Dr. J.D. McDonald, for his own use.

Measures

All participants were mailed the same research packet or given the same research packet on site. The research packets were comprised of the following information: (a)
introduction letter from Principal Investigator; (b) informed consent forms; (c) demographics section and the NACSAS; and (d) the NPBI.

The demographics section of the NACSAS asked about age, college major, and tribal affiliation. Other questions were added on grade point average (GPA) achieved in high school, college GPA, number of hours working at a job per week, and number of hours spent away from schoolwork with student's family or community.

**Native American College Student Attitudes Scale**

The NACSAS was developed by J.D. McDonald, Ph.D. in 1990, and copyrighted in 1994. Prior to this, an appropriate, established scale assessing Native American college student attitudes had not been created. McDonald (1990) used this instrument in his study on Native American college students at the University of South Dakota. The NACSAS was constructed using the rational-statistical test construction method. It utilizes a four-point Likert scale format. The general NACSAS format was modeled after similar, established four-point Likert scale devices such as the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger et al, 1983). Items are designed to assess degree of belief in the statements provided.

NACSAS items represent positive and negative attitudinal statements in alternating order so as to avoid a response bias set in either direction. All items on the
NACSAS were derived from scales used in other studies with Native American college students (Jeanotte, 1980; Wilson, 1983). Unlike scales utilized in these studies, however, the NACSAS is intended to be administered to Native American college students, mainly to those students attending four year, state institutions. The NACSAS was designed with the intent that Native American college students would provide answers indicative of their attitudes toward their college (McDonald, 1990). In the McDonald study for the total NACSAS scale, the reliability was $\alpha = .85$, the reliability for the Perceived Racism subscale was $\alpha = .89$ and for the College Enthusiasm subscale, the reliability was $\alpha = .82$.

In this current study, the reliabilities for the College Enthusiasm subscale was $\alpha = .70$ for SWCC, $\alpha = .58$ for NDSU. For the Perceived Racism subscale the reliabilities were $\alpha = .77$ for SWCC, and $\alpha = .75$ for NDSU. For the total NACSAS, the reliabilities were: $\alpha = .73$ for SWCC and $\alpha = .58$ for NDSU.

Native American College Student Attitude Scale Background

The NACSAS has been designed to elicit the positive and negative perceptions about a student's college experience that influence their academic attitudes and efforts. The primary purpose for doing so is to identify students who may be at-risk for attrition. In addition, individual and group attitudes toward their college experiences may also be assessed for comparison or advising. In general, these
students may be identified by their high endorsement of items that comprise the Perceived Racism subscale (the sum of even-numbered items). Students who are more content and culturally at ease in their surroundings will score low on this subscale, and higher on College Enthusiasm subscale (sum of odd-numbered items). This instrument is intended for use by counselors, therapists, advisors, and other officials who may suspect a level of unease or discontent within a particular student or are generally involved with the academic pursuits of American Indian college students.

Administration and Scoring

Students were instructed that the surveys contain no right or wrong answers to the items. They were asked to simply mark the statements to the degree they believe them to be true most of the time. The NACSAS is not designed to assess the reality of whether or not racism or cultural stress exists in an institution; instead, it is designed to determine whether or not the students perceive these stressors to exist. Relevant research suggests these beliefs contribute to attitude development and behavior that may lead to attrition. The scale should take no more than five minutes to complete. When the student has finished, the instrument is scored by summing the even numbers to derive Perceived Racism subscale and odd numbers to derive the College Enthusiasm Subscale.
the McDonald (1990) sample, the mean was 29.2 with a minimum of 14 and a maximum of 43.

**Northern Plains Biculturalism Inventory**

The NPBI is a brief, 30 item measure of identification with Northern Plains American Indian and Midwestern white (European-American) cultures (Allen & French, 1994). The inventory focuses largely upon social behavior, which is assumed to be directed by underlying constructs that various authors have described as attitudes, beliefs, world views, and acculturation.

This instrument is designed to provide a measure for level of cultural identification among Northern Plains American Indians to both American Indian and European-American cultures. Dana (1993) focused upon acculturation as an important moderator variable that requires assessment as a part of competent multicultural psychological assessment practice; level of acculturation is an important consideration in mental health service delivery.

The NPBI is composed of selected and rewritten items from the Rosebud Opinion Survey (RPOS; Hoffman, 1984; Dana and Bolton, 1985). The RPOS was developed by Hoffman, Dana, and Bolton, in collaboration with Rodger Hornby of Sinte Gleska University, Mission, South Dakota. RPOS items were originally selected from questionnaires developed by Green and Haymes (1973), Howe Chief (1940), and Jessor, Graves, Hanson, and Jessor (1986).
Interpretation

Perceived Racism subscale. Students scoring high on this subscale may perceive their college environments as culturally intolerant or even hostile. At this point, no norms have been created for the NACSAS. McDonald (1990) samples scores ranging from a minimum of 14 to a maximum of 43 with a mean score of 29.2. Research suggests which students to be at high risk for attrition. Students scoring high on this subscale may be experiencing extreme family stress, or financial or personal problems as well. Any combination of these factors places students at risk for attrition and should reflect a high score suggesting a need for counseling, advising, and encouragement. Low scores on this subscale may indicate students who is fairly at ease with their environment and at relatively low risk for attrition.

College Enthusiasm Subscale. Students obtaining a high score on this subscale may be not only be content, but very enthusiastic about their college experiences. These students are expected to be participating in college activities and events, and utilizing many campus services. These students typically are not at risk for attrition. Low scores on this scale may indicate students discouraged with their college experiences and suggests a need for counseling, advising, and encouragement. Again, are no norms for this subscale. In
The NPBI has three different factor loadings based on (a) American Indian Cultural Identification (AICI), (b) European American Cultural Identification (EACI), and (c) Language. Parallel items to those of the RPOS were developed for the NPBI in order to capture similar domains of behavior within Midwestern European-American cultures. Though the NPBI items were originally developed to comprise two scales, tapping AICI and EACI, factor analytic work suggested several of the items be instead grouped into a third Language factor. Therefore, a third Language Scale is scored to assess this domain tapped by NPBI. Two self-report versions of the NPBI currently exist. The College version is designed for used with college student populations. The Community version is intended for general community. This study used the College version.

Scoring of the Northern Plains Bicultural Inventory

Scoring of the NPBI currently uses the median split procedure. The median score is calculated for the AICI, EACI and Language scales using local norms or if unavailable the preliminary norms presented in Table 6. For this study, I will use the norms in Table 6 since I am looking at possible differences in college students from the two schools.

Psychometric Characteristics

Preliminary norms for a sample of 73 Northern Plains American Indian college students who completed the College version of the NPBI are presented on Table 6 (Allen &
French, 1994). These students are hypothesized to be a group largely composed of American Indian individuals with either a European American cultural identification or a bicultural identification.

A principal components analysis with varimax rotation was conducted with this same sample (Allen & French, 1994). Items tapping American Indian cultural identification loaded on the first factor, while items tapping European American cultural identification loaded on the second factor. A third group of items associated with positive loadings for tribal language usage and negative loadings for English language usage loaded on a third factor. This indicated that the third language factor functions differently than the other two factors. Unlike the first two factors, which tap independent cultural identification dimensions, the third language factor appears to tap a single bipolar construct related to American Indian language usage on one end of the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AICI</td>
<td>39.51</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10.13</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
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<td>EACI</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>.84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>9.78</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 6
Preliminary Norms of NPBI (N = 73)
continuum and English language usage on the other. It therefore appears that the AICI and EACI scales each tap independent dimensions comprised of elements of Northern Plains American Indian and European American cultural identification, respectfully. In contrast, orientation with regard to language usage, as measured by the NPBI items, fell along a single dimension. Higher scores on the Language scale indicate increasing preference for American Indian language usage, while low scores indicate a greater degree of English usage.

The preliminary study data (Allen & French, 1994) was compared with a group of Caucasian students attending the same university. Items from the Caucasian sample did not load as high on the three factors. Coefficients of factor congruence were computed for the AICI, EACI and Language factors and were .81, .85 and .77 respectfully. Three items that loaded highest on the AICI factor in the American Indian sample instead loaded highest on the Language factor in the Caucasian sample. Other items loaded on the same factors between samples at approximately the same magnitude. A one-way ANOVA of NPBI scale scores revealed that the American Indian college students scored higher than Caucasian students on the AICI and Language scales and scored lower on the EACI scale ($p < .0001$). This provided initial support for the validity of the NPBI.
For this study, the Principal Investigator did not include the Language factor. After consulting with other professionals who have used the NPBI scale, it was felt that this Language scale needed to be developed more. In addition, this study is more concerned with the levels of acculturation and attitudes toward higher education amongst Native American college students.

Reliabilities for NPBI

For this study the reliabilities for the NPBI were $\alpha = .86$ for AICI at and $\alpha = .87$ for AICI at SWCC. The reliabilities for EACI were $\alpha = .73$ at NDSU and $\alpha = .72$ at SWCC.

Previously, Allen & French's study (1994) computed six month test-retest reliabilities for 34 Northern Plains American Indian college students and found reliabilities of $\alpha = .82$ for the AICI scale and $\alpha = .70$ for the EACI scale, and $\alpha = .74$ for the Language scale.

As stated before, scoring of the NPBI currently uses the median split procedure. In this procedure, the median score is calculated for the AICI, EACI, and Language scales using local norms, or if unavailable, the preliminary norms listed on Table 6 of this chapter. A score below the median is considered low. A high score on the AICI scale along with a low score on the EACI scale indicates an American Indian Cultural Identification on the dimension of cultural immersion, while a low score on the AICI scale indicates
European American Cultural Identification. If both AICI and EACI scores are below the median, the scales identify a person characterized by marginality. Scores above the median on the Language scale indicate an orientation toward greater American Indian Language usage, while scores below the median indicate more of an orientation to English on this dimension. For this current study, these numbers were computed using the median split from the original sample: High AICI > .40; Low AICI < .40; High EACI > .35; and Low EACI < .35.

Some Final Considerations in the Use of the NPBI

An important consideration in use of the NPBI is the regional nature of its items. The NPBI was developed as a measure of identification with the American Indian and European-American cultures of the Northern Plains United States. The AICI scale is not intended to function as a measure of "pan-Indianism". Instead, a number of the items tap cultural practices specific to Lakota people and their Plains Indian neighbors. For example, item 14 of the NPBI lists the names of some the dances enjoyed by many Plains Indian people. In other regions of the United States, among other American Indian cultural groups, this item is likely to require rewording or replacement. Similar considerations are relevant to the EACI scale. The white people living in Northern Plains states are comprised of predominately Scandinavian and German-American cultural groups. For this
reason, it is incumbent upon users of the NPBI outside of the Northern Plains region to review items for their appropriateness with local populations, making revisions where necessary, and to investigate the psychometric properties of the instrument with different regional populations before interpreting results. I decided to include the total sample of the 116 Native American college students together on Table 7. This is a regional sample of the SWCC and NDSU Native American college students combined on their results of the NPBI.

Table 7

<table>
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<th>Mean</th>
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<td>EACI</td>
<td>33.34</td>
<td>33.00</td>
<td>6.84</td>
<td>.75</td>
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Acculturation Variable

In this study the acculturation variable is broken down into four categories from the NPBI. Those students who are classified as being "Traditional" have a high score on the AICI and a low score on the EACI. Students that are classified as being "Bicultural" have a high score on the AICI and a high score on EACI. Those that are classified as being "Marginal" have a low score on AICI and on the EACI.
Students classified as being "European American Assimilated" have a low score on AICI and a high score on EACI.

Procedures

This study followed a quasi-experimental, non-equivalent, comparison group design. The raw data was coded, entered and analyzed by the Principal Investigator, research assistants and/or their supervisor, utilizing the SPSS PC Statistical Software package available to graduate students and faculty at the UND Department of Counseling and faculty at the UND Department of Counseling and Department of Psychology.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were calculated for the demographic variables and the NACSAS and NPBI scores. These were analyzed separately for the tribal college students and the four year state institutions students in order to compare the two. Secondly, the pearson product moment correlation coefficients was computed among the demographic variables, the NACSAS and NPBI, for each institution. Reliability of scales were conducted separately for each institution.

Reflecting the research hypotheses, analysis of variance (ANOVA), Chi-Square, or correlational analyses were used to evaluate the following specific hypotheses.

Hypothesis I. A difference exists between tribal community Native American college students' scores and four
year state institution Native American college students' scores on the NACSAS.

**Hypothesis IA.** On the NACSAS, the Native American college students attending a tribal community college will score lower on the Perceived Racism subscale than the Native American college students attending a four year state institution (ANOVA).

**Hypothesis IB.** On the NACSAS, the Native American college students attending a tribal community college, will scored higher on the College Enthusiasm subscale than the Native American college students attending a four state institution (ANOVA).

**Hypothesis II.** A difference exists between tribal community Native American college students' scores and four year state institution Native American college students' scores on the NPBI (ANOVA).

**Hypothesis III.** There is a difference between tribal community Native American college students' level of acculturation or cultural immersion and that of four year, state institution Native American college students as derived from scores on the NPBI (Traditional [High AICI, Low EACI], Bicultural [High AICI, High EACI] Marginal [Low AICI, Low EACI] or European American Assimilated [Low AICI, High EACI] ) (Chi-Square).

**Hypothesis IV.** Regardless of the type of college attended, Native American college students who score high on
the American Indian Cultural Identification (AICI) subscale of the NPBI will score high on the "Perceived Racism" subscale on the NACSAS (A positive correlation).

**Hypothesis IVB.** Regardless of the type of college attended, Native American college students who score high on the European American Cultural Identification (EACI) subscale of the NPBI will score low on the Perceived Racism subscale on the NACSAS (A negative correlation).

**Hypothesis V.** Regardless of the type of college attended, Bicultural Native American college students, those who score high on both the European American Cultural Identification (EACI) subscale and the American Indian Cultural Identification (AICI) subscale of the NPBI will score high on the College Enthusiasm subscale of the NACSAS.

**Hypothesis VI.** Traditional Native American College students' (those who score high on the American Indian Cultural Identification subscale and low in the European American Cultural Identification subscale of the NPBI) scores on the College Enthusiasm subscale will vary by type of college attended (t-test). Tribal community college enthusiasm and the state college students will score low on College Enthusiasm.
CHAPTER III
RESULTS

The analysis is presented in the following order. First, there is a presentation of the descriptive analyses of the participants. Data analyses were calculated for the demographic variables, and the NACSAS and NPBI scores and were reported in Chapter II. These were done separately for the tribal college students and the four year state institution students in order to compare the two different results with each other. Second, the Pearson product moment correlation coefficients were computed among the demographic variables and the NACSAS and NPBI. Reliability of scales was also conducted separately for each institution as reported in Chapter II. Analysis of variance (ANOVA), Chi-Square, or correlational analyses were used to test hypotheses.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis I. Native American tribal community college student's scores differed from four year state institution Native American college students' scores on the NACSAS. The analyses of variance conducted on the NACSAS subscales between schools is shown in Table 8. A significant difference between schools was shown on the Perceived Racism (PERCRAC) subscale on the NACSAS.
Hypothesis IA. On the NACSAS, the tribal community college students will score lower on the Perceived Racism subscale than the four year state institution college students. The SWCC participants scored slightly lower (19.63) compared to the NDSU participants (21.65). The analyses of variance in Table 8 indicates a significant difference on Perceived Racism (PERCRAC) between two schools.

Hypothesis IB. On the NACSAS, the Native American college students attending a tribal community college will score higher on the College Enthusiasm subscale than the Native American college participants at a four year state institution. SWCC students scored higher (33.62) on the College Enthusiasm (COLLENTH) subscale than NDSU participants (32.51), although the analyses of variance in Table 8 indicated that the difference was not significant.

Hypotheses II. A difference between Native American tribal community college students' scores and four year state college students' scores appeared on the NPBI. While significant difference between schools was significant on the "European American Cultural Identification (EACI) subscale but not on the American Indian Cultural Identification subscale (AICI) as illustrated in Table 8.

Hypothesis III. There is a difference between tribal community Native American college students' level of
acculturation or cultural immersion and that of four year, state institution Native American college students' as shown in Table 8.

### Analysis of Variance on NACSAS and NPBI Subcales by School

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<tr>
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<td>EACI</td>
<td>384.72</td>
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<td>384.72</td>
<td>8.77**</td>
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<tr>
<td>COLLTHET</td>
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<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERCRAO</td>
<td>116.18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>116.18</td>
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<td><strong>Within groups</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AICI</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>PERCRAO</td>
<td>2618.79</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>22.97</td>
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</table>

*p<.05; **p<.005

derived from scores on the NPBI. The categories of acculturation are: Traditional [High AICI, Low EACI], Bicultural [High AICI, High EACI], Marginal [Low AICI, Low EACI], and European American Assimilated [Low AICI, High EACI]). The frequency and percentage of students falling into these categories are shown in Table 9. Twenty-five SWCC
participants identified with being Traditional, and only 12 participants from NDSU were in this category. As far as Bicultural is concerned, 5 from SWCC identified with being Bicultural, and 10 from NDSU. Twenty-one from SWCC and 11 from NDSU were found in the marginal category. In the European American Cultural Identification category. Fourteen from SWCC and 18 from NDSU in the European American Cultural Identification category. Chi-square analysis indicates that these differences in level of acculturation by school are significant ($\alpha = 8.29$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.04$).

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acculturation Categories</th>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>Bicultural</th>
<th>Marginal</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>SWCC N</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Total Sample</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>21.5</td>
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<td>NDSU N</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Total Sample</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>21.6</td>
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<td>116</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Percent</td>
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<td>12.9</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Hypothesis IVA.** Regardless of the type of college attended, Native American college students who score high on the American Indian Cultural Identification (AICI) subscale
of the NPBI will score high on the Perceived Racism subscale on the NACSAS (A positive correlation). The correlation between AICI and Perceived Racism (PERCRAC) for the total sample was significant (Pearson $r = .337, p < 0.001$). As indicated in Table 4 for SWCC, the correlation is $.337 (p = .006)$ and in Table 5 for NDSU, the correlation is $.536 (p = 0.001)$.

**Hypothesis IVB.** Regardless of the type of college attended, Native American college students who score high on the European American Cultural Identification (EACI) subscale of the NPBI will score low on the Perceived Racism subscale (PERCRAC) on the NACSAS (A negative correlation). As shown in Table 4, for SWCC students the correlation was not significant ($r = .014; p = .909$). However, the relationship as shown in Table 5 was significant for NDSU students ($r = -.30; p = .034$), (A negative correlation).

**Hypothesis V.** Regardless of the type of college attended, Bicultural Native American college students (high on both the European American Cultural Identification subscale [EACI] and on the American Indian Cultural Identification [AICI] subscale of the NPBI) will score high on the College Enthusiasm subscale of the NACSAS.

Bicultural students, regardless of college attended, scored high on the College Enthusiasm subscale, ($X = 35.4 [n=5]$) for the tribal community college students and $X =$
35.5 \([n=10]\) for state college student. There was no difference between schools \((t = -0.51, \ df = 13, \ p = .96)\).

**Hypothesis VI.** Traditional Native American College students' (those who score high on the American Indian Cultural Identification subscale and low on the European American Cultural Identification subscale of the NPBI) scores on the College Enthusiasm subscale of the NACSAS varied by type of college attended \((t = 2.49, \ df = 35, \ p = .02)\). Traditional students at the tribal community college \((n = 25, X = 35.6)\) scored higher than those at a four-year college \((n = 12, X = 31.5)\).
DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

The main purpose of this study was to investigate attitudes at a tribal community college to see if they differ from those at a four year state institution. The NACSAS and NPBI were administered to students at a tribal community college and a four-year state institution. This study was designed to compare the differences between a tribal community college (SWCC) and four-year state institution (NDSU) on these same two instruments.

Research Questions and Findings

Native American College Student Attitude Scale.

Question #1. The research question was do the participants from a tribal community college and a four year state university differ on NACSAS subscales of Perceived Racism and College Enthusiasm by the types of colleges they attend? Although a difference appears, we cannot say whether it is because of the students who chose to go to the institutions, or because of something about the institution. However, I believe, based on the literature, that it is likely because of the differences in institutional environments. There was a significant difference in the schools on the Perceived Racism subscale, but not on the College Enthusiasm subscale.
On the Perceived Racism subscale participants from the tribal community college scored lower as hypothesized in Hypotheses IA and IB than participants from the four year state university. The reason why I hypothesized this was because of my own experiences attending different four year state universities in the region and because of my own conclusions of the literature.

The items on the NACSAS comprising the Perceived Racism subscale were not intended to assess whether or not racism existed in these institutions. The NACSAS instead was designed to determine whether or not the students perceives these factors at their institutions. McDonald (1990) hypothesized that these perceptions of racism and cultural non-acceptance contribute to the formulation of attitudes that significantly affect the information processing and decision-making of students. Students who perceive their academic environment as inhospitable or hostile may develop attitudes that adversely affect their behaviors in ways that hinder their chances of achieving degrees. Since cultural beliefs cause many students to remain silent (at least to non-Indian university officials) about these discomforts, the most commonly observed of these behaviors is abruptly leaving school (McDonald, 1990). Again, based on my own experience and understanding of the literature, I would assume that a Native American college student at a tribal community college will score lower on Perceived Racism than
one at a state college, due to a number of different reasons: (a) the fact that these students are able to study and take classes on the reservation with their peers; (b) a majority of the staff at tribal community colleges are also Native American; (c) tribal community college students do not have the pressure of living and competing in a non-native environment; and (d) who also value differences must be considered. As I pointed out in the literature review, the Carnegie Foundation for the advancement of Teaching (CFAT, 1989) conducted a two-year evaluation of tribal colleges in the United States. Their report was favorable and encouraging, making the following conclusions: (a) tribal colleges appeared successful in providing successful learning experiences among students accustomed to failure; (b) tribal colleges promote and stress Native American values; (c) tribal colleges typically provide valuable services to the surrounding community (e.g., high school equivalency tests, child day care, and adult education programs); and (d) tribal colleges are often centers for the conductance of valuable social/cultural research" (CFAT, 1989).

College Enthusiasm was addressed in Hypothesis IB, which predicted that the Native American college students attending a tribal community college would score higher on
the College Enthusiasm subscale that the Native American participants at a four year state institution. There was not a significant difference. Students obtaining a high score on this subscale might not only be content, but very enthusiastic about their college experiences. These students would be expected to be participating in college activities and events, and utilizing many campus services. These students typically are not at risk for attrition. Low scores on this scale may indicate students discouraged with their college experiences and suggests a need for counseling, advising, and encouragement.

When comparing my study with the McDonald (1990) study, an interesting difference was discovered in the scores on the NACSAS. On the College Enthusiasm subscale, the mean was 29.2 for the McDonald study, which was conducted at a four year state university. This was lower than the NDSU mean of 32.51. For the tribal community college, the mean for College Enthusiasm was 33.62. On the Perceived Racism subscale, the mean was 31.6 which was a lot higher than the NDSU mean of 21.65, and for SWCC the mean was 19.63. Overall the Perceived Racism subscale was a lot lower for the tribal community college participants than for NDSU or the McDonald study (1990). This supports the literature on Native American college students attending tribal community
colleges. In general, this could also be because situations may have improved since the time of the McDonald Study (1990). Perceived Racism has gone down and College Enthusiasm has gone up.

**Northern Plains Bicultural Inventory.** Question #2. Are the scores on the NPBI different depending on the type of college the students attend? There was a significant difference on the EACI subscale but not on the AICI subscale. More students were classified in the European American Cultural Identification category at NDSU than SWCC. This may be due to a number of different factors. The review of some of the descriptive statistics may help us understand this phenomena. More students were classified as being Chippewa (68.6%) than Sioux (23.6%) at NDSU compared to SWCC, Sioux (93.7%) and Chippewa (4.5%). Based on my own perceptions, experiences, and review of the literature, I would say that the students who are classified as being Sioux are more traditional (are more into their native traditions and beliefs) than some of the Chippewa who appear to be a lot more assimilated into the mainstream, dominant society. This may be due to the historical reasons described in Chapter I.

**Question #3.** What is the relationship between Native American students' level of acculturation and the type of
college they attend? More students at SWCC were labeled as being "Traditional" on the Acculturation scale than those from NDSU. On the "Bicultural" scale, fewer students from SWCC were in this category, and more from NDSU. On the "Marginal" scale, more students from SWCC were in this category than from NDSU. On the European American Cultural Identification subscale fewer students were in this category from SWCC than those from NDSU. As hypothesized, chi-square analysis indicates that these differences in level of acculturation by school are significant ($X = 8.29; \text{df} = 3; p = 0.04$). In summary, I would say that more "Traditional" Native American college students will be found at the community college level basically because of the fact that most of these colleges are on and near the reservation. Most "traditional" students would prefer to stay at home, to work and live on their own tribal lands, to be able to speak their own native languages, and to be with their friends and families. In the Bicultural category, more students would be expected to be Bicultural at a four year state university than a tribal community college simply because of the fact that the students are able to move and live away from their native environment, and they would be expected to function in the dominant society. What was of concern to me was the Marginal category. More students from SWCC were in this
category than NDSU. According to the literature, in this category, students may be categorized as being at "high risk" of attrition.

Question #4. Is there a relationship between scores on the NPBI and the Perceived Racism subscale regardless of the type of college attended? Do students with a higher score on the American Indian Cultural Identification subscale score differently on the NACSAS because of the type of college they are attending? At NDSU, participants scored higher on the Perceived Racism subscale. A difference between the two schools could be seen. A significant positive relationship was discovered between American Indian Cultural Identification and Perceived Racism in the total sample and for participants from both types of colleges. Although, participants scored higher on AICI at the tribal community college, they also scored high on the College Enthusiasm subscale than those at four year state institution who did not. This is also addressed in Hypothesis IVA. The correlation for the total sample was significant (Pearson r = .381, p < 0.001). A significant positive relationship was seen for SWCC students, however the relationship for NDSU students was non-significant. In Hypothesis IVB, regardless of the type of college attended, Native American college students who score high on the European American
Cultural Identification (EACI) of the NPBI will score low on the Perceived Racism subscale of the NACSAS (A negative correlation). The correlation between EACI and Perceived Racism was in the right direction but not significant ($r = -.055, p = .557$). For SWCC students, the correlation was not significant; however, the relationship was significant for NDSU students. This was an interesting finding—the more the students were identified as being EACI, the more the Perceived Racism score would go down. This would lead one to include, generally, that no matter how one identifies oneself as a Native American (Traditional, Bicultural, or assimilated) one will perceive racism at a four year state college.

Research Question #5. Will Bicultural students score high on College Enthusiasm regardless of the type of college they attend? No difference occurred between the schools. When looking at the literature in this category of Biculturalism, one will recall that those students who are in this category are those who are, for the most part, accepted by the dominant society. Yet they also know and accept their tribal traditions and culture. They can thus move in either direction from traditional society to dominant society with ease.
At SWCC some of the students made comments about items that they felt did not apply to them. I asked them to circle the numbers of items they felt did not apply and they circled the following items: 2) I often feel discriminated against because of my heritage in college; 4) Most college instructors do not think Indian students can make it; 6) I feel many school policies and requirements are not sensitive to the special needs of Native American students; 8) Cultural differences here make my college experience very difficult; 10) I often have racial slurs or jokes directed at me from non-Indian students; and 14) The university system tries to make Indian students fail.

Some of the NDSU students circled the followed items: 6) I feel many school policies and requirements are not sensitive to the special needs of Native American students, (one student wrote: "what do you mean by special needs?) and many circled item 21) I am very interested in the Indian studies classes at my College. (They made comments like: "Not available at NDSU", "but none are offered at NDSU!")

Research Question #6. Will Traditional students' college enthusiasm scores differ by the college they attend? (High college enthusiasm for the tribal community college students and low college enthusiasm for the four year state college students.) A significant difference occurred in
College Enthusiasm by college attended, with the mean scores being higher for the tribal community college, as hypothesized. Again, this also supports the literature on the successes of Native American college students attending tribal community colleges.

A recent article in the *Indian Country Today* (November 30, 1998) newspaper reported that 31 tribal community colleges in the United States and Canada belong to The American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC). Dr. Jeanine Pease-Pretty On Top, President of AIHEC and President of Little Big Horn College reports: "Little Big Horn College boasts a success rate that brings a beneficial return to the community it serves. Out of a class of 35 graduates, one-half transferred to other colleges and the other half stayed in the community and worked. We have a professionally directed group of graduates with very high expectations. The college tracked students who took at least one course at Little Big Horn College. The tribal member population, within a reasonable distance with access to the college is approximately 4,500. Of that number, 3,500 individuals had enrolled for at least one course. Wouldn't any community in the United States like to make that claim?" (Indian Country Today, November 30, 1998, page B3). Tribal community colleges boast many successes, however, the
funding gap between tribal colleges and mainstream state colleges is continuing to widen. More research pertaining to tribal community colleges and Native American college students is needed to help education, retention and attrition efforts of Native American students.

Limitations of the Study

This research project has a number of significant limitations. First, the population that served as research participants can not be considered representative of the general Native American population in the States of North Dakota or South Dakota, or of the Sisseton Wahpeton reservation, where SWCC is located. This group is likely to be somewhat different from other Native Americans who are not going to college. Therefore, these results can only be considered meaningful in terms of the population under consideration. In addition, no information was available regarding those individuals who refused to participate to determine if attitudes toward higher education or acculturation may have been a factor in their decisions.

Addition limitations included the meaning and content of the scales used. The NACSAS was originally designed for a state university, Native American population. When used at SWCC some of the items came into question that the students did not feel were appropriate for a tribal community
college. Focus groups were requested from this population, but because of time limitations, and other factors, the SWCC students were unable to meet in these focus groups to make recommendations for changes on the two scales. Some did, however, write comments on the questionnaires or did ask questions at the time of administration, if they did not understand any of the questions.

The relationship between Acculturation and College Enthusiasm was not significant. Perhaps one explanation for this may be that the NACSAS is designed for four year college institutions, and since this was the first time it was administered to a tribal community college, be some inconsistencies with the wording of certain items may have occurred. The NPBI is also a fairly new instrument which still needs to be tested more regardless of the fact that it has a college version and a community version. For this study the college version was used.

The NPBI and NACSAS are both fairly new instruments that have limited reliability and validity research, but they appeared to represent the best Native American, "Northern Plains" instruments available at the time of this research.
Recommendations for Further Study

Further research is recommended and should be done utilizing these same two instruments, the NPBI and NACSAS. More research should be conducted with tribal community colleges and how these two instruments can better fit that type of population. Also of interest would be to see if these two scales can be revised to fit a younger, Native population. Native Americans are the most under represented minority group in terms of college success in the United States (NCES, 1990). These students drop out of college at an average rate of 80-85% nationwide (Astin, 1982). This attrition rate is higher for any minority group, and much higher than the majority culture (NCES, 1990).

Very little empirical research has been dedicated to studying the causes that maintain such high attrition rates for Indian students. A fair amount of anecdotal literature exists that calls for research to establish and pursue the positive and negative variables that affect the academic success or failure of these students. Some research has been conducted by individual universities to assess these variables, but the results have not been generalizable because of methodological issues and errors (McDonald, 1990).
Many of the needs mentioned in the Indian college student retention literature cannot be adequately addressed without the development of an instrument that may be used across tribes, colleges, time, and geographical areas. The characteristics of such an instrument need to include the following: 1) it must be simple enough to use with students who are either bilingual or have poor English skills; 2) it must be culturally appropriate so as to not offend or confuse those taking it; and 3) it must have demonstrable psychometric properties reflecting validity and reliability which are necessary for salience and utility (McDonald, 1990).

In summary and in conclusion, this overall study emphasized that differences in attitudes toward higher education and acculturation levels with Native American college students do exist. The most significant finding was the perception of perceived racism at a state institution. Many Native American college students that I know (myself included) have always felt this. Regardless of this negative perception, many of us have found coping skills to deal with problems such as this to go on to succeed in life. For example, utilization of Native American mentors and support networks. The overall attitude has been like this, and I will repeat a quotation that was used by Kickingbird and
Kickingbird (1979): "go to school, not to help yourself, but
to help us" (Wilson, 1983, p. 5). Many Native American
college students are "hanging in there" because of the fact
that they do have a strong support system and they are
strong in their various tribal belief systems. In this age
of newfound hope and tribal aspirations, things will change
in a positive way in the future.

In closing, Dr. Beatrice Medicine's (1981) statement
about being bicultural "Living in a bicultural world, it has
been difficult for me to maintain a Native perspective and
simultaneously maintain the standards of excellence required
in academia. Yet I think it is entirely possible to do this,
to be a Lakota person and yet to be a professor. Those of us
brought up within strong families (tiyospaye), with strong
Lakota beliefs, are able to function in two worlds. There is
something intrinsically valuable about the Lakota life-
style. That view persists, no matter what kinds of
culturally repressive measures—intellectual, social or
religions we have to endure. This is what is so important to
us when we hear Lakota songs, such as the Sun Dance songs—
Lakota hymns, really, because they are about cultural values
and attitudes. The words of the ceremonial songs and the
dances convey these values and attitudes. Surely this is
what Lakota rituals and belief are all about. They are tied
in with the way we perceive a world that is ours, a world that many outsiders try to penetrate by way of history, anthropology, education, or psychology. I have always wondered what it is about Lakota way of life that is so attractive to all. The countless numbers of people who research us constantly. We must have something important (Demallie, R. J. and Parks, D. R., 1981, pp. 159-160)."
APPENDICES
These questions ask you to describe your attitudes, feelings, and participation in Indian and White culture. Some of the questions may not apply to you. In these cases, one of the possible answers allows you to note this.

Read each question. Then fill in the number above the answer that seems most accurate for you, as in the example below.

What is your degree of comfort with paper and pencil questionnaires?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Comfort</th>
<th>Some Comfort</th>
<th>Great Comfort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this example, the person felt moderate but not complete comfort with paper and pencil questionnaires, so filled in 4.

In the case of attitudes and feelings, your first impression is usually correct. We are interested in how much you are influenced by Indian and White culture regardless of your own ethnic background, keeping in mind that no two people have the same backgrounds.

1. What is your degree of comfort around White people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Comfort</th>
<th>Some Comfort</th>
<th>Great Comfort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. What is your degree of comfort around Indian people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Comfort</th>
<th>Some Comfort</th>
<th>Great Comfort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. How interested are you in being identified with Indian culture?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Comfort</th>
<th>Some Comfort</th>
<th>Great Comfort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. How interested are you in being identified with White culture?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Comfort</th>
<th>Some Comfort</th>
<th>Great Comfort</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. How often do you think in English?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Half the time</th>
<th>Often or always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think in English.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NPBI

How often do you think in an American Indian language?

1. I rarely or never think in Indian language.
2. Half the time think in Indian language.
3. Often or always think in Indian language.

How much confidence do you have in a medical doctor?

1. I do not use medical doctors.
2. Have some faith in medical doctors.
3. Have strong faith in medical doctors.

How much confidence do you have in the medicine man/woman?

1. I do not use the medicine man/woman.
2. Have some faith in the medicine man/woman.
3. Have strong faith in the medicine man/woman.

How much is your way of tracing ancestry White (Focus on biological relatives, descent through father?)

1. I trace none of my ancestry according to White custom.
2. I trace some of my ancestry according to White custom.
3. I can trace all my ancestry according to White custom.

How much is your way of tracing ancestry Indian (cousins same as brothers and sisters, descent through mother?)

1. I trace none of my ancestry according to Indian custom.
2. I trace some of my ancestry according to Indian custom.
3. I can trace all my ancestry according to Indian custom.

How much do you attend Indian religious ceremonies? (Sweatlodges, Indian Peyote churches, sundance, vision quest)

1. I have never attended Indian religious ceremonies.
2. I sometimes attend Indian religious ceremonies.
3. I attend Indian religious ceremonies frequently.

How often do you attend Christian religious ceremonies? (Christenings, Baptisms, Church services.)

1. I never attend Christian religious ceremonies.
2. I sometimes attend Christian religious ceremonies.
3. I attend Christian religious ceremonies frequently.

How often do you participate in popular music concerts and dancing?

1. I never participate in popular concerts/dances.
2. I sometimes participate in popular concerts/dances.
3. I participate in popular concerts/dances frequently.

How often do you participate in Indian dancing? (Indian Owl Stomp, Rabbit, etc.)

1. I never participate in Indian dances.
2. I sometimes participate in Indian dances.
3. I participate in Indian dances frequently.

To how many social organizations do you belong where a majority of the members are Indian?

1. I belong to no Indian organizations.
2. I belong to some Indian organizations.
3. Several of the organizations I belong to are Indian organizations.
16. To how many social organization do you belong where a majority of the members are non-Indian?

1 2 3 4 5

I belong to no non-Indian organizations.
I belong to some non-Indian organizations.
Several of the organizations I belong to are non-Indian organizations.

17. How often do you attend White celebrations (White ethnic festivals, parades, barbecues)?

1 2 3 4 5

I never attend White celebrations.
I attend some White celebrations.
I attend White celebrations frequently.

18. How often do you attend Indian celebrations (Pow-wows, Wacipi, Indian rodeos, Indian softball games, Indian running events)?

1 2 3 4 5

I never attend Indian celebrations.
I attend some Indian celebrations.
I attend Indian celebrations frequently.

19. Does anyone in your family speak an American Indian language?

1 2 3 4 5

They rarely or never speak Indian.
They speak Indian part of the time.
They often or always speak Indian.

20. How often does your family speak English?

1 2 3 4 5

They rarely or never speak English.
They speak English part of the time.
They often or always speak English.

21. What is your use of English?

1 2 3 4 5

I rarely or never speak English.
I speak English part of the time.
I often or always speak English.

22. Do you speak an American Indian language?

1 2 3 4 5

I rarely or never speak Indian.
I speak Indian part of the time.
I often or always speak Indian.

23. To what extent do members of your family have traditional Indian last names? (Like "Kills-in-Water").

1 2 3 4 5

None have Indian names.
Some have Indian names.
All have Indian names.

24. To what extent do members of your family have last names that are not traditional Indian last names? (Like "Smith").

1 2 3 4 5

None have White names.
Some have White names.
All have White names.

25. How often do you talk about White topics and White culture in your daily conversation?

1 2 3 4 5

I never engage in topics of conversation about Whites and their culture.
Sometimes I engage in topics of conversation about Whites and their culture.
I engage in topics of conversation about Whites and their culture frequently.

26. How often do you talk about Indian topics and Indian culture in your daily conversation?

1 2 3 4 5

I never engage in topics about Indians and their culture.
Sometimes I engage in conversation about Indians and their culture.
I engage in topics of conversation about Indians and their culture frequently.
27. Do you wear White fashion jewelry?
   1. I never wear fashion jewelry.
   2. I sometimes wear fashion jewelry.
   3. I often wear fashion jewelry.

28. Do you wear Indian jewelry, bracelets, belts, and beads?
   1. I never wear Indian jewelry.
   2. I sometimes wear Indian jewelry.
   3. I often wear Indian jewelry.

29. How Indian is your preference in clothing? (Dressing in bright colors, clothes with Native art work.)
   1. I never dress according to Indian style.
   2. I sometimes dress according to Indian style.
   3. I often dress according to Indian style.

30. How White is your preference in clothing? (Dressing according to White style and fashion.)
   1. I never dress according to White style.
   2. I sometimes dress according to White style.
   3. I often dress according to White style.

J. Allen & C. French
University of South Dakota
Var 4 2 College
8/23/94
**Appendix B**

**NATIVE AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENT ATTITUDES SCALE**

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Please answer the following questions about your college experience. There are no right or wrong answers. Try to be as accurate and honest as you can. Mark the response that you believe to be true most of the time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>not at all true</th>
<th>some what true</th>
<th>very much true</th>
<th>completely true</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. College is the best time in life.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I often feel discriminated against because of my heritage in college.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My relatives and friends at home always support my college efforts.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Most college instructors don't think Indian students can make it.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My classmates always help me feel comfortable and welcome.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I feel many school policies and requirements are not sensitive to the special needs of Native American students.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My high school prepared me well for college.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Cultural differences here make my college experience very difficult.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I have no problem resisting pressure to party at college.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I often have racial slurs or jokes directed at me from non-Indian students.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I often take advantage of the campus support services (Special Services, University counselors, tutors, etc.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I worry a lot about making it through, financially, in college.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I think a college degree will help me get a better job.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The university system tries to make Indian students fail.</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Native American College Student Attitudes Scale
Page Two:

15. I have a clear picture of my career goals when I graduate.
   not at all true   somewhat true   very much true   completely true
   1          2          3          4

16. I feel afraid to approach my instructors to seek their help or understanding because of my heritage.
   1          2          3          4

17. I've made a lot of friends since I came to college.
   1          2          3          4

18. I believe there is racism in the town where my college is located.
   1          2          3          4

19. I regularly seek out people of my culture for understanding and support.
   1          2          3          4

20. I take on too much responsibility for my friends' and families' problems.
   1          2          3          4

21. I'm very interested in the Indian Studies classes at my college.
   1          2          3          4

22. I miss my home so much it makes me want to leave college.
   1          2          3          4

23. I spent a long time planning ahead for college.
   1          2          3          4

24. I'm not that interested in my major.
   1          2          3          4

25. What is your AGE?
   26. SEX (Circle one): Male   Female

27. Your GPA (OVERALL)?
   28. College STATUS (Circle one): Fr   Soph   Jr   Sr   Grad/Prof

29. To what TRIBE do you belong?

30. Hours spent working per week:

31. Hours spend with family/community:
Appendix C

"Attitudes Toward Higher Education and Acculturation Amongst Native American College Students" Study

Informed Consent

This study is being conducted to gather information on Native American college students' thoughts and feelings about themselves and their college experiences. Your participation may provide important information that may contribute to a better understanding of the unique needs of students like yourself, and those yet to come. There are no anticipated risks involved. You are invited to fill out two questionnaires (NPBI and NACSAS), which should only take about 30 minutes to complete. Your name is not required on them.

You may choose not to participate. If you are currently enrolled in a college/university classes, we may arrange with a cooperating instructor, to give you extra credit for your participation in this study. I will mail you a $5.00 honorarium for participating in this research study, if I am unable to pay you at the site of test administration. Please fill out your name and address on this page, so that I can send you the $5.00, and also have a record of who all I have "tested".

I have read the above information and consent to participate in this study.

Name __________________________ Date __________________________

_____________________________________

Address

Please return this page with your completed questionnaires.

You may contact Darlene Wilcox, Researcher, at 605-624-3259, or Dr. Sue Jacobs, at 701-777-2729, if you have any questions/concerns about this study.

Thank you!

Darlene M. Wilcox, M.Ed., ABD
Counseling Psychology Doctoral Candidate
University of North Dakota, Box 8250
Grand Forks, ND 58202
July 2, 1996

Institute Review Board
University of North Dakota
Grand Forks, North Dakota

Dear Sir:

I support "the Native American College Student Attitudes Scale" survey and dissertation that Darlene Wilcox, counseling psychology doctoral candidate will be administering with the Native American students at North Dakota State University.

In order to maintain the confidentiality of the students, we will assist by labeling letters given to us by Ms Wilcox that are pre-stamped and sealed with the survey.

Sincerely,

Doreen Yellow Bird, Director
Multicultural Student Services
REFERENCES


