

TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES:
BEACONS OF HOPE, SOURCES OF NATIVE PRIDE

by

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STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

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ABSTRACT

This study examines whether Tribal Colleges and Universities impact hope and pride within their surrounding communities. As part of the investigation, data was gathered through the distribution of a ten question survey to three participants at both Diné College and Comanche Nation College: the president, a student, and a community member. Further data was collected through testimonials gathered from articles within the Tribal College Journal from the past six years (2008-2013). The goal of the study is to broaden the understanding of Tribal College and University impacts within their communities, and to provide valuable information for the college-community relationship throughout Indian Country.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose of Study

As a result of increased accessibility, programs and funding, TCUs are impacting their communities' opportunities for higher education, and contributing to the rebuilding of their Native Nations. These impacts include increased education and employment of tribal citizens, a revitalization of culture and tradition within Native Nations, and decreased poverty and crime on reservations (The Path of Many Journeys 2007). While these results are undeniably crucial to the understanding of TCU impacts on Native communities, this study focuses on an often-overlooked effect of Tribal Colleges and Universities. The focus of this study is to determine the attitudinal impacts TCUs have on their surrounding communities. For the purposes of this study, "surrounding community" is defined as the citizenry of the Native Nation that has chartered the specific TCU.

Previous scholarship has recognized the wide range of economic and social impacts that TCUs have on their communities, ranging from poverty rates, employment rates, graduation rates, free community services (library, internet, meals, and ceremonies), and overall quality of life (AIHEC AIMS Fact Book 2009–2010 2012). Yet the impacts TCUs have on attitudes within their community pertaining to the TCU have been fundamentally overlooked. Essentially, the only references to impacts on community attitudes exist as briefly-mentioned assumptions within the larger context of overall impacts without further exploration or supporting data (AIHEC AIMS Fact Book 2009–2010 2012). Rather than accepting these assumptions as fact, this study elaborates upon the brief references to attitudinal impacts in an effort to begin filling in the gaps in current literature. Introducing evidence through surveys and *Tribal College Journal* articles

analyzed for this study helps to develop solid reasoning and further illustrate the impacts TCUs are having on community attitudes.

This study concentrates on whether or not TCUs cultivate a sense of hope and pride within citizens of its respective Nation, and if so, how these feelings relate to social cohesion and motivational mindsets within Native communities. “Social cohesion” is defined here as the feelings of togetherness and unity within the community, as well as the coming together of the community in acknowledgment of a shared devotion to, and bond resulting from, maintaining their culture and identity. “Motivational mindsets” is defined here as the enthusiasm and inspiration within the community not only that their Nation is bettering the lives of their people through offerings at a TCU, but also the encouragement citizens of the Nation feel to achieve higher education. The terms “hope” and “pride” were intentionally left undefined in the initial framework of this study so as to keep them free of the imposition of preconceived definitions prior to the collection of data. Taking this precaution allowed individual definitions to come about naturally through survey and article narratives, and produced a variety of definitions observable through the numerous categories that emerged from each term described in later chapters.

Three main research questions guide this study:

- 1) Do Tribal Colleges and Universities impact feelings of hope and pride in citizens of the surrounding community?
- 2) If so, how do these impacts relate to social cohesion and motivational mindsets within the community?
- 3) What are the similarities and differences in opinions of these impacts between administrators and community members?

Methods and Methodology

Perspectives of those influenced by TCUs were collected through the use of surveys distributed to three participants at both Diné College and Comanche Nation College. Specifically, the president, a representative student, and a community member from each of the two TCU communities were surveyed. Additional perspectives were gathered through the review and collection of narratives from *Tribal College Journal* (TCJ) articles from the years 2008-2013. Following the completion of data collection, the analysis of material was guided by the categorizing method described in the *Analyzing Qualitative Data* article retrieved from The University of Wisconsin-Extension's The Learning Store site (Taylor-Powell and Renner 2003). Subsequent results were interpreted using Terry Huffman's adaptation of Transculturation Theory, as defined in *Theoretical Perspectives on American Indian Education: Taking a New Look at Academic Success and the Achievement Gap* (Huffman 2010). While Transculturation Theory was not designed specifically for TCUs, the applicability to this study exists in the ties to Native culture as a source for academic success both within the principles of the theory as well as within the philosophies of TCUs' inherent foundations.

For this study, every issue of *Tribal College Journal* from 2008-2013 was examined for evidence of hope, pride, social cohesion, and motivational mindsets within Native communities regarding TCUs. The search was conducted using ten keywords in order to locate specific references that might offer relevant evidence. Within this six-year timeframe, 749 articles in total appeared (not including correction notifications), 56 of which contained one or more keywords within a relevant context. This means that only 7.47% of the articles within the 2008-2013 timeframe included references relevant to this study. Out of these 56, only one specifically

addressed the topic of this study. The other 55 articles primarily concerned unrelated TCU topics, such as research projects TCU students are involved in and new degrees and programs TCUs are developing. Within these 55 articles, the keywords existed as brief statements within the larger theme of the article. Further, a total of nine additional sources with one or more relevant keywords were found in readings outside of the current research; they have since been incorporated into this study as further evidence of TCU impacts on community attitudes. Combined, the few sentences that exist within the larger context can provide the beginning evidence that TCUs are in fact having an impact on the hope and pride in the citizens of their Nation. Overall, however, this lack of balanced representation within literature demonstrates the need for more research and discussion in the area of attitudinal impacts.

Each of the following chapters presents specific information pertaining to this study's background, methods, and findings. Chapter Two explores the scope of topics discussed in current literature regarding American Indian higher education and the Tribal College movement. Chapter Three explains the data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods used in this study to determine the results. Chapter Four illustrates the academic environment at both Diné College and Comanche Nation College through an in-depth profile of each institution. Chapters Five and Six present the survey and *Tribal College Journal* (TCJ) findings, respectively, determined through the utilization of the methods described in Chapter Three. To conclude, Chapter Seven offers a collective review and conclusion based on the findings presented in Chapters Five and Six, recommendations for future study, and closing thoughts.

While this study sheds light on thoughts and feelings regarding TCUs within their communities, it is in no way intended to make any generalizations about the represented Native Nations as a whole. This study includes a limited number of participants, and as such, the results

are meant to begin to illustrate the impacts TCUs are having on their communities rather than make broad generalizations about an entire Nation. This study strengthens the discussion surrounding attitudinal impacts TCUs have within Native communities, and begins to fill in the gaps in current literature regarding TCUs as a whole.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

History of Tribal Colleges and Universities

The history of Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) extends back nearly half a century to the establishment of Navajo Community College (now known as Diné College) in 1968 (History 2013). In a time riddled with challenges and changes, caught between the end of the United States (U.S.) federal government's termination efforts and the start of the self-determination era, Native Nations asserted their sovereignty and determination to regain control over their own people's education through the development of TCUs. The founders of the first TCUs recognized the failings of centuries of poor attempts by the U.S. government to assimilate American Indians through Western education. Determined to change the perspectives and lives of Native people by means of offering equivalent education within their own culturally-relevant framework, the TCU movement was initiated. Since then, nearly 40 additional TCUs have been formed, 34 of them fully accredited by the same organizations that accredits mainstream institutions (TCU Timeline 2013).

TCUs are tribally chartered, and as such are a distinctive act of inherent sovereignty held by Native Nations. In addition to a tribal charter, to be considered a TCU the institution must also have a majority of American Indians on a politically-independent governing board as well as within the student body (TCU Timeline 2013). Due to the limitation by U.S. legislation to one college per Native Nation, TCUs combat this restriction through opening branches across their respective reservations. This allows TCUs the ability to reach out and address the need of accessibility for their citizens across their Nations. Currently, there are over 75 campuses across 15 states with an additional one in the Canadian province of Alberta, (Tribal Colleges and

Universities 2013) collectively providing an education to over 30,000 students (Tribal Colleges 2013).

Shortly after the opening of Navajo Community College came the first federal legislation specifically intended to support TCU operation. In order to assist in funding this institution, the U.S. government passed the Navajo Community College Act in 1971. While funding was inadequate, this legislation was significant for the reason that the Secretary of the Interior dispensed the funds directly to the Navajo government rather than to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to manage for the tribe (Stahl 1979). The next year, in 1972, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) was founded by the first six TCUs in order to serve as a collective and cooperative resource for TCU leaders and their constituents (About AIHEC 2013). The original six institutions were DQ University, Navajo Community College, Oglala Sioux Community College, Sinte Gleska College, Standing Rock Community College, and Turtle Mountain Community College (Gipp 2009, 8). Through AIHEC, TCUs share knowledge and work towards their common goals of expanding Native Nation self-determination efforts over their own education, increasing accessibility of higher education to Native students, and advocating for tribal rights.

Less than a decade after the Navajo Nation carried out their own self-determination efforts with the formation of Navajo Community College, the U.S. government passed the 1975 Indian Self-determination and Education Assistance Act (PL 93-638). Federal termination policy was reversed and self-determination of Native Nations became the focus and ultimate goal (The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development 2008, 201). Although many Native Nations were ahead of U.S. policy through their actions in opening their own TCUs prior to the policy shift, the passage of this legislation was nevertheless valuable recognition of their goals.

Motivation within Nations to continue reclaiming control over their own education further intensified, and the TCU movement continued to grow.

Three years later, through AIHEC's advocacy efforts, the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978 became law (Stein 2009, 24). The federal funding received through this act was, and still is, minimal, resulting in TCUs struggling to fund basic operations. As part of the 1978 Act, Title I "authorized \$6000 per American Indian FTE (full-time equivalent student). Based on the Consumer Price Index over the past several decades, the authorization should now be \$8,450 per FTE to have kept pace with inflation. Either figure is considerably higher than the actual amount of \$4,447 per FTE appropriated in the 2005 federal budget for funding Title 1 the Tribal College Act," (Stein 2009, 25). Put another way, "the current federal funding per Indian student is at about 75 percent of the authorized level of \$6,000 per Indian student and lags behind the money received by non-Indian community colleges, which have much greater access to federal, state, and local dollars" that TCUs don't receive (The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development 2008, 212). It is important to note that this legislation does not provide funding for non-Native students. Consequently, TCUs do not receive funding for every student to whom it provides an education.

Such inadequate funding continuously hampers TCUs' abilities to offer financial aid to students, often hindering accessibility of higher education to Native students. In order to assist all Native students in their endeavors to attain higher education, whether at a TCU or not, the American Indian College Fund (AICF) was established in 1989 (About Us: History and Mission 2013). AICF works in unison with AIHEC to increase opportunities for Native students to attain higher educations. AICF raises money through both organizational and individual donors to provide financial aid to Native students and allow more students the ability to afford a college

education. Five years after the formation of AICF, Congress granted TCUs Land Grant status in 1994, broadening resources available to TCUs and better-enabling them to collaborate with mainstream institutions (Stein 2009, 32). Despite these developments, TCUs are still in need to adequate funding from the Federal government.

In spite of lingering challenges, TCUs continue to have significantly positive impacts within Native communities. TCUs are now a crucial part of increasing attainment of higher education by Native people as part of the rebuilding process within Native Nations. Alongside providing higher education opportunities to their communities, TCUs are also inherently aiding to lessen the anxiety and mistrust of Western higher education within Native communities. TCUs seek to bridge the gap between Native peoples and higher education, merging the format of Western education within the framework of Native culture and tradition. They are demonstrating that when approached properly, higher education, even within the Western structure, has a lot to offer Native Nations in the way of advancing self-determination. The victories seen up to this point have encouraged Native Nations that success the way they define it is possible and is happening every day, partly due to the development of TCUs. These successes refute historical notions that Native peoples must leave their culture behind and fully assimilate into Western philosophies in order to successfully attain higher education.

TCUs act as a stepping stone for their Nation's citizens, whether in the form of achieving higher education, job-training through certificate programs, or through their responsiveness to community needs (programs, services, forums, etc.). They provide their communities with more than an opportunity for general higher education; they provide a culturally-relevant education specific to their unique identities. Credentials offered range from certificate programs to Master's degrees, all specific to the community's needs in an accessible and more familiar

setting. For many Native students, leaving home to go to college is not only an intimidating concept, but is also often impossible due to familial obligations and cost. Staying involved in their community is reflected through positive force “encourage(ing) entrepreneurship and break(ing) the cycle of resignation and colonial psyche,” (Benham and Mann 2003, 187).

The past two decades have seen more recognition by the federal government of the legitimacy and importance of TCUs through the passage of executive orders by the most recent three US presidents. The first, Executive Order 13021, was signed on October 19, 1996 by President William J. Clinton with the aim of increasing recognition, support, and resources for TCUs, already provided to mainstream institutions (Executive Order 13021 1996, 54929). Six years later on July 3, 2002, President George W. Bush signed Executive Order 13270, reiterating the need for the federal government to support TCUs stating: “The Federal Government’s commitment to tribal colleges is reaffirmed and the private sector can and should contribute to the colleges’ educational and cultural missions,” (Executive Order 13270 2002, 45288). Most recently, President Barack H. Obama signed Executive Order 13592 on December 2, 2011, reconfirming the US government’s support of American Indian education. This latest decree is notably different than its two predecessors in several ways. Whereas the earlier two only covered TCUs, this new Order encompasses all stages of education, including TCUs. Additionally, it created the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education, an organization dedicated to the support and advancement of educational quality and opportunities for Native peoples. (Executive Order 13592 2011) Although these three Executive Orders are not enough to bring TCUs to a level of support needed for adequate growth, they are nonetheless important steps to improving access and resources for American Indian education.

In order to further increase learning and experience opportunities for their students, TCUs have begun to collaborate with other schools and organizations, expanding resources for students as well as for the institutions. For example, in 1999 the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, and the National Association For Equal Opportunity in Higher Education came together to create the Alliance for Equity in Higher Education. Separately, each organization aimed at increasing educational opportunities for a certain group of minority students, but together they were able to pool resources to create an even more powerful entity aimed at increasing education opportunities for minority students as a whole. (Alliance for Equity in Higher Education 2014) One year later, the Arizona Tri-Universities for Indian Education (ATUIE) was established by three of the largest universities in Arizona: Northern Arizona University, Arizona State University, and The University of Arizona. The organization later extended membership to Diné College and Tohono O’odham Community College in 2006, and Maricopa Community Colleges in 2007. Dedicated to the advancement of higher educational attainment for Native students, ATUIE continuously promotes the expansion of access and opportunities for Native students at all educational institutions through forums, student programs, and recruitment efforts. (About Us 2014)

TCUs are also collaborating with federal agencies such as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) through grants provided by the National Science Foundation (NSF). The Tribal Colleges and Universities Program (TCUP) is a specific program offered through NSF that funds predominantly-Native student-serving institutions to support programs that correspond with NSF’s goals of increasing student interest in the sciences and mathematics (Tribal Colleges and Universities Program (TCUP) 2014). Not only are these programs offering students real-life experiences that will help them secure stable and lucrative jobs in the future,

they are also enabling individual Native students to become role models for the upcoming generations who will soon be considering college and a career. The potential influential opportunities these may have on American Indian higher education is great, and there is no telling the impact these students' success will have on Indian Country as a whole.

The hard work and determination of the faculty, staff, students, and supporters of TCUs and American Indian higher education as a whole continues to produce results, enabling TCUs to sustain growth despite the often-difficult circumstances. Despite continuing challenges, the TCU movement continues to grow in popularity and possibilities. Recent events continue to shape and transform the future of the TCU movement and American Indian higher education as a whole. For example, Comanche Nation College was awarded candidacy status for initial accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission in 2012 as a result of hard work and dedication (2011-2012 Annual Report 2014, 5), Navajo Technical College changed its name in 2013 to Navajo Technical University in order to reflect its continual growth as a higher educational institution (Navajo Technical College Becomes University 2013), and there are plans materializing for the first California TCU to be established in 2014 through partnership of over 40 California tribes. California Tribal College (CTC), as it is to be called, will be "the nation's 38th tribal college [and] would serve California's 130 American Indian tribes and the large urban American Indian/Alaska Native populations in the state," (Lee 2013). Furthermore, existing TCUs continue to add degree offerings for their students including new Bachelor's and Master's degrees, as well as launch additional college branches across their Nations, enabling them to reach more people, thus increasing their widespread impacts within their communities.

Scope of Current Literature

Scholarship on Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) covers a wide range of topics from throughout TCU history. Literature spans from the history of American Indian higher education as a whole, the history of the TCU movement, statistical impacts of TCUs such as retention rates, and minimal mention of TCUs' attitudinal impacts. Collectively, this information provides for a better understanding of the context in which TCUs have formed and persist in contemporary times. Also demonstrated is how they have impacted, and continue to impact, their surrounding communities.

The literature on the history of American Indian higher education originates with the first European efforts to educate and assimilate American Indians through present day, contemporary issues. Grouped into three political settings, the timeline covers the colonial era (first "Indian" schools), the federal era (boarding schools), and the self-determination era (TCU and advocacy). The colonial era is defined as the very first European efforts to educate American Indians in an attempt to assimilate them into Western society. The federal era is defined by the U.S. government's efforts to control American Indian education through removal of Native youth and placement in the boarding school system as yet another attempt to educate and consequently assimilate them into Western society. The self-determination era is defined as Native efforts to reclaim control over their own education. (Brayboy et al. 2012; Carnegie 1989; The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development 2008; McClellan et al. 2005)

Another common topic within the history of American Indian higher education is the issue of Native students' needs not being met within mainstream academic systems. This neglect has led to an overall poor state of Native student achievement in higher education, seen in high need for remediation, and low enrollment, retention and graduation rates. When compared to all

other ethnicities, Native students fall short in every category (Guillory 2009; Shotton 2012; Shotton et al. 2013). These statistics are the results of a lack of attention and effort given to the unique needs of Native students rather than an inability of the students themselves.

Literature on the Tribal College movement begins in the late 1960's when Navajo Community College, now Diné College, became the first TCU, and follows the movement's development through present day. Current issues discussed include efforts made by increasing numbers of Native Nations to open TCUs, struggles of TCUs to become fully-accredited, and issues with acquiring adequate funding. However, there are also recurring positive themes such as increasing numbers of Native students choosing to go to college, improvement in retention and graduation rates, and collective efforts between TCUs and supportive organizations to improve accessibility and quality of higher education for Native students. (Benham and Stein 2003; Stein 1992; Warner and Gipp 2009)

Scholarship discussing TCU impacts on their communities covers a relatively large scope. Most literature focuses on issues faced by TCUs such as funding issues, curricula development, remediation needs of incoming students, and retention and graduation rates. Other literature addresses the positive economic and social impacts that TCUs have on their surrounding communities. Such impacts include reduced crime rates, reduced poverty, increased employment on the reservation, and improved health and life expectancy. Combined, these impacts have an empowering force within the community, significantly improving life on the reservation. (The Path of Many Journeys 2007; AIHEC AIMS Fact Book 2009–2010 2012)

Various reasons stand behind such positive outcomes; however one of the most popular perceptions is the cyclical positive energy within the community as a result of these impacts. When students are putting their attention towards courses and schoolwork, they have less interest

and time to become involved in negative associations such as drugs and alcohol, gangs, and indifference to productivity. Granted not all students are able to maintain this success, but those who do are fueled by their determination and feeling of purpose to keep them focused. Other reasons include the progression from completing certificate and degree programs to staying and returning to the reservation to work to improve life for their communities. (Benham and Mann 2003) Staying involved in their community is reflected through positive force “encourage(ing) entrepreneurship and break(ing) the cycle of resignation and colonial psyche” (Benham and Mann 2003, 187). Not only does this lower the unemployment rates on reservations, it also results in increased income for their families, therefore reducing poverty rates within Native communities (Building Strong Communities 2001; Championing Success 2006).

The literature focused on attitudinal aspects, such as hope and pride, is minimal. Essentially, the only mention of related impacts exists in the larger context of overall impacts, occurring momentarily in a fleeting line or two. Even then, they are stated as assumptions without further exploration or supporting data. For example, as previously explained in the Introduction, out of the 749 *Tribal College Journal* articles within the 2008-2013 timeframe examined in this study, just 7.47% were applicable. Furthermore, only one of these articles specifically addressed the topic of this study while the remaining articles primarily discussed separate subjects. This distinct lack of representation within current literature demonstrates that this is an area in need of further research.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Objective

The intent of this study is to gather perspectives from a wide range of individuals involved and impacted by Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). For this reason, method of data collection consisted of providing participants with surveys as well as reviewing *Tribal College Journal* (TCJ) articles for relevant narratives. (See Appendix for surveys) In order to ensure data collected embraced varied perspectives, surveys were sent to three specific individuals within the Diné College and Comanche Nation College communities. The participants to whom the surveys were distributed included the president, a student, and a community member. Based on one's relationship with the TCU, perspectives are expected to vary; a TCU president's perspective of the institution could possibly differ from what a student experiences, or how a community member feels. Each contributes a unique perspective on the college, and taken as a whole, offers a well-rounded view of the institution's impact in its community.

For this reason, rather than focusing on what only one group felt, this study sought varied perspectives so as to gain a diverse look into TCUs' impacts on community attitudes. In this study, "community attitudes" includes all those who are involved with the TCU, such as administrators and students, in addition to those impacted by the TCU's presence, such as citizens of the Native Nation. A TCU community does not just comprise of those who work at and/or attend the institution. By nature of being a part of the Native Nation that has chartered a TCU, the community at large is also impacted simply through the presence of the TCU and the effects it has on the Nation as a whole. The college-community relationship is crucial to the

success of TCUs, hence why community members' opinions of their respective TCU are essential to acknowledge. Therefore, it was vital to include community members in this study.

Three main research questions guide this study:

- 1) Do Tribal Colleges and Universities impact feelings of hope and pride in citizens of the surrounding community?
- 2) If so, how do these impacts relate to social cohesion and motivational mindsets within the community?
- 3) What are the similarities and differences in opinions of these impacts between administrators and community members?

Research and survey questions were written so as to not predetermine results. For example, the question “*Do* TCUs impact hope and pride?” is posed rather than “*How do* TCUs impact hope and pride?”. This allows for the possibility to find that they do not, rather than assuming that they do from the start. Survey questions are written similarly in order to allow participants to respond freely rather than influencing them to answer in a particular way, potentially biasing the results. Participants were invited to provide as much or as little information as they considered appropriate so as to not restrict or force their answers.

Data Collection

Surveys comprised of ten (10) questions were designed to gather participants' views on what they have seen and experienced throughout their communities in regards to the impact of their TCU on community attitudes. Additionally, narratives were collected through review of *Tribal College Journal* (TCJ) issues from 2008-2013. Of particular interest were the anecdotes within the surveys and article narratives that help to explain and illustrate TCU impacts, giving a

tangible voice to said impressions. Collectively, these sources proved beneficial to gaining a better understanding of the community's feelings towards their TCU; they expanded upon notions found in the literature and revealed new information not previously cited. Due to distance and time constraints, most interaction with survey participants occurred via email and over the phone. Likewise, data collection required surveys to be distributed and returned via email.

Once surveys and article narratives were collected, the potential arose to find similarities as well as differences in sentiments of those in administrative positions at TCUs as compared to those from within the community. Identifying both is vital to building a better relationship between a TCU and its community. Finding consensus in opinions is valuable for the reason that knowing what is working helps those in both positions nurture that connection, leading to a better relationship between a TCU and its community. Being able to identify any disconnects is equally important for the reason that it provides the opportunity to mend them. In addition to facilitating a better understanding of the relationship and impacts a TCU has within its community, the ability to shed light on what is needed for the future is strengthened. Through a better awareness of impacts and aspirations, efforts can be adjusted to encourage and build upon the positives, as well as work to correct any existing negatives or disconnects, therefore enhancing the benefits for the community as a whole.

Surveys

In total, six (6) individuals completed surveys in order to produce data for this section. The president, a student, and a community member from both Diné College and Comanche Nation College were surveyed in this study. Participants were asked to respond to questions

based on their own personal experiences with their TCU. The presidents received one set of survey questions while the students and the community members received another. Each set focuses on the unique perspectives each participant group can provide based on their distinct relationship with their TCU. The questions within each set can be separated into two categories. The first addresses concepts of social cohesion that reflect more on the individual including their general feelings about the TCU, attendance and participation in events, utilization of resources and services, and opinion on the efforts made by the institution to compliment Native culture and tradition. The second addresses mindsets that reflect on the community as whole such as motivation of community members to attend college, seen in increased numbers of enrollment in both traditional and non-traditional students, reciprocal involvement of the TCU and its community, and a sense of accessibility and attainability in relation to enhancing the community through self-determination efforts and nation building.

As part of reducing participant risk, informed consent and identity protection measures were utilized for participants' protection. Each participant was given a thorough explanation of the research and intent, provided with a consent form, and an opportunity to ask any questions that they might have. Due to the fact that this study involves Native communities where many people know each other well, one possible associated risk included identifiable participants based on information and stories provided. Therefore, keeping participant identities anonymous plays a crucial role in this study. Taking these precautions is important when working with any participants, but it is particularly important when working with Native communities where there has been a damaging history of experience with researchers and misuse of data. Native communities are therefore understandably sensitive to research practices in their communities. This study acknowledges this fact and is sensitive and responsive to this matter.

Tribal College Journal Articles

In addition to survey results, other evidence of hope, pride, social cohesion, and motivational mindsets as a result of TCUs were introduced through relevant narratives within *Tribal College Journal* (TCJ) articles. TCJ publishes four issues annually, one of which is a student edition that presents written works, stories, and opinions by TCU students. Every TCJ article within the last six years (2008-2013) was reviewed and examined in search of references pertinent to this study's area of focus. In total, 749 articles were reviewed within the 2008-2013 timeframe.

In order to make the best use of time, articles were reviewed using the University of Arizona library's online E-Journals "Ethnic NewsWatch" database. The automated "Find" searching tool was utilized to comb through each article for ten (10) separate keywords. The keywords selected for use in the search for relevant references are "hope," "pride," "proud," "attitude," "attitudinal," "motivate," "motivational," "social," "cohesion," and "mindset." Variations of the same word, for example "motivate" vs. "motivational," was necessary in order to ensure thorough search results. Due to the slightly different spelling, search results would be hindered if variations were not included while using the "Find" tool. For example, "motivational" will not come up in the search results when the word "motivate" is typed into the search bar. Variations were therefore included so as to avoid the risk of overlooking valuable data.

Careful precautions were taken to ensure that every opportunity for data within search results was examined. Using a broad keyword such as "hope" opens up the possibility for search results to include irrelevant uses of the keyword interspersed with those that are relevant.

Consequently, every appearance of a keyword in an article was examined for potential context relevancy. For example, in the article entitled “AIHEC commends North Dakota legislature” (2013, 1), the word “hope” is used to explain that “...TCUs serve as ‘beacons of *hope*’ in their respective communities.” The use of this keyword has clear relevancy to this study, as it is used to illustrate the positive presence TCUs have within their communities. Conversely, in the article entitled “NWIC Wins AIHEC Basketball Title Again” (2013, 1), the word “hope” is used to explain that “Northwest Indian College (NWIC, Bellingham, WA) men's basketball team ...took on larger competitors in *hopes* that the games would prepare them for the tribal college basketball competition of the year: the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) national basketball tournament.” In this sentence, the use of the keyword “hope” has no relevancy to this study’s topic, and was thus omitted from this study’s practical data. Making these distinctions was crucial to accurate and complete data collection. In total, out of the 749 TCJ articles reviewed within the 2008-2013 timeframe, 56 contained one or more relevant keyword usages.

Furthermore, nine additional sources of evidence with one or more relevant keywords were encountered in readings outside of this study’s research, consisting of older TCJ articles (7), an Indian Country Today Media Network article (1), and a page from the American Indian College Fund (AICF) website (1). Since seven out of the nine sources were TCJ articles, all were subsequently incorporated into the previously compiled data for this section. While the integration of this additional evidence assists in further demonstrating the impacts TCUs have within their communities, it must be kept separate when calculating the proportion of relevant article occurrences within the 2008-2013 timeframe. Incorporating the additional data after calculating the initial percentage protected the accuracy of relevant representation within the

literature. For this reason, the additional nine sources were added to this section's total data after the complete review of the 2008-2013 TCJ articles.

Analysis

Following the completion of data collection, the analysis of material was conducted using the categorization method described in the Taylor-Powell and Renner article entitled "Analyzing Qualitative Data" (2003). Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) separate the qualitative analysis process into five steps: 1) "Get to know your data," 2) "Focus the analysis," 3) "Categorize information," 4) "Identify patterns and connections within and between categories," and 5) "Interpretation: Bringing it all together." Use of these guidelines in this study provided an approach through which to ensure thorough analysis of data.

Subsequent results were interpreted using Terry Huffman's adaptation of Transculturation Theory, as defined in *Theoretical Perspectives on American Indian Education: Taking a New Look at Academic Success and the Achievement Gap* (Huffman 2010). Huffman states that "the basic premise of transculturation theory...asserts that American Indian students engage in the process of learning the cultural nuances found in mainstream education while retaining and relying upon their cultural heritage to forge a strong identity and sense of purpose" (Huffman 2010, 170). While Transculturation Theory was not designed specifically for the tribal college context, the applicability to this study exists in the ties to Native cultural awareness as a source for academic success both within the principles of the theory as well as within the philosophies of TCUs' inherent foundations. While this theoretical concept was slightly modified in the application of this study, the relationship between the theory and TCUs it is not a far stretch. The utilization of Transculturation Theory within the analysis process provided this

study with a theoretical framework specific to Native populations. So often the Native cultural element is left out of mainstream research and institutions, yet it is frequently connected to the strength and success of Native students and communities alike. For this reason, ensuring the use of a culturally-relevant interpretive framework in this study was imperative.

Surveys

Following collection of completed surveys, responses were reviewed within the context of each TCU. Responses were separated into two sets of three participants, one for each TCU, and subsequently examined as two individual groups. Analysis was conducted in this manner with the intent to produce results specific to each TCU, and thus be able to represent each institution individually in the final results. Additionally, selecting participants with different relationships with their TCUs enabled this study to represent a wider range of perspectives on TCU impacts than would have been acquired if all participants had the same relationship, for instance, if only students were surveyed. Presenting varied participants' responses within the framework of individual TCUs provides for a better understanding of the specific impacts each TCU has within their communities.

Once responses were sorted by TCU, they were reviewed for recurring themes within each set. As themes emerged, responses were coded and organized by TCU, creating two distinct sets of data, one for Diné College and one for Comanche Nation College. Following the review and categorization of all survey responses, the narratives and anecdotes provided were examined within the concepts of hope, pride, motivational mindsets, and social cohesion. The results produced through this analysis aided in answering the questions posed in the surveys as well as

the research questions as a whole. Detailed explanations of each TCU's survey results are provided in the Survey Findings chapter.

Tribal College Journal Articles

During the collection and review of *Tribal College Journal* (TCJ) data for this study, every article found to have a relevant reference was printed, and documentation was made of keyword(s) and context. Following the complete review of TCJ articles within the 2008-2013 timeframe, keywords were highlighted separate colors and sorted into distinct keyword sets. They were then counted so that an accurate percentage of relevant articles within this six-year timeframe could be calculated. Articles that included more than one keyword were then copied so that a duplicate could be designated to each necessary keyword set. Afterwards, the additional nine sources found in readings outside of this research were incorporated into the data pool. In total, the 56 TCJ articles from the six-year timeframe, together with the nine additional sources, amounts to 65 sources in this section of data.

Once sorted into keyword sets, these sources were reviewed for recurring themes, contextually analyzed, and subsequently categorized within the concepts of hope, pride, motivational mindsets, and social cohesion. Categorization of themes necessitated an understanding of from where individuals' feelings originate. Therefore, specific interest was in what these terms mean to the people using them to express their opinions regarding their TCU. When someone says the TCU brings pride to the community, what do they mean? Similarly, when a student says they have hope because of the TCU, what do they specifically have hope for? The results produced in this section further assisted in answering the research questions

posed in this study. Detailed explanations of each category within keyword sets are provided in the following Findings chapter.

Interpretation

Following data analysis utilizing the process described in the first four steps of the Taylor-Powell and Renner article (2003), Terry Huffman's adaptation of Transculturation Theory (2010) was applied to the fifth and final step of Interpretation. While Transculturation Theory was not specifically created for application to the tribal college context, it does have a practical connection to this study. The recognition and appreciation this theoretical framework demonstrates for Native culture as a source of contemporary personal success compliments the foundational ideologies of the TCU movement as a whole. For this reason, Transculturation Theory was selected for this study.

Despite the correlation between Transculturation Theory and TCU philosophies through their shared focus on culture and identity as a source of strength and success within Native communities, slight modifications had to be made in the application to this study. While Huffman's (2010) adaptation is directed specifically towards Native students within mainstream institutions of higher education, this study focuses on tribally-operated institutions of higher education and does not focus solely on Native students. Though some adjustments were made in order to adequately apply Transculturation Theory to this study, its relevance is quite strong and modifications were reasonably simple to make. The utilization of this specific theory in the analysis process provided this study with an appropriate theoretical framework with which to engage Native participants.

Central to the structure and goals of all TCUs is that of bringing the Western education form into their cultural contexts within an academic framework. This can be seen in the design of academic programs and degrees through effective efforts to embrace both Native culture and traditions with the Western educational structure. Huffman (2010) speaks to this role of embracing and blending both aspects on behalf of academic success when he maintains that “Transculturation Theory rejects the notion that American Indian students must undergo some form of assimilation in order to succeed academically” (171). This statement also speaks directly to the experience of Indian Country as a whole. Despite centuries of attempts to assimilate Native people into mainstream society, Native Nations collectively maintained a powerful refusal to abandon their tribal identities. As a result, Native people are proving that they can indeed be successful in contemporary society while also retaining and strengthening their Native identities, communities, and Nations. This element of Native success is regarded as essential to Huffman’s (2010) theoretical framework as well as to the foundations and goals of TCUs.

Additionally, Transculturation Theory (Huffman 2010) emphasizes that through the process of developing their own identity, Native students create for themselves personal strength and confidence. This newfound awareness acts as a tool with which they can create success for themselves in contemporary mainstream higher education while also staying true to their Native identities. Huffman (2010) explains that for Native students, “a strong cultural identity serves as an emotional and cultural anchor. Individuals gain self-assuredness, self-worth, even a sense of purpose from their ethnicity. By forging a strong cultural identity, individuals develop the confidence to explore a new culture and not be intimidated. They do not have to fear cultural loss through assimilation. They know who they are and why they are engaged in mainstream education” (171). This development of a “strong cultural identity” acts as a support system for

Native students that can be used to acquire success in mainstream higher education, and thus create an even stronger contemporary Native identity.

Similarly, it was through an increasing recognition of Native identity and dedication to strengthening community from which the TCU movement emerged. As a result, TCUs know what they are and who it is that they serve. They use this knowledge to instill this same sense of identity, awareness, and confidence in their communities so as to enable citizens to find personal success as well. This is true not just for their students but for all members of the community, who see what the TCU is doing for their Nation as a whole. TCUs act as places of cultural and educational support, supporting growth and well-being on both the personal and community levels. The shared acknowledgment of Native culture and identity as sources of strength and success rather than a hindrance is what connects Transculturation Theory (Huffman 2010) so closely to the purpose of TCUs, and thus to this study.

Limitations

Though much effort was made to create a solid framework for this study, certain circumstances did place some limitations on the range of its capacity. For example, specific limitations exist within the selection of two survey participants. First, the individual who completed the Diné College student survey is an alumnus of Diné College, and is now a Ph.D. student at a mainstream university. While he is no longer directly within the Diné College community, he answered the survey questions based on his experiences at Diné College. Though his responses are from a few years back, they nonetheless provide insight into the student experience at Diné College. Secondly, while the individual who completed a CNC community member survey is an enrolled citizen of the Comanche Nation, he does not live within CNC's

surrounding community. However, he does have experience with the college and can contribute his perspective to the overall representation of CNC's impacts. As a citizen of the Comanche Nation, his insight is valuable to gaining a better understanding of the college-community relationship.

Additionally, as explained above, while Transculturation Theory (Huffman 2010) shares many similarities with TCUs in principles and foundations, the theory itself was not created specifically for the tribal college context. While there are clear connections between the theory and TCU philosophies, slight modifications were necessary in order to ensure proper applicability for interpretation of data in this study. The shared focus on Native culture and identity as a source of strength and success within Native communities provides this study with an appropriate theoretical framework with which to analyze Native perspectives within a Native context.

Despite these limitations, subsequent findings nevertheless successfully illustrate TCU impacts on attitudes within their respective communities as well as within Indian Country as a whole. However, it is also important to recognize that this study is in no way aimed at making any broad generalizations about the represented Native Nations. While the narratives collected in this study are only a small fraction of opinions concerning the TCU movement as a whole, they nonetheless solidly represent the pictures that they paint as pieces of the whole, and as a result, firmly support the goals of this study. Resultant findings produced by the methods described in this chapter are explained in the Survey Findings and Tribal College Journal Findings chapters.

Chapter 4: Institutional Profiles

Since the 1968 enactment of the initial Navajo Community College charter, nearly 40 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) have been developed across the United States (U.S.), with an additional TCU extending into the Canadian province of Alberta (About AIHEC 2013). This study focuses on two distinctive TCUs: Diné College and Comanche Nation College. These two institutions developed in very different times within the history of American Indian higher education, and as such, provide unique views into the attitudinal impacts TCUs have within their surrounding communities. Yet, while these two institutions are unique in many ways, as tribal colleges, they also share many fundamental similarities.

This chapter is divided into two sections, one for each TCU of focus. Each section begins with a historical summary which establishes the roots of each institution's beginnings. Next is an assessment of the current state of each TCU in order to demonstrate the growth each has experienced as well as the environment in which they presently operate. Together, this information illustrates the overall relationship and influence these institutions have within their communities. While these institutions do function independently, it is also important to consider the interconnectedness of all TCUs for the reason that they work collectively toward the same goals: that of enhancing access, quality, and relevance of higher education for all Native people.

Diné College



Figure (1): Diné College Logo. (<http://www.dinecollege.edu>)

Founded	1968 (46 years)
Campus Locations	Tsaile, Arizona (main) Window Rock, Arizona Chinle, Arizona Tuba City, Arizona Shiprock, New Mexico Crownpoint, New Mexico
Length of Academic Programs	Less than 1 year – 4 years
Number of Degree Programs	1 Bachelor Degree 22 Associate Degrees 4 Certificate Programs
Total Faculty	Fall 2012: 63
Total Student Enrollment	Fall 2012: 1,970
Percentage of American Indian/Alaskan Native Students	Fall 2012: 98%
Student Gender	Fall 2012: 68% Female / 32% Male

Figure (2): Diné College Demographics. (General Catalog: 2013-2014; Diné College Statistics)

Institutional Background

In the early 1960's, many years were spent in open- and closed-door discussions within the Navajo Nation regarding the feasibility of opening a tribal college. Key players within the Navajo Nation, including tribal Council members Guy Gorman and Allen Yazzie, then-director of the recently contracted Navajo Rough Rock School Dr. Ned Hatathli, and non-Native ally to the Navajo Nation Dr. Robert Roessel, came together to launch endeavors toward opening such an institution. Several years later they were joined by federal representatives who strongly believed in their efforts, including Dr. Sanford Kravitz and Richard Boone from within the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), to assist from within the U.S. political realm. With associates and supporters within and outside of the Navajo Nation, collaborations toward opening a tribal college were effectively on their way. (Stein 1992, 10)

On May 7, 1968, an open meeting was held in the Navajo Nation capital of Window Rock, Arizona in order to explore the practicality of opening a tribal college. Support for the planned college extended throughout the community, including then-Chairman Raymond Nakai who strongly supported the idea of a college. The next two months were spent acquiring initial funding sources, arranging appointments, and finalizing official documents. The result of these efforts was the formal charter by the Navajo Nation on July 17, 1968 of Navajo Community College, now known as Diné College, as the first tribal college to emerge in Indian Country. (Stein 1992, 11)

Obtaining funding was an essential part of the planning and economic security for the institution in its first years of operation. Those involved were very well aware of this need, and through their efforts were able to collectively raise enough to initiate the vision of creating a

tribal college. The Navajo Nation Council approved a contribution of \$250,000, the OEO confirmed \$450,000 for each of the first three years, and the philanthropic organization, the Donner Foundation, granted \$60,000 for the first year, and pledged another \$100,000 for the second (Stein 1992, 11-12). With funding acquired for the first few years of operation, Navajo Community College was able to take the first steps towards officially opening its doors. A provisional campus was set up in the town of Many Farms, AZ on the Navajo reservation and began holding classes in January of 1969 (Stein 1992, 12). Student enrollment at Navajo Community College in the 1969-1970 academic year totaled 309, experiencing steady growth, as well as the introduction of non-Native students, in the following years (Stein 1992, 19).

Dr. Roessel was given the distinction of being selected as Navajo Community College's first president, in appreciation of his contributions in developing the college (Stein 1992, 12). However, all involved in the conception and construction of the college, Dr. Roessel included, recognized the importance of having a Native, specifically Navajo, president at the helm of the college. Tribal control of the education of the Nation could not genuinely happen until a tribal citizen held the role of Navajo Community College president. With this objective in mind, and with the support and approval of the college's Board of Regents, Dr. Roessel handed the reins over to Dr. Ned Hatathli on July 1, 1969, after just shy of a year in office (Stein 1992, 15). The selection of Dr. Hatathli as Navajo Community College's first Navajo president sent a strong message to the U.S. government and to Indian Country as a whole that tribal control of tribal education was possible and was on the rise.

While the first official classes offered by Navajo Community College were in Many Farms, AZ, it was soon decided that the main campus was to be built in Tsaile, AZ, just an hour North of the Navajo Nation capital of Window Rock, AZ. The college acquired over 1,000 acres

for construction through a contribution from the lands collectively owned by the family of then-board member Yazzie Begay (Stein 1992, 12). Since the 1968 charter, Diné College has expanded across the Navajo Nation by means of opening branches so as to better-reach its citizens, in what it terms a “One College Multi-Site System” (Diné College 2013). Currently, over 250,000 people live on the Navajo reservation spanning a vast amount of land, encompassing nearly 27,500 square miles within the states of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah (History: Introduction 2014) . With this in mind, it is clear why the college chooses to operate a Multi-Site System in order to best-serve its citizens. In addition to the main campus in Tsaile, AZ, Diné College now has sites in Window Rock, Chinle, and Tuba City, AZ, as well as in Shiprock and Crownpoint, NM, generating the motto “The Navajo Nation is Our Campus” (Diné College 2013). See Figure (3) below for a map of Diné College campuses.

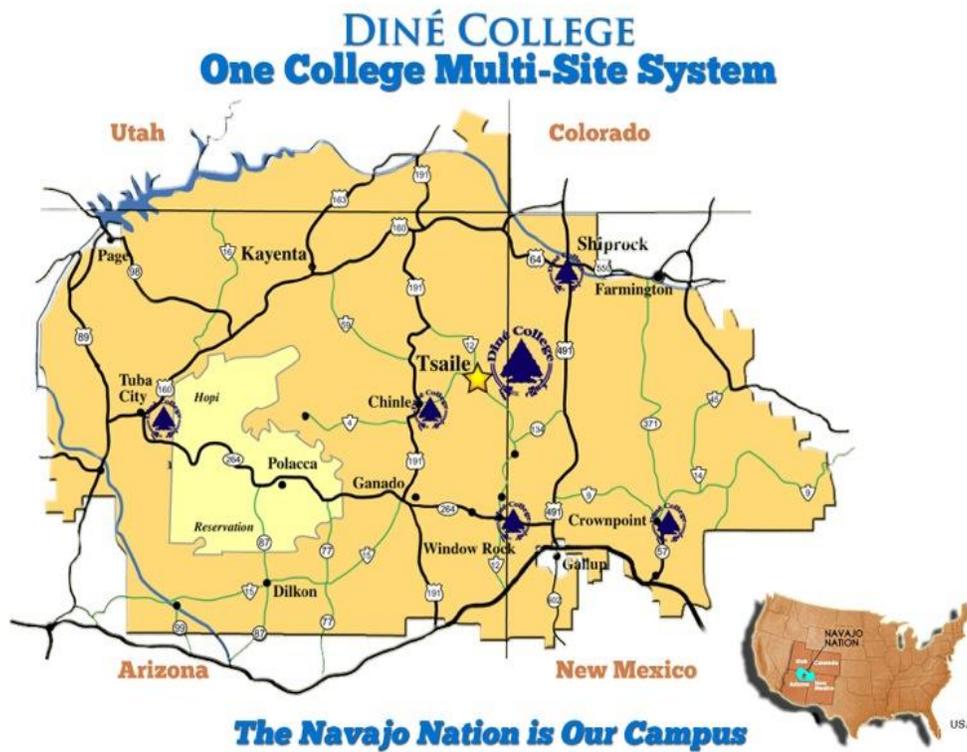


Figure (3): Diné College Campus Map. (<http://www.dinecollege.edu/about/campus.php>)

Governance/Administration

In addition to being the very first TCU to emerge in Indian Country, Diné College also became the first TCU to receive accreditation in 1976 (History 2013). The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), one the same six accrediting organizations mainstream institutions use (The Higher Learning Commission 2013), bestowed this distinction to the college less than a decade after it opened its doors. Since initial accreditation, Diné College has continued to receive approval for accreditation renewal over the years. This demonstrates that within the growth of the college, quality standards have been maintained, and students continue to receive high-quality education that is transferable to mainstream institutions. Also demonstrated is that Native Nations are indeed capable of successfully managing higher education within their communities. Not only does accreditation of TCUs refute widely-accepted beliefs to the contrary often held within mainstream, it also sends a message to mainstream institutions that they no longer exclusively own higher education.

In order to oversee all efforts that lead to continued accreditation, Diné College operations are supervised by a Board of Regents. Originally, the Board was comprised of ten members; however, when the college revised its charter in 1997, Board membership was reduced by two for a new Board composition of eight (Navajos Change Name to Diné College 1997). Current membership includes individuals holding diverse administrative roles from across the Navajo Nation: one member from each of the five reservation agencies as selected by the president of the Navajo Nation, a member of the Navajo Nation Health, Education, and Human Services (HEHS) committee, the Superintendent of Navajo Nation Schools, and the student

president of the Associated Students of Diné College (ASDC) representing the study body (Annual Report: 2011-2012 2014, 2).

Funding is also a vital part of college operations, the bulk of which comes from continued support from the Navajo Nation and BIA. Over the years, resources have grown to include support through awards and donations for special programs and projects from both public and private entities, as well as from both Arizona and New Mexico, two of the three states that the Navajo Nation resides in. (Locations: One College Multi-Site System 2013) The general budget made possible by these sources of funding is distributed across six pools of spending comprising of Instruction, Academic Support, Student Services, Institutional Support, Physical Plant, and Auxiliary Services (Annual Report: 2011-2012 2014, 3). A detailed breakdown of these components is available on page 3 of Diné College's 2011-2012 Annual Report. Together, these funds are what enable Diné College to offer a high-quality, applicable, and culturally-relevant education to the Navajo Nation.

Foundational Integration of Culture and Tradition

As a tribally-operated college, Navajo culture and tradition is inherently incorporated into all aspects of Diné College's design and operation. At the most fundamental level, these values are demonstrated very strongly in the institution's philosophy and mission statements as follows:

Philosophy: (Educational Philosophy 2013)

“The educational philosophy of Diné College ‘Sa'ah Naaghai Bik'eh Hozhoo’, the Diné traditional living system, places Dine’ life in harmony with the natural world and the universe. This unique educational philosophy and mission is grounded in Navajo cultural traditions. The philosophy provides principles both for protection from the imperfections in life and for the development of well-being. The Diné Educational Philosophy, developed by Navajo cultural specialists, represents the essence of the Navajo outlook on life...the core of this philosophy is

expressed in concepts and values associated with natural processes identified with the four cardinal directions, including such processes as the daily cycle of day and night and the annual cycle of the seasons. Diné College fulfills its mission by using the Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hozhoo principle as a framework to educate its students:

- Nitsáhákees (Thinking), Nahat'á (Planning), Iiná (Living) and Sihasin (Assuring)
- Studying Diné language, history, and culture
- Preparing for further studies and employment in a multi-cultural and technological world
- Fostering social responsibility, community service and scholarly research that contribute to the social, economic and cultural well being of the Navajo Nation.

This philosophy guides all aspects of Diné College's educational planning activities, as well as priority setting and implementation of research projects.”

Mission Statement: (About Diné College: General Information 2013)

“Mission Statement: Diné College is a public institution of higher education chartered by the Navajo Nation. Our mission is to apply the *Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhóón* principles to advance quality student learning:

- Through *Nitsáhákees* (Thinking), *Nahat'á* (Planning), *Iiná* (Living), and *Sihasin* (Assuring).
- In study of the Diné language, history, and culture.
- In preparation for further studies and employment in a multi-cultural and technological world.
- In fostering social responsibility, community service and scholarly research that contribute to the social, economic and cultural well being of the Navajo Nation.”

On Diné College's main campus in Tsaile, AZ, Navajo culture is also expressed in the structures on the grounds. On a large scale, the arrangement of the buildings is intended to represent the inside of a Hogan, a traditional Navajo home. As explained on their website: “Designed in the circular, holistic tradition of the Navajo Hogan, the Tsaile Campus reflects the strength of the Navajo culture. Administrative, instructional, residential, recreational, and library facilities are placed in reverence to traditional Navajo beliefs and create an environment for growth and academic success,” (Locations: One College Multi-Site System 2013). On a smaller scale, the main administrative building on the Tsaile campus, the Ned Hatathli Center, is named

after Dr. Ned Hatathli, the first Navajo president of the institution. Furthermore, the building itself is designed in the shape of a Hogan. Inside of the Ned Hatathli Center there is a smaller Hogan built on the ground floor. This interior Hogan is encircled by a walkway enclosed by the Hogan's outer walls and the main buildings' inner walls. As you enter the walkway outside of the inner Hogan and proceed to the left as is traditional, the walls of the building are painted with scenes depicting significant times in Navajo history. These illustrations tell the story of the Navajo people, beginning with their creation story and progressing into present times. The culture, tradition, and persistence represented here remind all those who visit of the beauty, challenges, and strength of the Navajo Nation.

A significant effort made by Diné College to better-represent culture and tradition occurred when the decision was made to change the name of the college itself. This transpired in the same 1997 charter revision that also reduced the Board of Regents membership from ten down to eight. Originally "Navajo Community College," the new name of "Diné College" was chosen so as to more accurately represent the people to whom the college belongs. The name "Navajo" was used by Europeans to refer to the people who originally called themselves "Diné", and was not reflective of their traditional identity. Choosing to change the college's name to one that speaks more closely to the Nation's tradition and culture empowered the Navajo Nation to take yet another step toward reclaiming control of their Nation's education. The name change also further removed the college from Western influence, thus enabling the college to advance its mission of honoring and revitalizing culture. (Navajos Change Name to Diné College 1997)

Culture in Courses, Programs and Degrees

Central to the goals of any TCU is the integration of Native culture and tradition into all aspects of its design, including courses and degrees. As such, Diné College aims to ensure that all students, regardless of academic degree sought, get some education in Navajo culture. The structural change that came along with the name change better-enabled Diné College to do just this. In addition to the standard general education requirements seen in mainstream colleges, such as mathematics and the sciences, Diné College general requirements include several “Navajo and Indian Studies” courses. Students must take a total of three required courses in Navajo studies, one in each of Navajo culture, Navajo history, and Navajo language. (General Catalog: 2013-2014 2014, 36) These required courses ensure some exposure to Navajo culture for all degree-seeking students, furthering the goals of cultural revitalization.

Providing courses within the Native context is a crucial aspect of TCUs. For this reason, Diné College offers more Native-culture courses than those within the general requirements. The curriculum also includes entire units of classes related to Navajo and Native studies. One such unit, entitled Navajo Language (NAV), consists solely of courses designed for teaching the Navajo language, including Navajo as a Second Language I, Medical Terminology of the Navajo, and Teaching Navajo to the Native Speaker (General Catalog: 2013-2014 2014, 70-71). Another unit, entitled Navajo and Indian Studies (NIS), is comprised of numerous courses specific to Navajo culture, as well as various courses that examine topics in Indian Country as a whole (General Catalog: 2013-2014 2014, 71-72). Such courses currently include: Foundations of Navajo Culture, Contemporary Indian Affairs and Tribal Government, and Navajo Nation Government (General Catalog: 2013-2014 2014, 71-72). While the general requirement courses ensure that all degree-seeking students will receive some exposure to Navajo culture, the

additional courses offered in Navajo and Native topics further increase students' opportunities to broaden their understanding about Navajo culture and Native issues as a whole.

The range of credentials offered at Diné College is just as diverse as the classes that shape them. Qualifications include certificates of occupational training, Associate's degrees, and one Bachelor's degree. Being the first and oldest TCU in Indian Country, Diné College has had the most time to develop degree and certificate programs. Within these efforts, expanding from its original two-year college framework to incorporate more advanced degrees is an emphasized goal. However, currently there is only one Bachelor's degree available at Diné College, a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education. This means that much effort is still placed on transferring students into four-year institutions or into occupations following graduation from Diné College. For this reason, Diné College continues to develop the necessary certificate and Associate's programs in order to better assist community needs.

Currently, Diné College has four certificate programs intended for prompt use in their respective fields following completion of coursework. Created to target very different areas of occupation, certificates in Irrigation Technician, Office Technology, Public Health, and Small Business Management/Entrepreneurship offer greater opportunities to community members wishing to expand their career options. (General Catalog: 2013-2014 2014, 40) These certificate programs are intended to enable students to quickly obtain needed training and qualifications for certain occupations, usually within one year. For this reason, these students are exempt from the general requirements for degree programs (General Catalog: 2013-2014 2014, 40).

In addition, Diné College offers a General Education Development (GED) program and a High School Concurrent Enrollment program. The GED program allows students the opportunity to take courses prior to taking the certified GED test (General Catalog: 2013-2014 2014, 26).

Individuals without a high school degree are given the opportunity to obtain a GED, providing them with the potential opportunity to continue into college courses. For students still in high school, the High School Concurrent Enrollment program enables high school juniors and seniors to take classes at Diné College that will count toward a college degree following high school graduation (General Catalog: 2013-2014 2014, 12). Both of these additional academic programs are examples of how Diné College works to reach out and further meet community needs.

While many of the academic degrees offered by Diné College are similar to those offered by mainstream colleges, such as an Associate of Arts degree in Business Administration and an Associate of Science degree in Physics (General Catalog: 2013-2014 2014, 5-6), there are also unique degrees worth noting. For example, also offered are an Associate of Arts degree in Diné Studies and an Associate of Arts degree in Navajo Language (General Catalog: 2013-2014 2014, 5). Shortly after the name change the college's only Bachelor's degree, a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education, also became available, awarding its first degrees the very next year (History 2013). Prior to the institution's name and resultant structure change in 1997, Diné College only offered occupational training certificates and Associate's degrees; however, following the transformation, Diné College was able to evolve with developments resulting from increasing popularity and size within the Navajo Nation. Whereas community colleges only award occupational training certificates and Associate's degrees, Diné College moved beyond community college status and was able to broaden its course and degree offerings past the Associate's level. (Navajos Change Name to Diné College 1997)

Offering courses and degrees that speak to cultural values side-by-side with those commonly seen in mainstream institutions is fundamental to a successful contemporary Native Nation. Not only does this approach provide Native students with an education they need to get

ahead, but also provides for the opportunity to further learn and explore their Native identities. Seeing classes taught about Native culture right next to classes taught at mainstream institutions helps students validate their Native identity and develop the confidence that they need to be successful in life. Every program and degree offered at TCUs is significant, as they each provide opportunities to the community that might otherwise not be an option.

Admissions, Tuition and Housing

The admissions application process at Diné College is comparable to that of mainstream institutions. However, in addition to requiring submission of standard documents as would be seen at a mainstream college such as an application and transcripts, if applicable, Diné College also requires proof of Indian heritage through a student's Certificate of Indian blood (CIB) or an enrollment card from their respective tribe (General Catalog: 2013-2014 2014, 12). At most mainstream institutions, this is not nearly as a high priority as it is for TCUs. This is not because non-Native students aren't embraced at TCUs, but rather because of unique federal funding stipulations that affect only TCUs. As discussed in Chapter 1, in accordance with Title I of the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978, TCUs receive federal funding per Native student enrolled full-time rather than per every student enrolled full-time. For this reason, an accurate count of Native students is essential. The fact that this funding is not being allocated at the approved maximum amount makes getting accurate numbers all the more critical to sustaining the institution.

Once accepted, many students face issues with cost of attendance. While financial need is not a concept exclusive to TCUs students, TCUs are very well aware of the financial need many of their students have. TCUs recognize that affordability is a large part of accessibility, and for

this reason, do their best to reduce costs as much as feasibly possible. At Diné College, tuition is notably less expensive than the average mainstream institution. In addition to mandatory fees seen at all institutions, such as a Technology Fee and an Activity Fee, each credit hour costs \$30 for a maximum of \$360 per semester for students enrolled full-time. This rate applies to students enrolled in certificate programs and Associate degree-seeking students. The Bachelor's degree program, however, has an important difference in cost. The cost per-credit-hour in this program is \$120 with a maximum of \$1,440 per semester for students enrolled full-time. (General Catalog: 2013-2014 2014, 14). However, even though the tuition rate for the Bachelor's degree program is substantially higher than the rest, it is still considerably less expensive than is seen in mainstream institutions.

Another way Diné College works to increase accessibility is by offering on-campus housing for up to 228 students at the main campus in Tsaile. Eligibility requirements specify that during the regular academic year, Fall and Spring semesters, students wishing to live in on-campus housing must be enrolled full-time. During the summer, students taking at least six credits are qualified for housing. (Residence Life: Information 2014) While student housing is only offered at the one location, simply having this option drastically improves the availability of Dine College within the entire Navajo Nation. Not only does it save students whose family lives somewhat close to campus time and money otherwise used for traveling to campus, it also enables students whose family lives hours away from any campus site, as well as those without transportation, to still be able to attend college.

Comanche Nation College



Figure (4): Comanche Nation College Logo. (<http://cnc.cc.ok.us>)

Founded	2002 (12 years)
Campus Location	Lawton, Oklahoma
Length of Academic Programs	Less than 1 year – 2 years
Number of Degree Programs	11 Associate Degrees 13 Certificate Programs
Total Faculty	Spring 2014: 12
Total Student Enrollment	Fall 2011: 251 Spring 2012: 274
Percentage of American Indian/Alaskan Native Students	2011-2012: 57%
Student Gender	2011-2012: 64% Female / 36% Male

Figure (5): Comanche Nation College Demographics. (Catalog: 2013-2014; Enrollment Management Plan: 2012-2015; Faculty & Staff)

Institutional Background

Beginning in 1990, discussion began within the Comanche Nation regarding the feasibility of creating their own TCU. For several decades the Comanche Nation had watched many Native Nations open individual TCUs and was determined to do the same for their citizens. In the years following, numerous meetings were organized with the purpose of deliberating the practicality of establishing a Comanche-operated TCU. During this time, Ron Burgess, director of the Comanche Nation Higher Education program (CNHE), formed general classes in math and writing to offer the community. Soon these efforts transitioned into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Cameron University, a four-year university also located in Lawton, Oklahoma. (Comanche Nation College History 2014, 2) These first steps were the beginnings of what would eventually become Comanche Nation College.

The year 2002 saw significant development in the way of advancing concrete plans for Comanche Nation College. The Nation was able to buy an official campus in Lawton, Oklahoma, the same town as the Comanche Nation Complex, due to a monetary gift from tribal citizen John Harrington (Tippeconnic 2009, 141). That same year, on May 4, 2002, the Comanche Business Committee (CBC) granted authorization for development efforts including an \$185,000 contribution from the Comanche Nation (Tippeconnic 2009,137). Three months later, on August 3, 2002, the Comanche Nation officially chartered Comanche Nation College as the first TCU in Oklahoma, accompanied by the corresponding Comanche Nation College Council (Tippeconnic 2009, 137). Following the enactment of the official charter, the initial classes that had previously been offered under Burgess through the CNHE program were transferred to the new campus.

Due to Burgess' early involvement with CNC development efforts, it was both reasonable and practical that Burgess become the first interim CNC president. He had a deep understanding of the developmental process through his participation with the initial course offerings and the transfer to the official location. Thus, Burgess left his position as CNHE Director and took on the role of interim president. After a period of time, he was succeeded by Charles Tippeconnic as the second interim CNC president, who served until the Council appointed the first full president of Comanche Nation College in November 2004. Dr. Kim Winkelman was ultimately agreed upon as the best candidate due to his broad knowledge of education and TCUs that developed from his own education coupled with his involvement with Oglala Lakota College. Interesting to note is that while the first two interim presidents are both Comanche citizens, Dr. Winkelman is Oglala Lakota. While Comanche candidates were also in the top running, the selection of a non-Comanche demonstrates the Council's determination to choose the right candidate for the position regardless of ethnicity or heritage. (Tippeconnic 2009, 138)

The first cohort of students to attend Comanche Nation College in 2002 for the Fall semester totaled 23 (Tippeconnic 2009, 140). Subsequent enrollment has continued to rise through the first decade of the college's existence: by the end of the second academic year, enrollment more than doubled to 62 in Spring 2004, and more than quadrupled to 278 by Spring 2005 (Tippeconnic 2009, 140). Although enrollment fluctuates year to year, interest in attending CNC persists within the community. According to the Comanche Nation College 2012-2015 Enrollment Management Plan, enrollment has remained between 100 and 300 students each semester (excluding summer sessions) through the Fall 2010 - Spring 2013 timeframe (2014, 6). While enrollment for Fall 2013 witnessed a significant decrease down to 46 students, the

decrease is attributed to CNC's shift to separate itself from the original MOU with Cameron University. Intended to increase CNC's independence, this transition better enables CNC to act upon its own goals as a self-governing TCU. (Enrollment Management Plan: 2012-2015 2014, 6) Nevertheless, considering the growth CNC has experienced since its official charter just over a decade ago, it is foreseeable that growth will resume promptly, as it has historically.

Anticipated growth is not restricted to the student body, however: increasing student numbers also necessitates appointments of new faculty and staff, growth in campus size, and improvement of overall impact within the Comanche Nation. With citizenship in the Comanche Nation currently surpassing 15,000, almost 8,000 of whom live in CNC's vicinity (The Comanche Nation of Oklahoma 2014), CNC can only be expected to grow in popularity and size. As the first TCU to emerge in Oklahoma, CNC continues to act as a groundbreaker for other Native Nations in the state.

Governance/Administration

At 12 years old, CNC is a relatively young institution and is still in the process of attaining full accreditation. However, CNC is beginning to see the realization of these efforts. As of November 12, 2012, CNC has held the status of initial candidate for accreditation from the North Central Association-Higher Learning Commission (NCA-HLC) (2011-2012 Annual Report 2014, 5). Obtaining this critical status demonstrates that developmental efforts have been effective and that within this growth, quality standards are being maintained and students continue to receive high-quality education.

These accreditation efforts, as the rest of CNC's activities, are supervised by the Comanche Nation College Council that was established alongside CNC in the official 2002

charter. The Council is composed of six members, all of whom are Comanche Nation citizens. The Comanche Nation Chairman also takes part by virtue of position within the Nation's government. Convening quarterly, the Council works to maintain development and operations of CNC in a way that is not only beneficial to the college but also intended to benefit of the community as a whole. (2011-2012 Annual Report 2014, 5) Currently, these meetings are particularly important while CNC is still in the process of attaining full accreditation.

Funding is also a vital part of college operations. Following the original approval of \$185,000 in 2002, funding from the Comanche Nation continues to grow in recognition of the important role the college has in the community. In the 2006-2007 academic year, the Nation's contribution totaled \$1,200,000. When added to other sources of public and private funds, CNC's complete budget for the 2006-2007 academic year exceeded \$3,000,000. (Tippeconnic 2009, 139) In order to make the best use out of these funds, the comprehensive budget is sectioned into the six categories of Administration, Nursing, Language Archive, Executive, Student Services, and Academic Affairs (2011-2012 Annual Report 2014, 18). A detailed breakdown of percentages can be found on page 18 of the CNC 2011-2012 Annual Report. The proper utilization of these funds is what makes offering a high-quality, applicable, and culturally-relevant education at CNC possible.

Foundational Integration of Culture and Tradition

At Comanche Nation College, Comanche culture and tradition is inherently integrated into the fundamental aspects of the college's design and operation. These values are clearly demonstrated in the institution's core through the philosophy and mission statements as follows:

Philosophy: (Philosophy 2013)

“The foundation for teaching, learning, research and all educational activities of the Comanche Nation College is based on the concept and philosophy of a Comanche-Centered Education. The College recognizes the strength in the Comanche culture and language. Therefore, they are the foundation for teaching and learning at Comanche Nation College. The programs of the college integrate both traditional and non-traditional knowledge and have a culturally responsive connection to the American Indian communities and others. This philosophy impacts policies and promotes the environment to establish and guide the institution in support of the College as it strives to meet its vision, core values, and mission and purpose statements.”

Mission Statement: (Mission and Purpose 2013)

“The Comanche Nation College shall provide students with a high quality and relevant education that is Comanche-centered, based on the tribal culture, language, history and values that will provide all students with the necessary knowledge, skills and experiences to function successfully in a multicultural society.”

One way in which CNC answers the calls made for cultural integration in the philosophy and mission statements is through the utilization of the Comanche 4R's: Relationship, Responsibility, Reciprocity, and Redistribution. These four values are reflective of core Comanche culture and tradition, and are vital to all components of the college. The 4R's are applied to every element of the college and used as a checks-and-balances method to ensure that the college is functioning in tandem with Comanche values. (Tippeconnic and Tippeconnic Fox 2012, 849) CNC also recognizes the importance of making these values as visible as possible, not just in its policies and actions, but also within the image of the college itself. As such, the 4R's can also be seen through the use of an additional logo. In Figure (6) seen below, the 4R's have been integrated with the horse culture of the Comanche Nation to create an all-encompassing visual reminder of Comanche culture, tradition, and values.



RELATIONSHIP RESPONSIBILITY RECIPROCITY REDISTRIBUTION

Figure (6): The Comanche 4R's. (<http://cnc.cc.ok.us/welcome>)

Culture in Courses, Programs and Degrees

Consistent with the central goals of all TCUs, integration of Native culture and tradition into all aspects of design and operation, including courses and degrees, is key at CNC. While many of the general requirement courses for a CNC degree are equivalent to those seen at mainstream colleges, such as mathematics and the sciences, also included is a section entitled Comanche Centered Education. All degree-seeking students must take seven credit hours consisting of three specific courses: Introduction to Comanche Nation College, Intro to American Indian Studies, and Comanche Language I. (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 76) Including these core courses in the curriculum is a straightforward approach to ensuring Comanche culture is part of every student's educational experience at CNC, regardless of academic track.

Alongside standard courses outside of the general requirements, such as various Chemistry (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 131) and Physics (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 153) courses, numerous other Native-specific courses are included within the comprehensive curriculum. These additional options allow students to deepen their understanding of topics in Indian Country. Such courses include Contemporary American Indian Issues, Tribal Governance and Representation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage, and Comanche History after 1875

(Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 117-121). Additionally as a tribal college, general areas of study, such as the sciences, are regularly provided within the Native context. For example, in addition to Earth Science and General Biology under the science section, Native Science is also a course option (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 97). While the distinction is made among the classes, the inclusion of all as equal options supports the validation of Native knowledge within students' minds. CNC also offers quite a diverse scope of Native language courses. Comanche language courses range from levels I-IV, and also include courses such as Comanche Medical Language (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 148-151). Interesting to note in the language options are the additional courses of Pawnee Language I, Kiowa Language I, and Kiowa Language II (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 149-150). The inclusion of other Native languages demonstrates the responsibility felt to the community at-large rather than to only the Comanche community.

Currently, CNC offers a diverse selection of occupational certificate programs and Associate's degrees, all as distinctive as the classes of which they are composed. As a relatively young institution, CNC remains determined to continue expanding its certificate and degree offerings with the aim of further meeting community needs. Since CNC is a two-year institution, a central focus is to be a stepping stone for students to continue on either in the transfer process to four-year institutions or into careers. The qualifications currently offered are designed to help students do just that.

Certificate programs at CNC go beyond what might be expected at mainstream institutions, such as certificates in Administrative Assistant Training and Basic Technology. Also offered are certificates to benefit those already having jobs, such as Grant Writing and CPR & First Aid. Additional certificates, such as Tribal Management, Tribal Gaming and Management, and American Indian Filmmaking, are geared toward use in occupations that are relevant to those

in Native communities. (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 78) Intended for immediate use in various occupations, certificate programs don't require completion of the general requirements for degrees, and are intended to take no longer than one year to finish (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 80). Responsive to community needs, offering training in applicable fields better enables citizens to gain employment within their communities.

Other academic programs featured by Comanche Nation College include GED/remedial courses, distance learning, Dual Enrollment Option, Concurrent Enrollment of High School Students, and Elder Eligibility. The option to take GED courses opens the door to potential higher education attainment to those who might not otherwise have that opportunity (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 79). Distance learning provides access to college courses to people who might not be able to travel to campus, eliminating the limitation of transportation costs and further increasing accessibility of CNC to the community (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 65). The Dual Enrollment Option targets students already enrolled in another college, made possible through an agreement between CNC and Bacone College, a four-year college located in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Through this collaboration, students can simultaneously enroll at both institutions, receive credit from both, and eventually receive a degree with both institutions' emblems on it (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 23). This is particularly beneficial to current CNC students since CNC is not yet fully accredited. The Concurrent Enrollment of High School Students program enables eligible juniors and seniors at Oklahoma high schools to earn college credit while still in high school (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 23). Elder Eligibility allows for those 55 years old and over to register for courses at CNC that appeal to them. Rather than paying full tuition, elders pay a single \$15.00 fee; however, they do not receive college credit for any classes taken through this program. (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 24) These programs are all approaches that CNC uses

to act upon the Comanche 4R's, further reaching out to the community in order to meet specific needs.

Currently, CNC also offers a diverse range of Associate's degrees. While many of them are comparable to those offered at mainstream colleges, such as an Associate of Arts degree in Fine Arts and an Associate of Science degree in Natural Science, CNC also offers Associate degrees in tribally-relevant areas. These include an Associate of Arts degree in Native Languages, an Associate of Applied Science degree in Gaming Management, and an Associate of Applied Science degree in Tribal Management. (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 78) Each of these degrees is meant to provide sufficient education to prepare students to either meet certain job requirements not attainable without an Associate's degree, or choose to transfer to a four-year institution in order to complete a Bachelor's degree. Rather than only offering degrees in typical areas offered at mainstream colleges, CNC makes a point to also offer relevant degrees applicable within Native communities so as to better-meet community needs.

Offering culturally-relevant courses and degrees alongside typical fields seen in mainstream institutions enables TCUs to meet several crucial goals. On the surface, they offer an education to their community members that meets standards within mainstream institutions, acknowledged through accreditation and transferring of students. On a deeper level, they support the revitalization and continuation of Native culture, and in doing so, provides Native students with the validation that their culture is in fact a powerful part of their identity and future success. Given the same timeframe older TCUs have had to develop, little doubt exists that CNC will achieve the same.

Admissions, Tuition and Housing

Comanche Nation College's admissions application process is comparable to that of mainstream institutions, requiring submission of standard documents such as an application and transcripts. Additionally, by its nature of being a TCU, the importance of Native students disclosing tribal affiliation with the institution is strongly emphasized. If applicable, the college requires proof of Indian heritage through providing a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB), or a supporting letter from the BIA (Student Handbook: 2013-2014 2013, 14). As previously explained, due to the stipulations in Title I of the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978, recording precise numbers of Native students is critical to ensuring that the institution receives appropriate funding. Providing this information also has benefits to CNC students since those who provide either of these two documents receive a slightly reduced tuition rate from the college (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 57).

Another way CNC attempts to meet community needs is through an open door policy. Not only does this flexibility allow students without a high school diploma or GED to come to CNC for GED coursework, it also reduces the number of strings attached to the acceptance process and thereby increases opportunity for obtaining higher education within the community. (Student Handbook: 2013-2014 2013, 14) However, none of this allows for anyone to walk into CNC and start taking classes. Certain measures lie strongly in place that enable CNC to maintain control over who is admitted, including the authority to decline admission to individual applicants deemed inappropriate. The open door policy creates more opportunity within the community through the elimination of certain admissions restrictions found at other institutions. Acquiring necessary credentials for admission into college becomes more attainable, and thus expands the potential for obtaining a college degree.

Following acceptance into college, finances become an issue for many students. TCUs recognize that cost of attendance is a common concern for many students at all institutions of higher education. For this reason, TCUs go to many lengths to reduce costs as best they can for their students, because they know that affordability plays a large role in accessibility. Reducing tuition to a manageable level is another way in which CNC works to increase accessibility to education. Not only is tuition lower at CNC than other mainstream institutions, but also CNC offers several opportunities for further reduction of tuition. CNC offers a tuition waiver to students who provide documentation that they are either enrolled citizens, or the children of enrolled citizens, of the Comanche Nation (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 32). Additionally, CNC offers tuition discounts to students from any Native Nation who provides either their Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) or a letter from the BIA (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 32-33). Basic CNC tuition is \$135.00 per credit hour, plus mandatory fees seen at all colleges such as a Technology Fee and Student Activity Fees. However, with the CDIB discount, tuition is reduced by \$5.00 per credit hour. Included within the CDIB rule, CNC also allows flexibility to embrace students who do not have a CDIB but whose parents do. (Catalog: 2013-2014 2013, 57) In recognition of common enrollment issues stemming from blood quantum guidelines, this approach allows CNC to remain culturally responsive to the challenges some students face. Together, in an effort to reduce costs and meet community needs, these incentives aim to provide discounts to as many students as possible in the hopes of encouraging attendance.

Attributable to many factors at play, CNC does not currently have housing options for students. Due to its relative newness, providing housing has not yet been feasible. The primary focus is on getting the college to a stable place through accreditation, meaning housing has had to be temporarily set aside. Location is also a large reason for the current absence of housing.

While many TCUs are located on reservations, CNC is unique in that it is located in a mainstream U.S. town. While the town of Lawton, Oklahoma in which CNC is located has a high population of Native residents and is also the location of the Comanche Nation Complex (The Comanche Nation of Oklahoma 2014), it is still not within the boundaries of a reservation. After the reservation held jointly by the Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache Nations was liquidated by the U.S. government in 1901, Lawton was established within this area. (Lawton's History 2014) Since then, Lawton has continued to grow and is therefore not nearly as rural as are many other TCUs communities. While housing would indeed be beneficial to CNC students, that need is not quite as critical as in far more rural TCU communities. Within the town of Lawton, other housing options such as apartments and housing developments are available that are not present in more rural TCU communities. (City Profile 2014) Nevertheless, as CNC grows, housing will likely become an option in order to better serve its students.

Chapter 5: Survey Findings

Survey Overview

For this section of data, three specific individuals from two unique TCU communities were selected to complete surveys in this study. The president, a student, and a community member from both Diné College and Comanche Nation College were surveyed, for a total of six (6) participants. The presidents received one set of survey questions while the students and the community members received another to ensure appropriate relevance to the distinct relationships with their TCUs. Acquiring a wider range of perspectives provided this study with varied responses within the TCU framework, allowing for a better understanding of the specific impacts each TCU has within their communities. Following collection of completed surveys, responses were reviewed within the context of each TCU; the three Diné College surveys were reviewed as a collective whole, as were the three Comanche Nation College surveys. Analysis was conducted in this manner with the intent to produce results specific to each TCU, and thus be able to represent each institution individually in the final results.

As explained in the Methodology chapter, certain limitations exist within the selection of two participants in this study. However, even though the individual who completed the Diné College student survey is no longer a student there, his experiences at Diné College still hold validity and relevance to this study. Though his responses are from a few years back, they nonetheless provide insight into the student experience at Diné College. Additionally, despite the physical distance between the residence of the individual who completed the Comanche Nation College community member survey and the actual location of the college, his intellectual and emotional connections are still very strong. His experiences and perspective provide insight towards a better understanding of the college-community relationship.

Rather than using specific keywords to locate themes, the survey questions themselves provided the venue through which themes could emerge; participants' responses led the way in determining topics brought to light. While survey questions were intended to address certain subjects, they were intentionally designed open-endedly so as to not predetermine answers. This method of approach led to varied responses among each participant. Within each TCU's section, the president's responses are presented first, followed by the combined student's and community member's responses. Participants were assured anonymity, and for this reason, discussions of their responses are referenced using their relationship with their TCU rather than their names. For example, rather than disclosing the Comanche Nation College student's identity, he will be referred to as "CNC student" throughout this study; this has been done for all six participants.

Survey Responses by TCU

Diné College

President:

When asked what she feels is the most significant impact Diné College (DC) has on its community, DC president stated that she considers it to be a multi-layered effect. She explained that providing accessible higher education is ultimately the most significant impact. Within the concept of accessibility, she considers cost, local location, comfort of culture, integration of Indigenous knowledge, and boosting of students' confidence to all be valuable aspects. She clarifies, "These aspects ground our students in their identity and place based knowledge and (they) gain the confidence and competence of being native first and then a college student" (Diné College President, 2014). In her opinion as an experienced TCU president, Native identity is of utmost importance, followed closely by college student status. She understands the significant

role knowing one's identity has in the academic success of Native college students, and considers it to be a crucial source of success.

Observation of such impacts has meaningful implications in assessing whether or not the TCU is achieving its goals of student support and success. DC President explains that the way in which she is usually able to discern these impacts is through noting student achievements, both as a DC student as well as after graduation. She shares, "The stories of our students are varied," and while some students find strength through "being grounded in tribal knowledge," others find it through "playing out all aspects of kinship and being part of the Diné College family" (Diné College President, 2014). She says that it is through these observable experiences that students find their success, adding that "Many students begin their college career here at Diné College and move on to a University or go on to the workforce" (Diné College President, 2014). The motivation and confidence provided through students' educational experiences at DC supports them in finding success after DC graduation, whether through further education or job attainment.

When reflecting upon all effects of the TCU, DC President also shares that she considers emotional impacts to be just as important as the economic ones. Through these attitudinal influences, students encounter personal success and often use it to benefit their economic standing within the community. She explains that embracing the Native culture is crucial to attitudinal impacts, and as a result, the economic effects. The most common result is students' increased connection to the TCU community as well as the Native Nation as a whole, stating that DC students "can identify with other tribal members through kinship...stay connected to family that gives them a sense of security... (and) students who did not grow up on the Navajo Nation come back to learn the language and know the culture. These experiences give students a

renewed sense of belonging to the nation and pride as individuals” (Diné College President, 2014). Through their increased cultural awareness, Native students find pride in themselves which they can then use to obtain success in their academic and professional endeavors.

DC president explains that she personally identifies and measures these results through diverse observation methods, varying by student. These experiences and successes are reflected in students “gain(ing) confidence and competence to persist in College” (Diné College President, 2014), who then “graduate and move on to pursue their educational endeavors or careers” (Diné College President, 2014). She adds that through the support the TCU receives from the Nation, the “college is an extension of our community,” and therefore students’ successes are ultimately the Nation’s successes (Diné College President, 2014). Together, the community can celebrate these accomplishments, and use them to encourage further achievements in the future.

Participation in TCU’s events is crucial for TCU presidents to encourage such accomplishments. Not only is it important for them to be seen in the community, but it is also important for them to have the opportunity to interact with all citizens of the Native Nation. Through this exchange, TCU presidents can gain a better understanding of the community’s feelings regarding the TCU, and have the chance to discuss these ideas with those presenting them. When asked how often she attends DC events, DC president replied that over the last year, she has attended between ten and fifteen separate affairs. She clarified by explaining that she attends DC events both “by invitation and other times out of my own curiosity” (Diné College President, 2014). Her commitment to attending DC events, both by invitation and interest, demonstrates that not only does she feel and act upon her responsibility as TCU president, but also that she is truly invested in the TCU’s well-being.

Additionally, DC president expressed that she does feel DC has motivated students to continue their education beyond the TCU. She explains that this is a major goal of DC, and for this reason, DC also offers several support resources for students including tutors, a recruiter, and counselors. Through these efforts, she says, “students are encouraged to gain experience here and move on to a University” (Diné College President, 2014). The encouragement and motivation DC students receive play crucial roles in student success, and in their future endeavors.

Regarding community involvement, DC president expresses that this is a vital aspect to DC’s well-being. She discloses that this commitment goes both ways, and the TCU’s dedication to the Nation is just as important as citizen’s engagement with the TCU. As part of the responsibility to the community, DC president explains, “Diné College facilities are open to our community. The community is always invited to take part in activities our college provides” (Diné College President, 2014). She continues by adding that DC “encourage(s) community and tribal governments and community organizations to use our campus facilities for meetings and other events” (Diné College President, 2014). Through these mutual efforts, along with the integration of cultural aspects, she feels that DC is an extension of the community as a whole. Due to this openness and connection to culture, she feels that there are no disconnects between the TCU and the community. The location of DC within the boundaries of the Navajo Nation most likely makes this shared responsibility easier for both sides to uphold.

Student & Community Member:

DC student and community member responses reflected many of the same sentiments as the DC president. However, due to their different relationships and involvement with DC, their

feelings and perceptions did vary to some degree. When asked about their general feelings toward DC, both student and community member had very positive things to say. Both discussed the benefits that it has for their Nation, and cited how the accessibility of the TCU has enabled more students to attend. The DC student explained that through his educational experience at DC, he felt “relieved because it was in a comfortable and familiar environment, supportive because I was broke, empowered because I found my self-esteem, positive because I was given the tools I needed to progress with the future, (and) hopeful because I had dreams to fulfil” (Diné College Student, 2014). These positive and encouraging feelings he developed as a result of attending DC aided him in continuing through to graduation. However, he also mentioned certain aspects that he felt could, and should, be changed. For example, he explained that during his time at DC, “there was not enough room to grow...more buildings are needed” (Diné College Student, 2014). As challenging as the dilemma of lack of space can be, ultimately what this means is that DC is successfully gaining more popularity and growing so much that more space is needed to accommodate all those interested in attending.

The DC community member shared similar positive sentiments with regard to her general feelings towards the TCU. She revealed that she “think(s) having a TCU in our community is great. It’s neat that we are one of the few Tribes that have a TCU in our community” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). Her acknowledgment of the Navajo Nation being one of the few Native Nations to have a TCU demonstrates her knowledge of the impact a TCU can have on its society. She added, “Having a College close is good for our younger children; they can still have that home teaching at home, and then having the Western teaching not far from home” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). To her, the accessibility of the college is extremely important. She recognizes the issues distance and lack of accessibility can present for

Native people having to choose whether to stay with family and community or leave the reservation in order to attain a higher education. With this in mind, she stated, “I am not sure about what I don’t like about the TCU” (Diné College Community Member, 2014).

When asked about the personal experiences that helped to generate these feelings, both DC student and community member shared stories of cultural importance. The DC student explained, “My happiness at DC began when I was an undergrad and taking courses relevant to my cultural background” (Diné College Student, 2014). He added that he was “influenced by several different people at DC,” including several different instructors who had particular influence on his success as a student, and his archery coach who gave him the opportunity to become “a team-member...(and) also taught me how to manage my time: studying, practicing, socializing, etc.” (Diné College Student, 2014). He used the guidance and support these administrators provided him to find academic success while at DC and beyond.

Similarly, the DC community member referenced the importance offering cultural courses to students can have on their sense of Native identity. She explains, “for me as a Native American I need to know who I am, (and) where I came from in order to better understand the outside world, and be successful” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). She values the opportunity DC provides students to not just acquire a higher education, but to obtain it within a cultural framework. She strongly believes that this awareness helps Native students increase their academic success at all institutions of higher education.

When asked about their utilization of resources and attendance of events at DC, answers varied between student and community member. The DC student explained that when he was there, he “was always doing something with the infrastructure and equipment” (Diné College Student, 2014). However, now that he no longer attends DC, or lives within the Navajo Nation,

he “occasionally utilize(s) DC resources when I need them... (and) will scan the DC website once a month to see what’s happening in the area and at the satellite campuses; other times, I call my colleagues that still work there and they provide me a quick verbal update” (Diné College Student, 2014). He added that when he was at DC, he “was involved in events because clubs and staff needed extra people... (and was) helping out when I could, volunteering, and socializing with my community” (Diné College Student, 2014). Although he no longer lives close to DC, it is still important to him that he stays connected to the school, through keeping in contact with faculty and staff as well as through scanning the website. His active efforts demonstrate his interest in the college’s well-being and the relationship that still exists.

The DC community member on the other hand, says “I don’t use the TCU very often, but my children do. They use the library and internet there to do their research on a weekly basis” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). She also shares that she will visit the TCU “when a niece or nephew is participating in an event or graduating... then the whole family will go there” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). While she does not go to the TCU as often as students do, she still maintains her involvement through the support of her family members. As she explains, participation is a family affair, demonstrating how the TCU retains its connection to citizens regardless of academic enrollment.

With regard to DC’s community involvement outside of the academic setting, and what they felt could be improved on, both DC student and community member agreed that while the TCU makes a good effort, it could still be improved upon. The DC student acknowledged that he “believe(s) DC did its job to reach out to the community... with what resources were available” (Diné College Student, 2014). He added that issues exist with “the logistics planning and the geographical location... (as) it is harder for the satellite campuses to really get events going”

(Diné College Student, 2014). He felt that the location of certain campuses sometimes hindered those locations in their ability to engage citizens, and urged that more attention would be beneficial to these locations' success. Bearing in mind the large scope of the Navajo Nation and the high costs of operating a campus location, the issue in reaching all its citizens is understandable. However, this does point out issues resulting from rural TCU locations, and should be considered when planning on establishing a TCU.

Likewise, the DC community member also acknowledged that DC “is really involved in the community” through providing “reports on certain event(s) that go on at the College...helping the Farmers in the community... (and are) involved in Water Shed Studies in our community” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). However, she too acknowledged that she “would like to see more of this” and stressed that more collaborative studies and projects “need to happen in our community in order for us to plan” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). While it is important to acknowledge the positive things that DC is doing for its Nation, it is equally essential to recognize that there still remains a need for additional TCU collaboration. Having this information can aid TCUs in targeting which areas they want to prioritize in their efforts.

When asked whether or not they felt that DC advances the self-determination efforts of the Navajo Nation, the DC student and community member provided mixed responses. The DC student replied, “In some ways it does but it depends again on the logistics and where certain services/resources are needed and applicable” (Diné College Student, 2014). He used the example of a law program on the Navajo Nation, explaining “the need for these types of courses in law, legal work, etc. occurred in Window Rock, AZ, next to the hub of tribal government, but also this was the only place where DC was able to secure a State Bar and Native Nation Bar

certified attorney who could teach these courses. So depending on the request...and the availability of resources, DC had to be flexible enough to meet those demands” (Diné College Student, 2014). While he acknowledged that overall the efforts DC makes does improve self-determination of the Navajo Nation, he again recognized the issues that develop due to the large scope of the Nation. However, he also mentioned the flexibility of DC’s collaboration with other entities in order to utilize the same resources, and thus increase its accessibility and offerings within the community.

Similarly, the DC community member agreed that the TCU does enable the Navajo Nation to improve its self-determination efforts. She elaborated, “the College is helping the community with different trainings to sustain good farming for food and hay for our livestock... (and with) water shed studies to secure water for our community” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). This partnership supports the Nation’s endeavors to sustainably care for the land and established way of life. While it is crucial for those in the government to recognize the self-determination aspect, it is also important for citizens to be able to identify it on the local level. Through a better awareness of the potential benefits a TCU can have, more directed collaboration can take place.

As part of these self-determination efforts, location was a particularly important consideration. When asked if they felt the close location of DC has improved accessibility of higher education to the community, DC student and community member responded differently. Responding with a “yes” and a “no”, the DC student explained, “Yes because its located on the Navajo Nation and still closer than most surrounding cities if you reside in the center of the Navajo reservation...DC-Tsaile campus would be so much closer” (Diné College Student, 2014). He then reasoned, “No because it’s still a big reservation so people who want to attend the main

campus have to travel quite a distance if certain courses are not available at the satellite campuses; Tuba City to Tsaile is still a 3 hour drive” (Diné College Student, 2014). Again, the issue of size versus accessibility was a cause for concern. While the existence of many DC campuses is still increasing the accessibility of higher education within the Navajo Nation to some degree, he would like to see more. He suggested increasing academic offerings at the current satellite campuses, as well as the establishment of additional satellite campuses throughout the Nation, as routes to increase accessibility of DC opportunities.

The DC community member reiterated the student’s “yes” response when she articulated “there are people that so not have reliable transportation in the area and having a TCU close helps the community find ways to get to school without going too far” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). She added that the “dorms at the College where people can stay to go to school” are very helpful features in increasing accessibility of DC opportunities (Diné College Community Member, 2014). DC recognizes that they cater to a very large population, and as such, the dormitory option at the Tsaile campus is another way in which DC works to meet community needs. Together, the multiple campus sites and the dormitories increase accessibility of the TCU.

Through this increased accessibility, higher numbers of students are able to attend college. As a result of their educational experiences, many find the motivation to continue their education beyond DC. Both DC student and community member responses reflected this sentiment. The DC student discussed the importance of role models in helping students see what they are capable of. In addition to the instructors at TCUs, he also spoke of how students can motivate each other, and how he has now turned into a role model for other students. As a Ph.D. student at a mainstream institution that got his start at DC, he is representative of how successful

all Native students can be. He shared a story from when he first arrived to the Ph.D. program, and explained that when a former DC student “noticed me, (she) approached me, and she said... ‘It’s about time you got here! You were always saying that you wanted to come back for your Ph.D.’” (Diné College Student, 2014). In this case, reciprocity can be seen in the motivation he received from a student whom he motivated during his time at DC.

The DC community member’s responses echoed those of the student. She agreed that she also feels DC motivates students to continue their education after completion of their program. She says that TCU faculty and staff “really encourage students to continue their education” beyond their DC experience (Diné College Community Member, 2014). She then brings in the cultural aspect and expresses her strong belief that “it is good to start from Diné College, (because) in order to be successful, I believe you have to know who you are, where you come from and a bit about your culture to carry you through life. Whatever you choose to do in life all goes back to who you are and where you come from” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). This assertion ties in very strongly with the foundations of all TCUs, that knowing one’s culture and having a strong sense of identity can be a significant source of success.

Since TCUs are chartered by Native Nations, they are inherently connected to their communities. However, perceptions of this relationship vary among students and citizens. When asked if they felt DC is an extension of the community as a whole, both DC student and community member agreed that they do, using diverse examples to explain their answer. The DC student expressed his appreciation for the integration of Navajo culture into the fundamental principles of the TCU. He clarified, “The Diné College education system is designed to provide Navajo students a foundation in Navajo culture and philosophy as a set of motivational tools that will guide them through their academic journey” (Diné College Student, 2014). He also spoke

about the efforts DC makes to physically integrate itself into the community as a part of, rather than a part from. He explained how the campus is designed to blend into the rest of the Nation through the intentional incorporation of “trees, traditional vegetation, and roaming livestock (that) can be seen on the circular campus” (Diné College Student, 2014). Such active efforts to reflect Navajo culture and identity result in DC’s Tsaile campus looking and feeling like a natural extension of the community.

However, he also discussed the existence of disconnects within the DC atmosphere that at times can present issues for its overall goals. He reasoned that “there are some administrators/instructors/staff who simply don’t buy into the Navajo paradigm so they reject it and it’s transparent enough for students to notice; and students will complain about (it)” (Diné College Student, 2014). During his time at DC, he used such circumstances as a learning experience for himself and for other DC students. He would explain, “It’s good for diversity and (of) challenging our values; that dissonance makes us much more aware of our surroundings and in most cases, it reinforces what we believe in. That negative experience can be turned into a positive learning experience so that students know how to handle new ideas and concepts that do not fit their own sense of values and traditions... (and) cautioned ...that they were going to see much of the same reactions when they leave DC and transfer to a university off the reservation, so it’s good practice to encounter these situations and to learn how to control emotions and composure” (Diné College Student, 2014). His keen awareness and ability to turn a negative experience into a positive learning opportunity was an incredible gift that he gave to the other DC students. Not only did it help students to feel assured of themselves and their beliefs, but it also provided them with awareness and preparation for a potential transfer into a mainstream institution.

The DC community member shared similar positive sentiments with the student, acknowledging, “I do think the TCU is an extension of the community because education is part of the community as a whole” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). She added that she is grateful for how the TCU “promote(s) culture and identity” through employing instructors knowledgeable in “cultural ways and...the clan system the Diné People use, which is still a strong part of our culture and identity. This is what is taught at our college that helps the students understand culture and identity” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). It is through this cultural awareness and support that she feels DC becomes an extension of the community.

Similar to the DC student’s response, she too mentioned a disconnect that she sees in relation to DC administrators. Whereas the student addressed the impacts culturally-disconnected TCU faculty and staff have on students, the community member discussed the effect it has on the individuals themselves. She argues, “those who choose not to believe in culture and self-identity...go on in life not sure of themselves” (Diné College Community Member, 2014). For this reason, she feels very strongly that the cultural awareness DC provides holds immeasurable significance to students’ individual success as well as the success of the Navajo Nation as a whole. While these disconnects are something to be aware of, DC’s positive impacts cannot be outshined, and can be clearly seen in the increasing numbers of enrollment each year.

Comanche Nation College

President:

When asked what she feels is the most significant impact Comanche Nation College (CNC) has on its community, CNC president identified the cultural aspect of the college. She explains that the Native community “can identify with the College and the mission to promote

the Comanche culture, language, history, and traditions. The College provides a location that belongs to them and is one in which they can be educated” (Comanche Nation College President, 2013). This two-part answer demonstrates the interconnectedness of the cultural aspects embedded into CNC’s framework. Not only can citizens identify with the college due to the focus on Native culture, but they also feel as though the college belongs to them as a collective Nation.

While considering specific examples that can help demonstrate these impacts, CNC President explained that she observes them through the students themselves. She expresses that CNC’s focus on Native culture and identity helps students find their confidence, and through the confidence, achieve academic success. For example, she says that CNC “receives students who need their GEDs to do better for themselves. I see many who come in with their heads down, shoulders slumped and barely making eye contact. As they begin to identify with the College and begin to do well in class and testing, one can see their self-esteem take a turn. They become proud of their achievements” (Comanche Nation College President, 2013). She also discussed the cultural activities that CNC sponsors in an attempt to further encourage Native culture, such as “powwows, hand games, storytelling, documentary film, and other traditional activities” (Comanche Nation College President, 2013). Through these activities and events, CNC further attempts to provide an environment that supports Native culture and identity.

CNC president further explains that she considers emotional and attitudinal impacts to be just as important within Native communities as the economic influences. She noted a connection between the two revealing, “If they cannot achieve or are told that they cannot achieve, then they won’t – they are labeled. When they are able to get their GED or an Associate Degree, they experience their potential...they can create a better life for themselves and their families, they

can become – this is what impacts economic influence(s)” within their community (Comanche Nation College President, 2013). This relationship among attitudinal impacts and economic influences suggests that often attitudinal impacts are the roots of academic and economic success. She clarifies that the most prominent impacts observed includes increased cultural awareness and identity, a sense of belonging, and experiences of success. She shares that through the experience of “see(ing) role models that look like them,” such as CNC professors and administrators, students find “empowerment... (and realize) they can do what they never thought they could,” and through this experience, will “come to know who they are” and what they are capable of (Comanche Nation College President, 2013). This newfound cultural identity provides students with the strength they need to carry on and be successful in school as well as after graduation.

Such impacts can typically be determined through the actions of the students themselves. She explains that the development of a student’s Native identity can be “gauged through observation, body language, and self-reporting” (Comanche Nation College President, 2013). While observation and body language can be accomplished without students knowing or intending to do so, self-reporting requires student courage to share their personal story and experience with administrators. For example, she reveals that “my observations are verified when I get a student who will come to tell me what a difference, I, or the College has made in their life...the opportunity to speak about what was going on and the advice and support that was provided in those discussion made a difference...that is powerful” (Comanche Nation College President, 2013). These decisions made by students enable her to further understand what a difference the TCU is having on their lives.

She also notes that similar attitudinal impacts occur within the Native community at large as a result of the TCU's efforts. While CNC is not located on a reservation like many other TCUs, the surrounding community does have a large Native population. Although there are some differences of opinions within the non-Native population, the Native community undeniably feels the impacts of the TCU. She strongly feels that Native citizens "all have a story to tell, a culture that they come from; one that identifies who they are," whereas the non-Native residents "do not understand this cultural difference...the Native American community is totally different from the local community" (Comanche Nation College President, 2013). Through this shared experience, Native residents can use the TCU to strengthen their bond with each other as well as with the TCU.

When asked how often she attends events within the community, CNC president expressed that she "participate(s) on a regular basis in community events but more regularly when I am invited" (Comanche Nation College President, 2013). She explains that she aims to attend at least two to three a month, depending on her time availability and the particular event. However, she also stresses the importance of receiving an invitation, otherwise she has hesitation and doesn't want appear intrusive. The significance of invitations, balanced with her interest in maintaining connections, demonstrates that while she feels it is her responsibility to support the college, she also feels an obligation to ensure that her presence is sought for a particular event.

CNC president also strongly believes that the TCU provides students with the motivation they need to continue their education after graduation. The support they receive while attending the college plays a crucial role in their academic success and continuation of their educational endeavors. When students see that they can succeed in college, their motivation, determination, and courage increase, which they then use in future endeavors. However, CNC president also

shared her desire for their graduates to “come back to assist the small schools that got them started” (Comanche Nation College President, 2013). Such increased reciprocity is a potential source of further support and success for the college and its students alike.

In discussions of community involvement, CNC president emphasized that mutual commitment is a vital aspect of the TCU’s endurance. While it is important for the TCU to be engaged in its community, it is also crucial for the community to remain involved with the TCU. Due to CNC’s mainstream location, the concept of community incorporates more than just a Native population. This delicate situation adds the additional element of non-Native influence onto the college and its future, creating a complicated college-community relationship. CNC’s president shared that often it seems as if “the external community really doesn’t care if the College make(s) it or not; we are insignificant to them as a whole” (Comanche Nation College President, 2013). Awareness of this disconnect with the mainstream mindset can have serious effects within a TCU community; however, CNC does not let this overpower them. If anything, CNC’s administrators use this indifference as motivation to not just persist, but to do what it takes to help the college thrive.

The strength to persist found and utilized by CNC administrators, students, and community members alike often stems from the cultural awareness fostered by the TCU. In an effort to ensure Native culture is included in all CNC degrees, academic requirements include cultural courses. Not only do these serve as ways for Native students to learn about their identities, they also serve as a way to spread the knowledge of Native culture and values to non-Natives in an attempt to bridge gaps in understanding. CNC’s president expresses that due to such efforts on behalf of the TCU, “the community as a whole... (is) beginning to embrace more the culture of the people who live among them, through museum activities, and cultural activities

and events that are becoming more inclusive of who they are and contributions they have made in the past” (Comanche Nation College President, 2013). This positive outlook helps to encourage CNC’s community to continue in the hopes that the non-Native residents will follow suit and become more supportive of the TCU as part of their community.

Student & Community Member:

Although numerous ideas that came to mind when asked about their general feelings towards having a TCU in their community, everything shared by the CNC student and community member was positive. The CNC student felt optimistic due to the traditional and cultural knowledge that is integrated into the framework of the TCU. To him, “having a tribal college in the community is beneficial because...traditional knowledge and education helps a student who is Comanche or Kiowa or Caucasian” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). This important inclusion in his statement of all students regardless of ethnicity demonstrates his awareness of the benefits increasing cultural awareness can have throughout the community. However, he also expressed his concern for CNC’s ability to stay open due to low enrollment currently being experienced. He explained, “The problem I see is not having more people who are interested in going to a tribal college. While I enjoy the small class size, I worry that there is not enough students to keep the tribal college going” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). While he acknowledges that he appreciates having small classes, his concern for the college’s future overrides his own, demonstrating the dedication so common within TCU communities.

The CNC community member also shared positive feelings regarding a TCU in the Comanche Nation. He explains that “it is a great and satisfying feeling to have a tribal college in our community. I have a strong feeling of pride, accomplishment, and feel the college represents

tribal sovereignty and implementation of the policy of self-determination in controlling and providing higher education opportunities for tribal and non-tribal members. It feels like a real accomplishment that will help the Comanche communities” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). He added that the way in which CNC represents Comanche culture helps to make the TCU a “very visible reality” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). However, he also acknowledged that he disliked “how hard it is to recruit and hire experienced college administrators and faculty with limited resources, (and) it is especially hard to find a qualified member of the Comanche tribe to assume the position of President. It is not that there are not qualified Comanches, it is just they are vested in the positions they occupy at other places” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). He also expressed frustration over the often-challenging relationship CNC has with the local community, a sentiment shared by all three CNC participants. However, despite the difficult situation with the non-Native population, the strength CNC demonstrates refutes any doubts that may exist.

When asked what generated such positive feelings towards the TCU, both student and community member shared personal examples that clearly demonstrate the affirmative impacts felt, individually as well as collectively. The CNC student shared that based on his experiences, he strongly feel that “Comanche college instructors are excellent teachers and are doing an outstanding job...The faculty at Comanche Nation College (are) interested in the lives of their students” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). It is though such investment, guidance, and support that CNC faculty and staff foster needed encouragement and motivation in their students.

The community member shared that he recently attended a CNC graduation, and “to witness and talk to students that were actually graduating (and) wearing their caps and gowns walking across the stage to receive their earned diplomas was a feeling of pride, joy, happiness,

and a realization that the college had achieved one of its goals” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). He added that “it was great to see people in the audience who acknowledged and supported the college by attending the graduation. I have the feeling that they thought this was their college” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). This reference to community members who were also supporting the college and graduates through their attendance of the ceremony demonstrates how interconnected the support received and provided by each means to the other.

In terms of utilization of CNC resources and attendance of events, the student and community member provided varied responses. The CNC student spoke very highly of the ability to utilize TCU resources, saying that “the use of the library is accessible and very helpful on locating school material, checking on e-mails, or whatever the case may be” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). He adds that he “utilize(s) the library on a daily basis in between class times... (and) will occasionally stop and utilize the internet on days that I do not have class” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). His use of resources on days with class as well as without illustrates his understanding of the benefits CNC’s resources can offer students. While he did not mention any specific CNC events that he has attending or participated in, he did state that he “would like to see more community awareness activities on behalf of the college” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014).

Since the CNC community member does not live directly within the CNC community, he expressed that “I do not use the resources as much as I would like...The main thing I do is visit the college website and call people at the college to catch up on what is going on, especially student and academic program information” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). Despite his physical distance, it is important to him that he maintains contact with CNC

and makes an effort to stay updated. Also due to distance, he explains that he is able to “attend 1-2 events a year. However, I often advocate and inform people about the college wherever I am” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). Such active efforts to support the TCU are significant because they demonstrate his continued interest and investment in CNC, and his refusal to allow physical distance to hinder his dedication to the college and its goals. Also demonstrated is that CNC is important to Comanche citizens regardless of where they live.

With regards to CNC’s efforts to remain involved in its community outside of the academic setting, as well as suggestions for future improvement, both student and community member shared positive observations as well as constructive recommendations. The CNC student stated, “I believe that the Comanche Nation College is involved in the community and being in this particular community, the college is very accessible” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). His statement expresses a unique aspect of CNC; that of existing in a mainstream town rather than on a reservation. He also shared his opinions on the pros and the cons associated with this location, explaining that while the challenging relationship with the non-Native population does present issues for CNC, on the other hand having mainstream resources has its benefits too. For example, he discussed transportation availability through the Comanche Nation Transit and articulated that therefore, “Comanche Nation College is very accessible for Comanche Nation members” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). This opportunity is not as readily available in more rural TCU communities, but benefits those who want to attend CNC. However, he also expressed that, in his opinion, “there could be a little more outreach done to promote the school to gain more students. There are tribal members that need more information on how the tribal college system works” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). This demonstrates his

awareness of the shared need for citizens to know more about the TCU, as well as the need for CNC to increase its student body.

The CNC community member echoed some of these same sentiments. He acknowledged that “the college makes a good effort but can always do more. The effort to involve the community is dependent on the college’s resources and the ability to engage the tribe and community” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). He acknowledges that while part of the responsibility lies with CNC, the tribe and the community also have a responsibility to the college. He also advised that “as a young and developing college, resources, including human and fiscal resources, are limited and tend to focus on developing a sound academic program” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). Eventually, he would like to see CNC “identify more resources, including budget, which supports community involvement” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). The influence a TCU’s age has on its resources and abilities is also an important feature to be aware of. CNC has not been around as long as other TCUs, and as challenging as it can be, CNC is not yet able to feasibly support as much as it would like.

In terms of the autonomy, both student and community member agree that CNC does enable the Comanche Nation to improve upon its self-determination efforts. Through the combined efforts of cultural support and accessibility, the CNC student expressed that he “believe(s) that the tribal college helps to improve the self-determination efforts of the tribe” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). He recognizes that accessibility is a crucial part of effective efforts to increase attendance, which therefore plays a crucial role in the ability of a Native Nations’ citizens to collectively increase their self-determination efforts as a whole. The CNC community member’s responses echo those of the student, and elaborates that “the tribe is

exercising its legal, sovereign status as a tribal government... (and) the tribe and the college are implementing the policy of self-determination by chartered and establishing a higher education institution. Every federally recognized tribe has a right to establish a tribal college; it is their decision” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). His statement clearly illustrates the ways in which CNC supports and enhances the self-determination efforts of the Comanche Nation.

When asked if they felt the location of CNC has improved accessibility of higher education to the community, both student and community member agreed that it does. The CNC student again referenced the availability of the Comanche Nation Transit and its influence on making CNC “very accessible for Comanche members” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). Due to its mainstream location, transportation and housing options are more available for those who want to attend CNC than at other TCUs. The concept of accessibility was also present in the community member’s responses. He explained that CNC’s location is particularly beneficial to “students who do not have access to a major four year university or (who) want to stay close to home” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). He added that “a local college also helps with student retention since dealing with family responsibilities and finances are factors in improving graduation rates... (and) also allows students to work while attending classes” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). Consequently, while a mainstream location does present some challenges to CNC, it also provides some benefits.

Both CNC student and community member expressed their strong beliefs that through the educational experiences students undergo at CNC, they find the motivation to continue their education after graduation. The student shared his personal story of the motivation he has received as a student at CNC. He explains that after the loss of his father, he “was having a rough

time going back to school,” but a CNC faculty member “took the time to give me the encouragement that my soul needed to hear. The faculty at Comanche Nation College... (are) interested in the lives of their students and encourages their students on the daily. They motivate me to continue my education after I’m finished with my program at Comanche Nation College” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). Undoubtedly, the personal support and encouragement he received during this difficult time helped to maintain his motivation to achieve success, both while at CNC as well as after.

The community member also agreed that CNC helps to motivate their students to continue educational endeavors beyond their TCU achievements. He explained that “often students experience academic success in tribal colleges; this helps to build confidence and higher expectations in students. It also instills in students the importance of a college education and degree that helps them to continue their education beyond the tribal college. I think these things are true at Comanche Nation College” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). His additional reference to TCUs infusing the significance of higher education into their students is another important result of the TCU experience.

While considering how the TCU fits into its community, both the CNC student and community member acknowledged consistencies as well as disconnects. The CNC student identified that CNC does a good job promoting Comanche culture through “integrating both traditional knowledge and education... (and) because students can learn a native language and receive college credit hour(s)” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). He also explained the role accessibility CNC plays in its function as an extension of the community, again referencing the collaboration between CNC and the Comanche Nation Transit. However, he also expressed his concern for the apparent disconnect between the TCU and its surrounding community, both

Native and non-Native. Specifically, his apprehension for the Nation in “not having more people who are interested in going to a tribal college...(and) worry that there is not enough students to keep the college going” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). He also expressed his awareness that “tribal members that need more information on how the tribal college system works” (Comanche Nation College Student, 2014). His attentiveness to the college-community relationship and resultant suggestions for improvement all have the potential to benefit CNC in future endeavors.

The community member’s responses expressed his appreciation for how CNC works to nurture its relationship with the surrounding towns. He explained, “I think the college is an extension of the tribe and tribal communities. I think with Comanche Nation College, it is also an extension of the larger communities (around Lawton), including both Indian and non-Indian community members” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). This awareness of the impact CNC has on more than the Native community is an important aspect to recognize in its efforts to be *a part of* the community rather than *a part from* the community. He adds that “there is no question Comanche Nation College promotes culture, language and values in its academic programs and in all other phases and activities of the college. Comanche Centered Education is the foundation of the college...Comanche Nation College recognizes that there is much strength in being Comanche; the college builds on Comanche strengths and makes them stronger through academic and student life programs” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). These culturally-relevant efforts on behalf of the TCU validate the importance the college places on Native culture and identity.

While the student’s concerns were directed more toward the relationship between CNC and the Native Nation, the community member expressed concern for the disconnects between

CNC and the surrounding community at large. He explained that “since Comanche Nation College is located in Lawton, Oklahoma there are disconnects between the larger non-Indian community and Comanche identity and culture. The larger community is not always accepting or respecting (of) Comanche ways. In essence, racism and discrimination still exists” (Comanche Nation College Community Member, 2013). This sentiment was also acknowledged by the CNC president as a cause for concern and source of challenges. However, these issues are by no fault of CNC, but rather exist within the non-Native population and their choice to act in such negative ways. Nonetheless, CNC still stands strong in the face of this opposition and demonstrates how dedicated its faculty, staff and supporters are to continuing the college despite such circumstances.

Chapter 6: Tribal College Journal Findings

Distribution of Keywords within Articles

The 2008-2013 *Tribal College Journal* (TCJ) timeframe contained a total of 749 articles, and the review of the six-year timeframe produced a sum of 56 articles comprising one or more keywords within a relevant context. This means that of the articles within the 2008-2013 TCJ timeframe, only 7.47% contained data relevant to this study. Additionally, out of the 56 articles, “What Hope Looks Like” (Paskus 2012) was the only article that specifically addressed the topic of this study. The other 55 articles primarily concerned unrelated TCU topics, with the relevantly-used keywords existing as brief statements within the larger theme of the article. The pie chart below illustrates the proportion of articles containing relevant references in comparison to the total number of articles within the 2008-2013 TCJ timeframe.

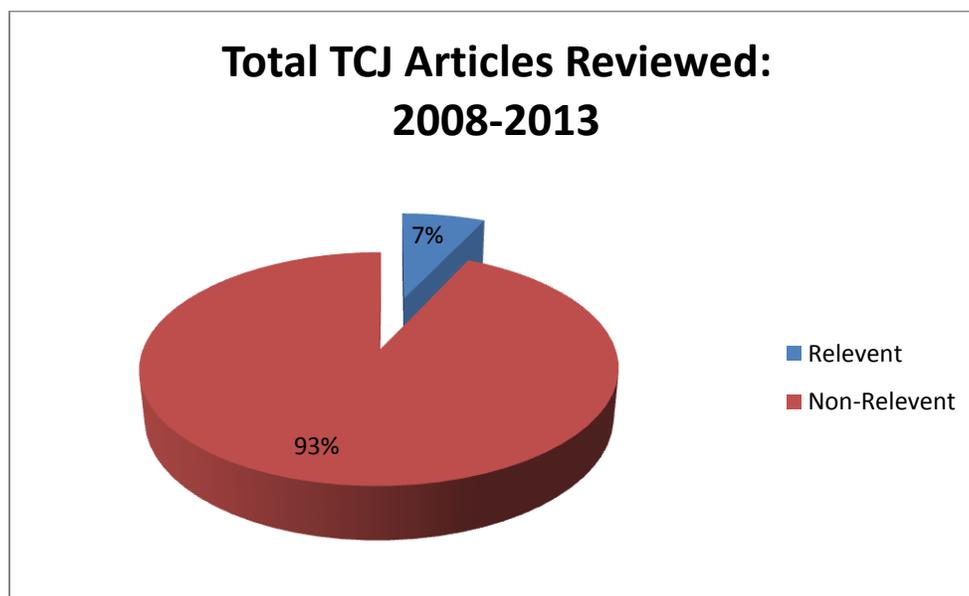


Figure (7): Total TCJ Articles Reviewed: 2008-2013.

Following the calculation of the 2008-2013 percentages, articles were subsequently sorted into sets by keyword. The articles within this six-year timeframe that contained more than one keyword were then copied so that duplicates could be placed into their respective keyword sets. Within these 56 articles, after copies were made, the count of each keyword was as follows: Hope (19), Pride/Proud (27), Attitude/Attitudinal (1), Motivate/Motivational (9), and Social (8). The pie chart below illustrates the distribution of keywords in TCJ articles within the 2008-2013 timeframe.

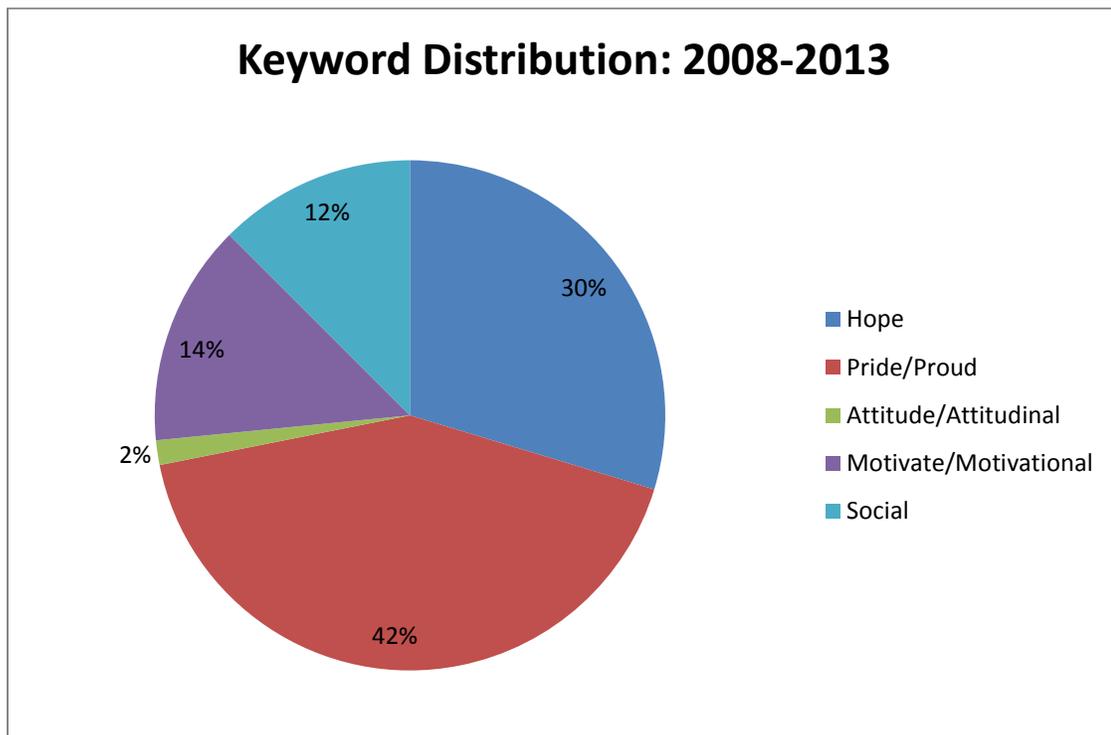


Figure (8): Keyword Distribution: 2008-2013.

The additional nine sources with relevant evidence encountered in the readings outside of this research were incorporated into the data pool and calculated into the total numbers of keyword references. These additional sources consisted of older TCJ articles (7), an Indian

Country Today Media Network article (1), and a page from the American Indian College Fund (AICF) website (1). These additional sources were added to the body of data after the six-year percentage was calculated so as to not skew the true distribution of references to attitudinal impacts within literature. Within these nine additional sources, two articles had more than one keyword, producing an additional keyword count of Hope (8) and Pride/Proud (3). In total, the 56 TCJ articles from the six-year timeframe, together with the nine additional sources, amounts to 65 sources in this section of data. Together, the comprehensive counts of each keyword generated by the sum of these 65 sources are as follows: Hope (27), Pride/Proud (30), Attitude/Attitudinal (1), Motivate/Motivational (9), and Social (8). The table below illustrates the distribution of keywords within each group of data in this section.

Total Keyword Distribution:					
	Hope	Pride/ Proud	Attitude/ Attitudinal	Motivate/ Motivational	Social
2008-2013	19	27	1	9	8
Additional	8	3	0	0	0
Total	27	30	1	9	8

Figure (9): Total Keyword Distribution.

Assessment of keyword distribution reveals an observable absence of the two keywords “cohesion” and “mindset”. Also a noticeable is the relative lack of representation of the

“attitude” keyword when compared to the others. The ten keywords used in data collection were chosen from the research questions so as to give the best chance of locating concepts applicable to this study. Despite the lack of representation of these three keywords in the actual keyword count, it is important to recognize they are still present through the use of the other keywords. For example, all ten keywords and related references represent community attitudes in various ways; therefore, only having one count of the “attitude” keyword in a relevant context is not problematic to the overall results of this study. Additionally, the keywords “cohesion” and “mindset” are still present in principle within their respective themes. For the purposes of this study, multiple keywords were utilized to locate the same information, such as “pride” and “proud.” So too was the case with “social” and “cohesion,” as well as with “motivation” and “mindset”; the use of the keyword “social” fundamentally involves the keyword “cohesion,” as does the use of the keyword “motivation” fundamentally involve the keyword “mindset.” Consequently, their lack of representation in the keyword count does not signify that their associated themes are not present in the data, but rather that certain keywords were more productive than others.

Classification of Keyword Set Categories

During the review of keyword context within all 65 sources of data in this section, many distinct themes emerged within each keyword set with regards to the impacts TCUs have on community attitudes. Depending on usage, some themes were more straightforward to categorize than others; certain themes were particularly unique and uncomplicated to isolate, while others were more similar in connotation and therefore more complex to separate during the categorization process. This was particularly true for the “social” keyword set. However, this

intricacy speaks to the interconnectedness of all aspects pertaining to TCUs, as well as the resultant feelings that exist within Native communities. Altogether, analysis of keyword contexts produced different totals within each keyword set: Hope (7), Pride/Proud (13), Attitude/Attitudinal (1), Motivate/Motivation (5), and Social (3). Keyword set categories are listed below, followed by detailed explanations and interpretations of each:

Hope:

- BOH: The term “beacon(s) of hope” arose within four separate sources. Its application occurred within the context of the future of a specific TCU community, as well as the future of Indian Country as a whole. Similar language was also used in reference to TCUs as “creating bright circles of hope” and TCUs making “their home as a place of hope.”
- F: “Hope” used to explain the hope for the future of the TCU-chartering Native Nation, as well as hope for Indian Country as a whole
- I: “Hope” used in reference to the current state of the TCU-chartering Native Nation through immediate impacts seen in the community
- P: TCU acts as a source of hope as a possible way out of poverty
- S: Individual students’ hope felt for themselves and their success in the future, sometimes explained as a feeling of inspiration for this hope
- C: The specific hope felt for the revitalization and continuation of Native culture and identity within the future of individual Native Nations as well as of Indian Country as a whole
- A: The hope created by all those working for the advancement of TCUs and their goals as a collective force within Indian Country

Pride/Proud:

- SC: Pride felt for the school due to the dedication to Native culture and identity
- IC: Newfound, or increased, pride in oneself because of culture and identity emphasized by the TCU

- SS: Pride felt within the TCU and the community for the students as well as for the school as a whole
- AC: The accomplishment made by the Native Nation through the opening of a school at large is seen as a huge success and sparks pride within the community
- DF: The clear demonstration made by the Native Nation that it values education by dedicating funds necessary to support the TCU generates pride within the community
- QU: Pride in the level and quality of education the TCU provides the community
- RC: Pride felt within the community as a result of their Nation successfully reclaiming control of education within its own self-determination efforts
- OC: Pride in being able to offer resources to the community at large
- LE: Pride in being able to offer a local education and thus removing the need to choose between staying with family and community or leaving to go to school
- ED: Students' general sense of pride and accomplishment in getting an education
- AT: Students' sense of pride in attending a TCU (vs. a mainstream institution)
- CP: TCUs' connections to the Native pride felt across the United States
- MV: Pride felt for the efforts made by the TCU movement as a whole, on a National level

Attitude/Attitudinal:

- EXP: Personal experiences involving a TCU, whether through a class, program or event, generate positive attitudes within community members with regards to the TCU

Motivate/Motivation:

- JOB: Student's educational experience at TCU motivated them to apply for a job following completion of program at TCU
- CED: Student motivated by educational experience at TCU to continue their education to a 4-year degree (whether at TCU or mainstream institution)
- EXT: The existence of a TCU in the community motivates additional attendance of community members
- RET: Motivation and support students receive while at TCU to continue their program of study through completion

- HSO: TCU programs and resources motivates high school students to be successful, graduate from high school, and possibly encourage enrollment in college

Social:

- TOG: Feelings of togetherness and unity within the community as a result of TCU
- DEV: A coming together of the community in acknowledgment of a shared devotion to TCU's goals, culture and identity
- BON: Bond resulting from maintaining culture and identity, as well as through the collective efforts to support students

Hope:

BOH: The term “beacon(s) of hope” and other similar language within the context of the future of a specific TCU community, as well as the future of Indian Country as a whole.

A particularly significant pattern found during data review is the repeated use of the term “beacon(s) of hope” in reference to TCUs. This specific term occurred four times within four separate sources: three TCJ articles and one webpage. Two additional occurrences of similar language were found in two other TCJ articles. Utilized by diverse individuals within the TCU movement, these terms are applied to various contexts to describe TCUs as places of hope for Native people, both within their respective communities as well as for Indian Country as a whole. In total, six references to TCUs using these terms were found in descriptions of TCUs and their existence, and resultant impacts within Native communities.

Pertaining to Indian Country as a whole, the term “beacons of hope” used to describe TCUs and their impacts appears on the American Indian College Fund (AICF) website: “*Tribal colleges are beacons of hope* for social and economic change in their communities, helping to fight poverty” (History and Mission: The American Indian College Fund’s History 2013, 1).

Melody Henry, graduate and president of Stone Child College expands on this concept from the community level when she explains that she “believes *the tribal college is ‘a bright spot in this community...Life can be hard out here...We have high unemployment and many social issues, but Stone Child is a beacon of hope...I’ve seen people come here with no income, people receiving government assistance, and they become leaders of our tribal council’*” (Stone Child Marks 25th Year of Serving Community 2009, 1). While the first passage references TCUs within the framework of Indian Country as a whole, and the second addresses the specific community in which the TCU exists, they both speak of TCUs as strongly tangible sources of hope within Native communities. The appearance of this term in both personal narratives as well as on a related-organization’s website is significant for the reason that it indicates that TCUs are developing a stronger reputation of hope within Native communities, both locally as well as nationally.

Other language similar to “beacon(s) of hope” in reference to TCUs also appeared within TCJ articles. For example, on page two in “Tribal College Journal Looks Ahead to Challenges of Second Decade,” TCJ contributor Marjane Ambler explains “these (Native) communities are not the dark pools of despair so often portrayed by the media. Tribal colleges and universities are *creating bright circles of hope* on their reservations with the glowing faces of their graduates at the center” (Ambler 1999, 2). This passage not only acknowledges TCUs as sources of hope, but their graduates are also recognized as an essential function of this effect. The notion of TCU graduates’ role in this movement is further elaborated in another article, where it is expressed that TCU graduates “have become leaders committed...to *their home as a place of hope*” (Mohatt 1990, 2). Here, the Native community as a whole is referenced as a “place of hope” due to the impacts TCUs are having through the placement of TCU graduates into the community on

reservations. While these narratives utilize choices of words different than “beacon(s) of hope,” they express the same sentiments; TCUs are places and sources of hope.

The broad use of these expressions within various contexts by numerous people at varied levels of TCU involvement is especially significant because it demonstrates that this concept permeates the TCU movement at many levels. While it is important that individual people within Native communities use these phrases to express their opinions of TCUs as sources of hope, it is particularly noteworthy to recognize that this concept has now reached the national level. The fact that an organization specifically established to support Native students, such as the AICF, is using this language confirms how strongly this concept has been infused within Indian Country as a whole.

F: “Hope” used to explain the hope for the future of the TCU-chartering Native Nation, as well as hope for Indian Country as a whole.

One particular article stood out after the review of this section that expressed the significant force that hope has within the TCU movement as a whole. On page five in “Forty Years of ‘Fire in the Belly,’” leaders within the TCU movement stress that among the numerous benefits TCUs provide their communities, hope is the most significant: “In a nutshell, many of the leaders of the tribal college movement offer an admonition for tribal and college leaders to remember *tribal colleges’ roots and their essential mission of offering hope and confidence* to Indian students. They agree that *the most important gift that tribal colleges offered in the early days is the same gift they offer today: hope*” (Pember 2012, 5). The strong embedment of hope within the foundation of TCUs is made clear through the assertion that hope continues to be the most significant contribution TCUs make to their communities and to Indian Country altogether.

The mutual exchange of hope can be seen within tribal leaders' desire to offer hope inspiring the motivation utilized to establish TCUs, and in return, the support TCUs receive from their communities through the hope they have generated. As a result, in the eyes of these leaders, hope is considered to be the driving force for support and success of TCUs, and thus the most important and essential element of TCUs and the TCU movement as a whole.

The impacts TCU students have within their communities are also a great source of hope felt by their Nations as a whole. Students attend a TCU, graduate with a certificate and/or academic degree, and use their knowledge and skills to improve the state of Indian Country, achieved not only at the community level but also at the national level. During a recent meeting in Washington D.C. between U.S. legislators and TCU administrators, students, and advocates, students "laid out the realities of reservation life and shared stories of how education has changed their lives and that of their families. *Though some of their stories were serious and somber, all were hopeful*" (Paskus 2012, 2). The stories of their educational experiences expressed by the students illustrate the positive impacts TCUs have at many different levels. The hope referenced in these stories is not just for the individual students themselves, but are also for their communities and for Indian Country as a whole. Through their accomplishments, not only are TCU graduates using hope to improve their own lives, but they are also returning the investment of hope back into their communities.

I: "Hope" used in reference to the current state of the TCU-chartering Native Nation through immediate impacts seen in the community

Many of the sources reviewed in this section involved the discussion of long-term hopes within the community generated by TCUs, such as better overall quality of life on the reservation

and increased recognition within mainstream. However, also present were feelings of hope for the current state of the Nation as a whole due to more immediate results of TCUs' efforts. Such impacts can be observed through smaller, more direct efforts undertaken by TCUs. For example, Fort Peck Community College "President Dr. James Shanley (Assiniboine)...emphasized his college's *powerful impact in community service*. 'To some, the tribal college is the only show in town...in fact, one elder recently said that *this institution was 'the hope' of the community*'" (Worley 2010, 4). These efforts to offer resources to the community with more immediate results, such as access to a library and the internet as well as through community service projects, also play a vital role in generating hope within the community. Immediate impacts help community members feel more hopeful for the current state of their Nation as well as for its future; they are able to observe positive changes taking place not just within their own lives but also within their communities.

One particular article discussed a specific example of how hope is perceived by a certain cohort of community members as a result of more immediate TCU impacts. Told through the eyes of the younger generations on the reservation, the article "What Hope Looks Like" discusses a program initiated by Oglala Lakota College in an attempt to curb suicide within Native communities. Children were given cameras and were invited to "use photographs to answer the question 'What does hope look like to you?'...Children snapped shots of their families and homes. There are also photos of people at play – and of a basketball suspended in midair above a wooden backboard and hoop – and many, many pets. 'Their photos give a completely different perspective of life...(they) have a *great sense of what's important to them, and what makes them hopeful*'" (Paskus 2012, 2). The immediate impacts and resultant hope that these children highlight with their pictures are recognizable illustrations of the impacts TCUs are

currently having within these communities. The observation and indication of these impacts throughout the community by these children helps to encourage hope within the younger generations on the reservation, and possibly into the larger community by association.

P: TCU acts as a source of hope as a possible way out of poverty

For many people, both Native and non-Native alike, an education is one potential way out of a life of poverty. College represents a chance to achieve a better life, and gives hope to students that if they work for success they can indeed achieve success. For example, when “Eiden Lawrence, former president of Sisseton Wahpeton College...returned to the Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota reservation in South Dakota – after living for five years as an alcoholic on skid row in Los Angeles – *the tribal college represented his only hope...‘The college offered hope, acceptance and the help to move forward,’*” (Pember 2012, 1). This case is a prime example of how a student’s educational experience at a TCU can completely turn their life around. It is particularly important to note that in many Native communities, the local TCU is the only chance some community members have to acquire an education. If a potential student is living in poverty, he/she certainly cannot afford to leave home and attend college elsewhere. Therefore, TCUs are incredibly important and beneficial because they offer hope when no one else does.

Collectively, the actions of individuals choosing to attend a TCU, such as Eiden Lawrence’s story above, can have far-reaching benefits for the community as a whole. As explained in “Activists Buck Status Quo,” “Hope (is) when students can gain skill in subjects such as information technology, zoology, or engineering, they can also potentially *reduce their own and their communities’ poverty and resulting hopelessness*” (Ambler 2010, 2). The

reciprocal nature of hope as a result of TCUs is undoubtedly experienced within Native Nations when students succeed as a result of their own initial hope, inspire hope and support within their communities. In effect, the hope felt within entire Native communities as a result of TCUs is raising the quality of life within Native Nations one student at a time.

S: Individual students' hope felt for themselves and their success in the future, sometimes explained as a feeling of inspiration for this hope

Generally, TCU graduates emerge from their college experience with an increased sense of hope for themselves and for their futures. While this tends to be a universal theme for most college graduates, Natives and non-Natives, the additional layer of hope and desire to serve one's community with their education is often present within the sentiments of Native students. As TCJ contributor Mary Annette Pember asserts, "*Tribal colleges offer American Indian students the chance to hope*" (Pember 2012, 3). David Gipp, long-time president of United Tribes Technical College, corroborates this sentiment in the following statement by revealing, "'When our students see what they can accomplish, their confidence builds. Then they carry that same baton forward to others'" (Pember 2012, 3). As Gipp explains it, as part of the process of TCU students building personal confidence and hope, there exists an inherent exchange of support through these perspectives from student to student, as well as from student to community member(s). This sharing of confidence and hope as each TCU student succeeds motivates those around them to do the same.

Through students' personal successes, they can also inspire positive feelings in those around them. For example, in the author profile of his article entitled "Lucy Barrett: From Grandma to Graduate to Professor," Dan King, president of Red Lake Nation College reveals

that ““Seeing *our students’ hopes, dreams, and passion for the future* on a daily basis is such a positive, natural energy to be around”” (King 2011, 2). His statement demonstrates that simply being around TCU students, seeing their success, and helping to celebrate their achievements, can naturally improve the outlooks of TCU administrators, fellow students, and community members alike. The personal hope felt by TCU students provides inspiration to those around them, and thus creates a positive force in and around TCUs that can be utilized to generate positive change within Native communities.

C: The specific hope felt for the revitalization and continuation of Native culture and identity within the future of individual Native Nations as well as of Indian Country as a whole

The focus placed on Native culture and identity at TCUs provides their respective communities with the hope that their culture will not just survive, but will also be strengthened in the future. In her article entitled “Through Woksape Oyate, We Share Our People’s Wisdom” Dr. Cheryl Crazy Bull, current President and CEO of the American Indian College Fund, describes the hope she felt for the continuation of Native culture and identity during a Woksape Oyate meeting. “Lakota for ‘Wisdom of the People,’ Woksape Oyate is a project of the American Indian College Fund...meant to build intellectual capital at tribal colleges. *Wisdom of the People is knowledge acquired through sacred experience, through sharing and hard work, and through willingness to honor ourselves and our cultures*” (Crazy Bull 2012^a, 1). Dr. Crazy Bull goes on to explain that during this meeting TCU administrators, students, and advocates began to share personal stories and experiences and “the heart work of each institution – saving the lives of our students, restoring our knowledge, and building our leaders – revealed itself. We shared the work we are doing in our institutions with our students and communities and gave

generously of what we learned. Personally, I was inspired, and *my hopefulness about how we will maintain our identities and sense of place as tribal people is strengthened* by what other people shared” (Crazy Bull 2012^a, 1). The sharing of personal narratives at the Woksape Oyate meeting, specifically those that demonstrated the strong support Native culture and identity receives at TCUs, brought hopefulness for the revitalization of Native culture and identity to those in attendance. The hopefulness felt at the Woksape Oyate meeting undoubtedly exists within all those who witness and/or experience the very things spoken about at the meeting within their own TCU communities.

Hope within Native communities also stems from the recognition of TCUs as places of cultural support. As explained in reference to Navajo Technical University, previously Navajo Technical College (NTC) at the time this article was written, “*cultural survival*” is a strong focal point at the institution, and “is essentially the foundation of what has become a *modern-day cultural renaissance*” (Vandever 2012, 1). The article further elaborates by asserting that “only in a place that knows the complexities of both the modern and traditional worlds could this happen... (NTC) is *a place where hope for the modern Navajo lives, and where Navajo language and culture will never die*” (Vandever 2012, 1). Increased recognition and appreciation of Native culture at TCUs brings about a stronger sense of Native identity within TCU administrators, students, and community members alike. This deeper connection to identity generates hope within the community that their culture will not just survive, but will also be strengthened in the future.

A: The hope created by all those working for the advancement of TCUs and their goals as a collective force within Indian Country

A more comprehensive approach to looking at hope in terms of TCU impacts is through the inclusion of Indian Country allies as a whole, Native and non-Native alike. In her article entitled “Without Racism, Indian Students Could Be Both Indian and Students,” TCJ contributor Marjane Ambler discusses the influence “cultural brokers” have in creating hope within Native education as a whole. Ambler states “*the hope for Indian students’ success lies with tribally controlled education and with the cultural brokers – both Indian and non-Indian – who devote their lives to building understanding across cultural lines...The hope lies in non-Indians, such as the readers of the Tribal College Journal, who are themselves cultural brokers* fighting the ignorance. They recognize the importance of understanding other cultures” (Ambler 1997, 2-3). She acknowledges the vital importance of cooperation among all Indian Country allies, regardless of ethnicity or profession, for the advancement of Native education as a whole. The hope for Native students and their education lies in these people who fight, collectively and individually, for awareness, recognition, rights, and action for the betterment of Native education as a whole.

Marjane Ambler (1997) broadens her discussion to include those directly engaged in creating hope for Native education such as individuals specifically involved within the TCU movement, as well as organizational allies. This includes organizations that were created specifically to support the advancement of Native students such as TCUs and the American Indian College Fund (AICF), as well as mainstream organizations such as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) that choose to partner with TCUs in order to broaden the opportunities for Native students. Along these lines, Ambler (1997) elaborates by

stating that “*hope lies in the tribal college presidents and faculty who frequently become involved in advocating for such changes on behalf of Indian students throughout their states...The hope lies in the tribal college students who emerge confident of being successful in their own and in the mainstream cultures...(and) The hope lies in those institutional cultural brokers that understand the colleges’ dual mission and support them in it*” (Ambler 1997, 2-3). Again Ambler acknowledges the importance for numerous entities to work together if TCUs are to gain the support they need and the respect they deserve from mainstream society. These collective efforts, both individual and organizational, foster the growth of hope for Native students, institutions, and education as a whole.

Pride/Proud:

SC: Pride felt for the school due to the dedication to Native culture and identity

Much pride within TCU communities stems from the acknowledgement, support, and value TCUs give to Native culture. As Oglala Lakota College student Waniya Locke reveals, “*I am so proud of my school,*’ ...Like her grandmother, it is Waniya’s culture, history and language that inspires her the most” (Rose 2013, 2). Many TCU students share this sentiment, and through this pride, use it as a source of strength, inspiration, and motivation to do well in school as well as after graduation. Support and celebration of Native culture are also accomplished through selecting the name for the TCU itself. As tribally-charted institutions, TCUs understandably aspire to represent the Native Nation(s) through which they were established in the best way they can. Therefore, name selection is a crucial aspect to TCUs’ identity, and as such, is a constant reminder of who they are and who they serve. This objective is also achieved through changing

an institution's name so as to better represent their community's identity and goals. For example, in 1997 Navajo Community College officially changed its name to the current Diné College so as to better-represent their Nation's culture, traditions, and identity (Navajos Change Name to Diné College 1997). Similarly, the former Fort Belknap College transformed its name to Aaniiih Nakoda College in 2011 in order to reflect the two Native Nations that it represents, the Aaniiih and the Nakoda (Cournoyer 2012). Native communities find pride in such deliberate actions because they clearly assert that Native identity is something to be proud of, and worthy of recognition and cultivation.

IC: Newfound, or increased, pride in oneself because of culture and identity emphasized by the TCU

As a result of the pride felt for the school due to its cultural inclusion efforts, students take pride in themselves through the cultural knowledge instilled by the TCU. Native students enter TCUs with varying levels of knowledge pertaining to their Native identities; some come in with a deep understanding of their cultural roots, while others come in with portions of knowledge. Through the educational experience as a whole, TCUs help foster a sense of pride in Native identity. One way in which this is accomplished is through the knowledge shared in the classroom. For example, "In classes, Western scientific studies are used to affirm cultural knowledge about the uses of Native foods and medicines...Using information like this can *give students a sense of confidence and pride in their traditional ways of knowing*. They remember that their ancestors had sophisticated ways of understanding and caring for their world... *A sense of pride and enthusiasm comes over many as their culture is validated and affirmed*" (Krohn 2011, 1-2). Through the unification of Native and Western knowledge and techniques, TCU

students not only learn the knowledge they need to be successful in their futures, but through this awareness, they also gain pride in their culture, history, and identities as Native people. Through this validation and awareness, TCUs students find strength in themselves from drawing on their culture and traditions, and as a result, further understand how their Native identity can be utilized as a tool for future success.

SS: Pride felt within the TCU and the community for the students as well as for the school as a whole

Pride felt for TCU students is a very commonly expressed sentiment within TCU communities, as they are a significant source of success for their Native Nation, individually as well as collectively. In part, this pride stems from the acknowledgment of these students' choice to attend college in general, but particular pride also stems from their choice to attend a TCU. Despite often challenging circumstances, these students demonstrate that they are strong enough to succeed, achieving positive accomplishments with their educations. Additionally, pride in the TCU itself is also a common sentiment, partially due to simply having an institution of higher education to call their own, but also from the positive difference the TCU is making within its community. In the article entitled "Dream and Reality: The Founding and Future of Sinte Gleska College," it is explained that "*People on reservations are proud of their colleges and they are deserving of such competent institutions. We had hoped we could create such pride and competence in this college. I believe we have succeeded... We did firmly believe that it would exist... that it would be very good, that we all would find pride in it, and that the people who would build it would continue to create and would not accept the early refrain we heard: 'It'll never work'*" (Mohatt 1990, 3). Interesting to note is that while pride is acknowledged as a result

of the TCU, pride was also a goal when creating the TCU, clearly demonstrating how intertwined the aspect of pride is within TCU communities. While having an institution of higher education within the community provides immense pride for Native citizens, additional pride stems from the tribally-operated, tribally-focused foundations of all TCUs.

AC: The accomplishment made by the Native Nation through the opening of a school at large is seen as a huge success and sparks pride within the community

Additional pride comes from the accomplishment made by the Nation through successfully opening an institution of higher education. Establishing such an institution is a substantial feat for any community or organization, requiring immense amounts of time, energy, money, resources, and dedication. However, with regard to TCUs, particular pride stems from the accomplishment having been made by Native people, for Native people, and within Native communities. Founding a tribal college demonstrates that there is not only dedication within the community to take on such as task, but also the commitment to support it into the future. Such pride can be appreciated in the celebration of TCU anniversaries. As explained by Red Crow Community College President Marie Smallface Marule, “Celebrating the 25th anniversary of Red Crow Community College is *an achievement for which we can all be proud*...The celebrations paid a special tribute to the many accomplishments achieved in its 25-year history” (Weasel Fat 2012, 1). The collaborative efforts made by numerous entities within Native Nations to sustain TCUs are a testament of the dedication within the community to these institutions. The expression of this commitment of support is a source of immense pride within Native communities.

DF: The clear demonstration made by the Native Nation that it values education by dedicating funds necessary to support the TCU generates pride within the community

In addition to the pride stemming from the accomplishment made through the establishment of a TCU, particular pride comes from the specific choice made by the Native Nation to dedicate the funds necessary to open and maintain it. With regard to Navajo Technical College, now Navajo Technical University, Navajo Nation delegate Mel R. Begay expresses his gratitude for the support the TCU continues to receive from the Navajo Nation Council, explaining that “*it’s a big stride that is being done...These are our young ones whose minds we’d like to expand. I’m proud of these schools that are within our communities*” (Vandever 2012, 1). This dedication of funds sends a strong message to the community that providing the opportunity to attain higher education is valued within the Nation. Additionally important to note is that funding a TCU is not a one-time arrangement, but rather a long-term commitment. Making this lasting pledge is another way in which Native Nations are working to meet their citizens’ needs, and as such, creates an immense source of pride within the community.

QU: Pride in the level and quality of education the TCU provides the community

Receiving accreditation is a milestone through which higher education institutions can assess and demonstrate the quality of education they offer their students. Since TCUs receive accreditation from the same organizations that approve mainstream institutions, certification places TCU students in equal standing with those at mainstream institutions. Following initial accreditation of Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College (SCTC) in 2007, past SCTC president Karen Radell explains, “What accreditation means ultimately for the tribal community is that *our students now have an even playing field* from which to launch their educational careers. Students,

faculty administration, and members of the community *all take justifiable pride* in SCTC having achieved accreditation. *Accreditation is a validation* of SCTC's mission, and with accreditation, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College has been *recognized as an equal among its peers*" (Radell 2008, 1-2). After enduring centuries of forced educational practices, Native Nations are now proving that they can offer quality higher education within their own cultural framework. Effectively balancing Native and Western knowledge at TCUs demonstrates that students don't have to give up their culture and identity to be successful. Rather, Native culture and identity can be used as sources of academic success, generating great pride within themselves as well as within their communities.

RC: Pride felt within the community as a result of their Nation successfully reclaiming control of education within its own self-determination efforts

Establishing a TCU is yet another step towards greater sovereignty and self-determination of Native Nations. Undertaking this responsibility has powerful implications for the Nation's ability to reclaim control of the education of their citizens. As a result, TCU students are able to choose to remain in their communities and work after graduation. At Sinte Gleska College, "the college's *graduates do stay* and do provide the leadership in many positions *previously held by outsiders*. A significant increase in the numbers of Lakota teachers has occurred because of the college. We are all *proud of our graduates*...They have become leaders committed...to *contribute to the improvement of the quality of reservation life*" (Mohatt 1990, 2). Not only do TCU communities feel pride in being able to offer their students the option to attend college locally, they are also proud of their graduates' choices to stay and give back after completion of their program. This essential step in reclaiming control of education through the

establishment of TCUs demonstrates the reciprocal nature of Native Nations' self-determination efforts.

OC: Pride in being able to offer resources to the community at large

A Native Nation's capacity to offer its citizens numerous resources through a TCU generates immense pride felt throughout the society as a whole. Being able to personally serve one's community is a particular source of pride for many Native people working within their Nation. As TCJ contributor Heidi Sherick describes in her interview of Little Big Horn College President Dr. David Yarlott, Jr., "While considering the answers to my questions, he would often gaze out the window toward the horizon. It seemed to me *as though he were speaking not only for himself, but for his people – and that he felt proud and grateful to serve as an educational leader on the Crow Reservation*" (Sherick 2012, 1). Such dedication felt for one's community, and pride in being able to give back, is a common sentiment of those in tribal occupations. The support TCUs provide to the Nation as a whole rather than focusing only on students' needs demonstrates that the institution values all members of the community and is working to meet all citizens' needs.

LE: Pride in being able to offer a local education and thus removing the need to choose between staying with family and community or leaving to go to school

Due to the TCU movement, mainstream institutions are no longer the only choice Native students have to attain higher education. Providing an accessible option gives power to citizens, and enables them to take pride in making the right decision for themselves. It also helps alleviate many issues associated with attending a mainstream institution, such as cost, reluctance to leave

family and responsibilities, and separation from community and culture. At Salish Kootenai College (SKC), sports play a large role in attracting students, as well as maintaining their motivation to stay in school. The construction of a new basketball facility at SKC had students and athletics director Juan Perez excited to “show (it) off...Before the new gym was built, they had to play and practice at the local high schools on the reservation. ‘*We have our own home now...When we play our homes games, there’s a little more sense of pride.* We’re not going to let another team come in and do what they want. We protect our home pretty well’” (Talahongva 2009, 4). The accomplishment of building a new facility, along with the awareness of ownership and belonging, fosters students’ sense of pride within themselves and their communities.

ED: Students’ general sense of pride and accomplishment in getting an education

TCU students feel a great sense of pride in themselves as college students, and recognize the potential benefits getting an education can have for themselves, their families, and potentially their Native Nation as a whole. Often, the self-confidence and pride found through their educational experience at a TCU transforms into pride in themselves as roles models for others who might think college is unattainable. Oglala Lakota College student Eric Yellow Boy explains, “For me, the greatest challenge was making the decision to go to school. I was 32 years old when I started, and the scariest part was wondering if I could do it. But now, I am close to graduating with my Associate’s Degree in Lakota Studies...*I am very proud of the fact I’m getting an education.* This is the best thing I can do for myself and my family. *It sets an example for my nieces and nephews*” (Umbhau 2010, 2). Many TCU students take pride in knowing that their personal decision to attend college has the potential to help others find the motivation they

need to be successful as well. This pride serves TCU graduates as a source of strength they can utilize for future success in education beyond the TCU as well as in their careers.

AT: Students' sense of pride in attending a TCU (vs. a mainstream institution)

In addition to the pride TCU students feel as a college student in general, further pride exists in their choice to attend a TCU over a mainstream institution. For example, Haskell student Kristin McGirt “jokes that a cousin ‘dragged me up to Haskell.’ Joking aside, however, she takes great pride in obtaining her bachelor’s degree from Haskell in May 2009. As an excellent softball player, she could have received scholarships from other schools. Haskell, however, offered her the opportunity to meet a diverse group of Native peoples and focus on management skills that she can take home to her tribe” (Students Can Choose From Four Baccalaureate Programs 2009, 2). Kristin McGirt actively chose to attend Haskell because of the suitable support the campus environment could provide her Native identity and her desire to study applicable topics that she could bring back to her community. TCU students like her find much pride in attending a TCU and all the TCU represents; they feel proud to be a part of the larger TCU movement within Indian Country as a whole.

CP: TCUs' connections to the Native pride felt across the United States

TCUs emerged out of a growing movement of Native pride within the U.S., close in time to the first tribal-U.S. contract agreement with the operation of the Navajo Nation’s Rough Rock School and the passage of the 1975 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development 2008, 201). TCJ contributor James Shanley (2001) explains, “During this period, there was a renaissance of hope, pride, and

resolve aimed at strengthening tribes and improving life for American Indians, particularly those living on reservations” (1). Shanley’s (2001) statement demonstrates how interwoven the concepts of hope and pride are within the TCU movement as a whole. The reciprocal nature of this relationship is revealed through the acknowledgment of TCUs as a product of Native hope and pride, and the subsequent hope and pride felt within Native communities as a result of TCUs.

MV: Pride felt for the efforts made by the TCU movement as a whole, on a National level

The persistence, ambition, and drive of TCU administrators, organizations, and supporters, together with the efforts their students continue to exert, are sources of great pride within the TCU movement as a whole. In celebration of AICF’s 20th anniversary, people from across Indian Country gathered to applaud the accomplishments made over the past two decades. Participants “*felt an immense sense of pride as more than 300 people came together to celebrate the American Indian College Fund’s 20-year anniversary. The Fund has raised millions of dollars for scholarships and capital funding for campus infrastructure and in the past 20 years has awarded more than 70,000 scholarships to American Indian students*” (Letters to the Editor 2010, 1). All those involved, Native and non-Native allies alike, take pride in the achievements and recognition of the TCU movement, and are proud to be a part of it. The successes accomplished over the past nearly 50 years only strengthen their determination to continue their work for the benefit of Native students and Indian Country as a whole.

Attitude/Attitudinal:

EXP: Personal experiences involving a TCU, whether through a class, program or event, generate positive attitudes within community members with regards to the TCU

While all of the keywords used in this study represent community attitudes in some way, inclusion of the “attitude” keyword was nonetheless necessary so as to ensure a thorough search for potential sources of data. The article entitled “Muscogee Students and Elders Learn From One Another” demonstrates how TCUs are using student programs to bring generations together and foster positive attitudes within the community. The article explains that “students and faculty at the College of the Muscogee Nation created a service learning project last school year that linked students with community elders...In mid-October, students began their first training session...*The elders brought questions and had good attitudes about learning technology...The participants were eager to continue with the training sessions and were also appreciative of the students’ patience, knowledge, and time*” (Randall 2011, 1). Through participation in this program, positive attitudes were cultivated in all participants, elders and students alike; elders were optimistic about learning to utilize modern technology with students, and the students gained confidence from being able to serve their elders. Hosting these types of programs empowers a TCU to benefit both their students and their community simultaneously, as the collective entity that they are.

Efforts such as the one at the College of the Muscogee Nation enable multiple generations to come together and collaborate, and through that partnership, to create new, and strengthen existing, social bonds within their community. The optimistic attitudes and improved awareness generated through participation in such programs expands throughout the community,

and as a result, further generates support for the TCU and its efforts. A sense of hope for the future, both personally and also for the community as a whole, is enhanced within participants' outlooks; in the students who are able to use their time in college to contribute to their community, and in the elders who are able to connect with the younger generations while also increasing their own knowledge. As a result, a reciprocal effect is put in motion once TCUs create and initiate service programs that benefit the community.

Motivate/Motivation:

JOB: Student's educational experience at TCU motivated them to apply for a job following completion of program at TCU

Students' personal successes at TCUs not only opens doors for them as graduates, but also empowers them to seek those newly-opened opportunities, such as more fulfilling and rewarding jobs. Following graduation, TCU graduates commonly desire jobs within their communities as a way to give back to the community that enabled them to get their education through the TCU. For example, Brandon Good Luck, a student at Little Big Horn College, "began learning about environmental science through a research internship...his experiences motivated him to apply for a job with the tribe's environmental program after he completed his associate degree. Now he serves as the program director and serves as a steering committee member" (Zaffos 2013, 3). Good Luck's personal experiences and success broadened his range of job opportunities and also increased his determination to seek a job that serves his community. As a result of their educational experiences, TCU graduates have a better understanding of the

opportunities now available to them within the job field, and as such, are more motivated to find those improved opportunities rather than accepting any job just to get a paycheck.

Although TCU students commonly aspire to obtain a community-serving job after graduation, it is important to recognize the fact that job opportunities within Native communities can be limited. Sometimes TCU graduates have to leave their reservations in order to find a job that corresponds with their educational field and level. Therefore, it is important to recognize that there are many other ways in which all Native graduates, TCU and mainstream alike, can use their motivation to benefit their communities from off the reservation. For example, Native graduates can seek jobs in fields that support Native Nations, communities, and students, such as an affiliate at the American Indian College Fund (AICF) or related organizations, as a representative within the U.S. government, or serving in mainstream educational institutions as an instructor or a tribal liaison. Even if their career choice has no direct connection to any Native community, such as an engineer at a mainstream company or a doctor in a mainstream hospital, simply functioning as an accomplished Native professional sends a strong message to mainstream society, and in doing so, benefits their community through representation. Regardless of career path, all Native graduates, TCU and mainstream alike, use the motivation found through their educational experience to give back to their community in some way.

CED: Student motivated by educational experience at TCU to continue their education to a 4-year degree (whether at TCU or mainstream institution)

Motivation to attend college can be one of the most complex things for any student to muster, Native and non-Native alike. It is not uncommon for students to feel some degree of anxiety, fear of failure, hesitation, or a combination of all three. Often, TCU students find initial

motivation to enter college from observing the educational achievements of family and friends, as is the case with Sitting Bull College (SBC) student Audra Stonefish. Stonefish acknowledges that she “came to the program because of her brother...a 2009 B.S. graduate and current Ph.D. student at North Dakota State University. *He persuaded her to give it a try...* She has (since) participated in two separate research projects, one with NUTRO and one with the REU program. Those two programs, she says, *kept her in school and are providing her with the motivation necessary to complete her bachelor’s degree*” (Guinn 2011, 2). The initial motivation Stonefish received from her brother’s words of encouragement and the observation of his success convinced her to take that first step into college. As is common in many TCU students’ experiences, the chance Stonefish took led her to find her own motivation through experiencing her own success, ultimately guiding her to the decision to continue her education beyond a 2-year degree.

Other times, motivation to continue one’s education is realized after enrolling in initial courses. While some students enter TCUs with already-established motivation and confidence due to a long record of K-12 academic success, others step into the academic setting with hesitation. The confidence these students find through their personal academic successes inspires and motivates them to continue their education beyond what they have already accomplished. Students believe more is possible, and that they are capable of additional achievements, perhaps something they might not have considered prior to taking the first step into college. As a result, TCUs often act as a stepping stone for their students’ academic future. The motivation established through personal academic success often acts as a powerful source of determination and achievement for Native students.

EXT: The existence of a TCU in the community motivates additional attendance of community members

The concept of going to college can be stressful for any student, Native and non-Native. For some Native students, particularly those who grew up on reservations, an additional element of uncertainty and hesitation can exist due to the current, sometimes hostile, environment within mainstream educational institutions. Consequently, taking the first step into the unknown and enrolling in courses is sometimes the hardest part of going to college for many uncertain students. Since TCUs are located within Native communities and most are currently 2-year institutions, they can often feel less intimidating and threatening to Native students interested in the concept of college but aren't completely sure about it. The opportunity TCUs provide for a more comfortable college experience can function as motivation for prospective students to test the waters of higher education.

In addition to the above-stated reasons, the experience of having a TCU can provide community members with opportunities to observe and experience events and impacts within their Nation. For example, witnessing other people within their community enrolling and succeeding might be enough to persuade someone to give the TCU a try. Additionally, it can provide opportunities for community members to become involved with the TCU peripherally. For instance, the opportunity to attend events at the TCU could possibly spark interest in someone to decide to enroll in classes. The diverse certificate programs TCUs offer provide the opportunity to motivate students to pursue an academic degree. This response is precisely what administrators at Stone Child College hope for following modifications to the requirements of their occupational training certificate programs. The secondary goal for the certificate programs is to act as *“a springboard for future education...(and) hope that earning the first certificate will*

nudge them down the road to an associate degree and, eventually, higher degrees” (Worley 2010,

3). In this case, having a TCU responsive to community needs, such as modifying certain program requirements, can potentially encourage participation in certificate programs. Creating such opportunities for their communities is a universal TCU goal, which all hope can assist students to find the interest and motivation to take advantage of these opportunities.

RET: Motivation and support students receive while at TCU to continue their program of study through completion

Retention of students is an essential aspect of a successful education. Graduation is the ultimate purpose and goal of enrollment for TCU students who enter an academic degree program. The encouragement they receive while in school is crucial to their success in meeting this goal. For some students, if it had not been for the support and motivation they received at their TCU, they might not have persevered. This was undoubtedly the case for Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College student Sam Wiggins. He affirms that “attending college was new and unfamiliar for him...*If not for the support he received from the Men’s Talking Circle, Wiggins is certain he would have dropped out of school. He recently earned his Associate’s Degree in Land Management and Renewable Energy and currently is finishing a degree in Agriculture and Natural Resources” (Pember 2011, 2).* For students like Sam, the unfamiliarness of the higher education environment can threaten their ultimate success. Such challenges can make it easy for students to lose motivation, become disheartened, and withdraw from school. For this reason, TCUs do all they can to ensure students receive enough encouragement to be successful.

TCUs and their administrators recognize that motivation and support are core aspects of student retention. It is essential that students feel welcome, wanted, and supported from within the institution in order to find the personal strength and motivation to persevere. Consequently, a crucial role and primary goal of TCUs is to provide students with the support they need to find success. This initial motivation provided often acts as a catalyst for students to find their own personal confidence and motivation. Once found, students are able to realize their full potential and utilize it to complete their degrees. Therefore, fostering a supportive environment and providing students with a support system plays a central role in student motivation as well as in enabling the TCU to reach its ultimate goal of seeing students through to graduation.

HSO: TCU programs and resources motivates high school students to be successful, graduate from high school, and possibly encourage enrollment in college

TCUs recognize the importance of education at all levels, particularly the role K-12 education has in future college enrollment and success. For this reason, TCUs aim to offer educational opportunities beyond the college population. As a result, many seek to involve high schools and their students in additional educational programs. In order to increase accessibility to secondary students, many programs occur during the summer. This is the case with the STAR (“Student Transition to Academic Rigor”) Project at Leech Lake Tribal College (LLTC), which targets high school students considered to be “at-risk.” As LLTC President Dr. Gina Carney explains ““They really were a rebellious group. Most of them didn’t go to class’...But *by the end of the three weeks, they were much more interested in learning and kept up that motivation when they went back to high school.* ‘They excelled in math and science, and here they are back in camp’” (Talahongva 2009, 3). TCU programs such as the STAR Project aim to assist high school

students in learning about college while also acquiring tools for educational success at all levels. It is the hope that through these experiences, high school students become interested in college, and as a result, find the motivation to successfully graduate high school and eventually attend college.

In addition to programs for at-risk youth, many TCUs also offer options for high school students who are already demonstrating academic success and interest in attending college. Programs include dual enrollment options for students who want to get an early start on their college careers. For example, United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) offers a dual enrollment program that allows high school students to enroll in UTTC classes, and subsequently earn college credits, while still in high school. Such programs also serve as a potential recruiting opportunity for the hosting TCU. At UTTC, program administrators hope that “*the experience will lead students to choose to continue at the college* by pursuing an online education or enrolling as a traditional college student” (Neumann 2012, 2). The knowledge, encouragement, and motivation provided through these programs enables high school students to broaden their understanding of academic opportunities available to them. Understandably, the hosting TCU hopes that participating students will attend their specific TCU following high school graduation; however, being able to encourage and support students’ decisions to attend college, wherever that may be, is the ultimate goal. Julie Desjarlais, UTTC’s Online Outreach and Training Coordinator, clearly demonstrates this sentiment when she states that ““*even if they chose to stay in their community and enroll in a local tribal college or another college of their choice, it’s all good...* The colleges will get well-informed, confident students, with a jump start on their post-secondary education. *Everyone benefits*”” (Neumann 2012, 2). Motivating Native students to attend any institution of higher education remains the ultimate goal of all TCUs.

Social:

TOG: Feelings of togetherness and unity within the community as a result of TCU

TCUs host numerous opportunities for its Nation's citizens to gather as a community through social events such as annual fairs and cultural ceremonies. Through participation, community members have the opportunity to come together as a cohesive group and utilize a shared space that everyone can enjoy. TCU's also present opportunities for community service projects, such as health workshops and student service learning projects. While social events are intended for enjoyment, service projects are often designed to address specific community needs. For example, in response to the awareness that often "American Indian men are unaccustomed to asking for help... (and) may view such requests as a sign of weakness... Dr. Leander 'Russ' McDonald (Dakota), vice president of academics at Cankdeska Cikana Community College (CCCC)... has created a credit class that includes a men's drum group at the college. There *students and community members can come together* in a healing environment where it is acceptable to ask for help" (Pember 2011, 2). Participation in this program, and others, enables participants to not only receive help, but also serve as support systems for each other. Through mutual sharing and support, participants are able to build upon feelings of togetherness and unity with which they can use to develop their own sense of well-being.

Attending classes also fosters a sense of togetherness and unity within TCU students through the experience of sharing a classroom with members of their community. The collective participation these students encounter within the classroom environment helps them to feel connected and supported by one another. Dr. Cheryl Crazy Bull, current President and CEO of

the American Indian College Fund, explains “as tribal educators, we often find our greatest encouragement while interacting with students in our classrooms and around campus. Students tell us how *going to a tribal college has taught them more about themselves and given them a sense of community*” (Crazy Bull 2012^a, 1). In addition to the general “sense of community” all college students feel, for TCU students, there exists an element of Native identity, providing them with an additional layer of community within which they feel as if they belong. TCU students’ educational experiences foster the sense that they are in this effort together, and are pieces of their Native Nation’s greater whole.

DEV: A coming together of the community in acknowledgment of a shared devotion to TCU’s goals, culture and identity

In addition to the feelings of togetherness and unity fostered by TCUs, devotion to the advancement of the TCU is also cultivated. Within this shared devotion, the aspiration to maintain and strengthen Native culture and identity also exists. Widely acknowledged by all TCUs is that the perseverance of the institution and its impacts necessitates a sustained dedication through continued cooperative efforts between the TCU and its community. At Northwest Indian College (NWIC) in particular, “the development of NWIC as a bachelor’s degree granting institution has been *a shared community vision* and ongoing goal of the college...Throughout the college’s history, the Board of Trustees, tribal leaders, faculty, staff and students have *worked together to develop* academic and social programs that meet the needs of tribal communities” (Commission Grants NWIC Four-Year Accreditation 2010, 1). Such collective community efforts to improve the TCU promotes the current sense of community,

strengthens the community's appreciation of their Native culture and identity, and nurtures a sense of mutual responsibility.

At its foundations, the college-community relationship is one of broad reciprocity; just as the community supports the continuation and well-being of its TCU, a TCU supports the continuation and well-being of its community. Ultimately, TCUs belong to their Native communities, meaning that the verbal, monetary, and attitudinal support communities provide TCUs immensely influence their operations. In return, TCUs support the community through the development and adaption of institutional offerings designed to meet community needs, provide opportunities for academic success, and serve as a place of cultural support. Therefore, a TCU's connection to its community inherently exists in the mutual responsibility and support provided by each. Together, they have the power to make change within local Native communities as well as Indian Country as a whole.

BON: Bond resulting from maintaining culture and identity, as well as through the collective efforts to support students

As a result of the feelings of togetherness, unity, and devotion due to the presence of a TCU, social and emotional bonds are reinforced within Native communities. Awareness and appreciation of their Native identity is also strengthened within individuals as well as at the community level. With regard to Indian Country as a whole, Dr. Cheryl Crazy Bull, current President and CEO of the American Indian College Fund, explains that as a collective force, "we are educating tribal people within their homelands or upon the lands where they have come to *reaffirm their nationhood*. Our educational approaches are rooted in tribal knowledge and derive from the teachings of our ancestors. Tribal colleges and universities have emerged from the

sacred to do the necessary, present-day work of our ancestors. They teach our languages, *socialize our children* and support their families, protect and manage our resources and assets, and *preserve our identities* and our ways of living for future generations” (Crazy Bull 2012^b, 1). The use of the expressions “reaffirm their nationhood”, “present-day work of our ancestors”, and “preserve our identities and our ways of living” all demonstrate the results of the active efforts being made within the TCU movement to reinforce Native cultures, identities and communities. Important to note are the connections made among the past present, and future regarding the bonds within Native communities. The awareness of these bonds allows Native communities to connect with their collective history through the efforts of the present, for the advancement of the future.

Through this support, bonds within individual Native communities, as well as the collective Indian Country as a whole, can further develop and strengthen. The cultural bonds reinforced by TCUs individually as well as a cooperative movement supports the embrace of an emotional collectiveness within Native communities. The mutual benefits experienced throughout TCU communities enables citizens to see and feel their relationships grow with the TCU. These bonds are ultimately what sustain Native Nations; without them, a strong sense of community would be hard to maintain.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

Overview

During review of the findings as individual sections as well as a comprehensive whole, various themes emerged as to the impacts of TCUs within their Native communities. It was observed that the surveys produced data with a somewhat different focus than that of the TCJ articles. Overall, the survey data spoke more to community relationships, while TCJ data provided more information on the concepts of hope and pride. This difference in emphasis is most likely due to the open-ended nature of the survey questions versus the use of specific keywords in the review of TCJ articles. Collectively however, this information illustrates a cohesive whole as to TCUs' attitudinal impacts, and consequently answers the inquiries posed in the research questions.

The utilization of Transculturation Theory (Huffman 2010) in the interpretation process played a crucial role in this study due to its focus on culture and identity as sources of strength and success for Native peoples. Since this study focused on positive aspects pertaining to Native identity, it was essential to apply a theory that does the same. The ideology of Transculturation Theory (Huffman 2010) is evident in the narratives provided in both the survey section as well as the TCJ section. This framework supports the assertions of deep connections between cultural awareness and academic success within the foundations of TCUs reflected in the findings of this study.

Consideration of the findings necessitates the recognition that the opinions and experiences presented in the data are in no way intended to represent their Native communities or Nations as a whole. Rather, they offer glimpses into the experiences of TCU communities and

how TCUs are impacting the attitudes within. As such, they serve as valuable pieces of the puzzle that have been used in this study to begin filling in the gaps in current literature.

Surveys

Analysis of survey responses revealed several different recurring concepts within the narratives provided. Native culture, TCU location, hope and pride, and community involvement were all noticeable themes that stood out among the others. Most importantly, all six survey participants referenced the importance of Native culture in their responses. They expressed their appreciation for the TCU's efforts to incorporate culture and tradition both within the academic environment as well as extensions into the Nation as a whole. In particular, both community members intensely discussed how important it is for Native students to have a strong sense of identity, and the role it can play in their success in school as well as after. Instilling this awareness in their students is an objective all TCUs strive for, seen clearly in their incorporation of Native culture into all aspects of the educational experience.

Effects of TCU location was also an interesting theme that emerged from the narratives. The pros and cons associated with choice of campus position was something participants at both DC and CNC referenced. Through the assessment of responses, environmental setting was determined to be both a major benefit and a major challenge to TCUs and their constituents. In comparison, the community surroundings of DC and CNC are very different; while DC is located on a reservation, CNC is situated in a mainstream town with a high Native population. For DC, although the location within a reservation is beneficial for the college-community relationship, the ruralness of many parts of the Navajo Nation presents challenges to its accessibility and outreach efforts. Conversely, even though CNC's environment makes building

relationships and receiving support from within the entire community difficult, the mainstream location increases administrators' and students' access to the college and resources such as transportation, housing, and jobs. Therefore, location is a crucial concept worth consideration in the future establishments of TCUs, as the give-and-take clearly impacts the institutions and their communities in different ways.

Though not as prevalent as in the TCJ articles, the concepts of hope and pride were intermittently referenced within survey responses. Both presidents use the terms "pride" and "proud" to discuss the TCU's impacts on student attitudes. Similarly, the CNC community member utilized the word "pride" twice in his description of his general feelings regarding the TCU. Additionally, the DC student explained that he was "hopeful" as a new student entering DC's academic environment. The application of these terms, while not as widespread as in the TCJ articles, clearly demonstrates that these concepts are nonetheless part of the TCU experience.

While the need for increased community involvement was indicated by participants at both TCUs, also important to note are the references to current efforts being made with the aim of actively responding to community needs. Additionally significant are the descriptions of the personal endeavors made by the DC student and CNC community member who do not live within the TCU's surrounding community. Although their physical distance restrains their involvement, they both still take deliberate actions to remain connected to their respective TCU. This demonstration of dedication and commitment to the cause is a common sentiment displayed in all those involved in the TCU movement, and is ultimately what keeps TCUs strong and persistent despite often challenges circumstances.

TCJ Articles

Analysis of the TCJ articles generated numerous themes within individual keyword sets, as well as among the sets. Most notable was the interconnected and reciprocal nature of TCUs and their impacts as referenced throughout keyword set categories. These inherent qualities within TCU foundations, together with Native philosophies, demonstrate how TCUs are appropriate, culturally-matched institutions within their respective Nations. As such, their operation is a reflection of the values held so strongly within Native communities.

Particularly interesting was the recurrence of the term “beacon(s) of hope” to describe TCUs within their communities. The repeated use of this expression by various individuals involved with TCUs is significant because it demonstrates that this notion has permeated the TCU movement at many levels. This is unmistakable recognition and verification that TCUs are increasingly being seen as great sources of inspiration, encouragement, and hope within Native Nations. In total, out of the total 65 sources of data in this section, six referenced TCUs using such language. This means that altogether, 9.23% of the sources in this section referenced TCUs in this manner. Not only is this noteworthy since nearly 10% of the sources from in this section utilized such specific language, but it is especially significant when considering how few relevant sources within the 2008-2013 timeframe even exist.

Furthermore, TCJ narratives discussed the motivation felt as a result of TCUs as a shared benefit among students and administrators. Students who come to TCUs unsure of themselves or their ability to succeed often find that through their educational experiences they can accomplish great things. The encouragement they receive at TCUs enable students to find the confidence and success needed to motivation themselves to continue their educational endeavors beyond the TCU. They have overcome their initial hurdles and have the self-assurance that they can

overcome potential future hurdles found at a mainstream institution. As a result of witnessing students' increased confidence and success, TCU administrators can maintain their motivation to persist in often challenging circumstances; they find inspiration from students' successes to help them persist. This reciprocal relationship of motivation and support occurring between TCU administrators and students is a powerful example of the cycle of perpetual hope illustrated in the TCJ narratives.

Recommendations for Future Study

Reflection on the findings presented in this study helps to shed light on potential opportunities for future research in the area of TCUs' attitudinal impacts within Native communities. Demonstrated through the powerful examples provided by those included in this study, the positive changes and influences that TCUs have on the outlooks and opinions of those most impacted are clear. Therefore, additional research in this area has the potential to further illustrate and more deeply characterize such encouraging and affirmative impacts. For instance, conducting larger investigations could assist in broadening the understanding of these effects, as could studies that include individuals from within related organizations. From those efforts, future work could pass from describing the positive effects to developing ways to make those changes both more broad and strong.

Whereas this study surveyed three unique participant groups (presidents, students, and community members) from two separate TCUs, a larger case study focusing on one TCU could provide much more expansive information on that specific institution's impacts. Such a future study could focus on a particular participant group from this current study, or a combination of the three, and ought to consist of a pool between ten and 20 individuals from each group. A

variation on this example could involve between five and ten TCUs for comparison of impacts among different institutions. Acquiring this information through surveys and/or interviews has the potential to further highlight the voices and lived experiences of those most impacted by the TCU movement altogether.

Another opportunity for future study includes research that focuses on the opinions and experiences of individuals within connected organizations such as the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) and the American Indian College Fund (AICF). Including the voices of those involved with the TCU movement through associations allows for different perspectives to be shared and considered. As such, these distinct standpoints would help broaden the understanding and representation of TCU impacts. Together with the views of those within TCU communities, this information could assist in illustrating the larger picture of TCUs and their impacts within Indian Country as a whole.

Closing Thoughts

While this study only touches the surface of the impacts TCUs have on community attitudes, collectively, the concepts discussed demonstrate that hope, pride, motivation, and social cohesion are all fundamental aspects of TCUs. The narratives provided by TCU presidents, administrators, students, community members, and advocates all support the assertion that TCUs' attitudinal impacts are an important area of study. The voices of those most involved are crucial to a better understanding of the institutions' impacts on their communities. The clear demonstration of the deep existence of such effects within Native communities provided in this study, along with the lack of significant representation within the literature, validates the claim for the need for further documentation of these opinions. Additional research in this area has the

potential to better-represent the full impacts TCUs are having within their communities, as well as within Indian Country as a whole.

Ultimately, the stories, experiences, and opinions shared through surveys and TCJ articles provide the evidence needed to verify that TCUs are in fact impacting community attitudes of hope, pride, and motivation, as well as social bonds. The unique individual stories as well as the commonly-referenced sentiments all illustrate the impacts, small and big, that TCUs have within their Native Nation. While individual stories of success are indeed worthy of celebration, the larger portrait these narratives collectively create represent powerful examples of the many ways in which TCUs impact at the individual level as well as within the community at large. Additionally, it is essential to recognize that the impacts discussed in this study could not be possible without all those working to keep the TCU momentum going. Native, non-Native, inside tribal communities, and out, they all work tirelessly for the benefit of Native students. Such impacts are the results of nearly 50 years of hard work and dedication by those committed to the TCU movement as well as to Indian Country as a whole. Only time can tell how much improvement might be made over the next 50 years.

Appendix: Surveys

Survey Questions for Administrators:

- 1) What is the most significant impact that you see your TCU having on the community?
- 2) Can you share anecdotes (such as stories or examples) that demonstrate such impacts?
- 3) Are emotional/attitudinal impacts as important as economic influences? Please elaborate.
- 4) What kind of emotional and attitudinal impacts have you observed? Example(s)?
- 5) How do you identify and measure/gauge attitudinal impacts? Why are attitudinal impacts important to demonstrate? Please elaborate.
- 6) What similarities and/or differences do you see in attitudinal impacts within the community?
- 7) Do you participate in community events on a regular basis (ceremonies, performances, graduation, etc.)? On average, how many events have you attended in the last year? Daily? Weekly? Monthly? Examples? Why did you choose them?
- 8) Do you believe that the TCU has motivated students to continue their education beyond courses, certificates and/or associate's degree? Please explain.
- 9) What role(s) does the community play in the well-being of your TCU? (Organizational? Fiscal? Others?)
- 10) Do you feel that the TCU is an extension of the community as a whole? Are there consistencies with community culture and identity? Examples? Are there disconnects? Examples?

Survey Questions for Students and Community Members:

- 1) What are your general feelings towards having a TCU in your community, and more specifically regarding your distinct TCU itself? What do you like, what do you not like?
- 2) Can you tell me about a particular event that happened at your TCU or that you attended that gave you these feelings? Is there a particular instructor or class that makes you feel this way?
- 3) Do you utilize your TCU's resources on a regular basis (library, internet, etc.)? If so, how often in the last year have you used them? Daily? Weekly? Monthly? Examples?
- 4) Do you participate in TCU events on a regular basis (ceremonies, performances, graduation, etc.)? If so, how many events have you attended in the last year? Daily? Weekly? Monthly? Examples? Why did you choose them?
- 5) Do you feel that the TCU makes a good effort to be involved with the community outside of the classroom? Why or why not? What would you like to see more or less of?
- 6) What do you feel the TCU could improve on in regards to community involvement?
- 7) Do you feel that the TCU enables the community to improve the self-determination efforts of the Nation? Why or why not?
- 8) Do you feel that the close location of the TCU has improved accessibility of higher education to the community? Why or why not?
- 9) Do you believe that the TCU has motivated students to continue their education beyond courses, certificates and/or associate's degree? Please explain.
- 10) Do you feel that the TCU is an extension of the community as a whole? In what ways do you feel the TCU promotes culture and identity? Are there consistencies with community culture and identity? Examples? Are there disconnects? Examples?

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