

STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO COPY

In presenting this paper in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree at Montana State University, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this paper for scholarly purposes may be granted by my major professor, or in, his absence, by the Director of Libraries. It is understood that any copying or publication of this paper for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Signature

Carmen Cornelius Taylor

Date

March 20, 1979

HOW CULTURAL FACTORS OF NATIVE AMERICAN CHILDREN

MAY AFFECT SCHOOL AND TEST PERFORMANCE

by

CARMEN CORNELIUS TAYLOR

A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

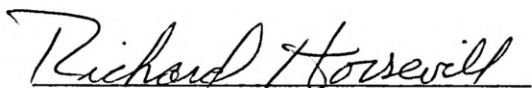
of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

with concentration in

Counseling

Approved:


Chairperson, Graduate Committee


Head, Major Department


Graduate Dean

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

March, 1979

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Richard Horswill and Mr. Jerry Slater for their constant patience with me and for their encouragement in the development and writing of this paper. My gratitude also goes out to my husband, Ron, and young daughter, Kara, for their endless patience and support throughout this endeavor. Finally, I would like to thank my parents for their lifetime of encouragement and for the desire they have instilled in me for learning.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Purpose of the Study.....	3
General Questions to be Answered.....	4
General Procedure.....	4
Limitations.....	5
Definition of Terms.....	5
Summary.....	7
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE - Introduction.....	8
History of Indian Education.....	8
Indian Culture and Value Systems.....	12
Conflicts in Values.....	16
Testing in Cross-cultural Settings.....	22
Over-representation of Minorities in Special Education...	27
Standardized Tests and Minorities.....	29
Summary.....	35
CHAPTER III: METHODS FOR APPROACHING CROSS-CULTURAL ASSESSMENT	
Introduction.....	39
Related Policies.....	40
Cultural Awareness.....	43
Assessment in Cross-cultural Settings.....	45
Summary.....	51
CHAPTER IV: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
Summary.....	54
Conclusions.....	56
Recommendations.....	57

TABLES

Page

Table I: A Comparison of Values.....	14-15
--------------------------------------	-------

Abstract

Studies of children from culturally-different backgrounds have repeatedly indicated that these children score lower on intelligence and achievement tests. These same minority group children are over-represented in special education classes. Native American's, as a part of this country's minority population, have had an even longer history of failure in the educational system.

Through a review of literature, cultural values of Native Americans are examined and compared with those of the dominant society. This study examines how these differences may create conflict in a classroom setting and, ultimately, how school and test performance is affected. The conflict, frustrating to both teacher and student, contributes to performance in school which, too often, categorizes these culturally-different children as inferior.

Rather than view these differences negatively, the researcher suggests methods which address the needs of these children. She further concludes that the educational institutions of this country must adapt more positively to the needs of the children they serve. This includes awareness of the cultural group(s) within the school setting and development of strategies which will work with these children -- in the classroom and in the entire assessment process.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The political climate in the middle to late 1960's supported self identity on a number of socio-cultural fronts and made it possible for previously silent minorities to dare to vocalize their dissatisfaction with the social, political, economic and educational institutions of this country.

In gaining a new sense of being, these silent minorities began to cast off all vestiges of oppression. The fact that influences outside the individual conceivably could exacerbate if not actually "cause" the problems of concern were highlighted.

Thus, inappropriate tests, poorly trained teachers, an irrelevant curriculum, and a failure to understand the intersection of cultural differences and learning problems could be as much to blame for the "learning problems" as the characteristics and "deficits" of the children themselves, who typically were labeled emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, or educable mentally retarded, and educated in self-contained special classes (Jones, 1976:2).

Statistics show that there is an over-representation of minority group members in self-contained special classes. "Of 1,268 Anglo children in the total sample of one study, only 23 (1.8 percent) were enrolled in special classes for Educable Mentally Retarded children" (Jones, 1976:4). On the other hand, "16 of 124 (12.9 percent) black children were enrolled in classes for Educable Mentally Retarded children and 32 (18.6 percent) Mexican-American children were enrolled in special classes out of a total of 172 in the sample" (Jones, 1976:4).

The Children's Defense Fund in a 1974 study found the following:

If a child is not white, or is white but not middle class, does not speak English, is poor, needs special help with seeing, hearing, walking, reading, learning, adjusting, growing up, is pregnant or married at age 15, is not smart enough or is too smart, then, in too many places, school officials decide that school is not the place for that child. In sum, out of school, children share a common characteristic of differentness by virtue of race, income, physical, mental or emotional "handicap" and age (Jones, 1976:15).

By the simple fact of numbers, handicapped children are a minority group. They are, in reality, an amalgam of several different minority groups.

Native Americans have not differed from other minority groups in this country in their quest for improvement of the educational system for their children. However, it was not until the Senate Subcommittee issued its final report that national attention was focused on the status of education for the natives of this country. The educational challenge of the report is captured in these excerpts:

Dropout rates are twice the national average in both public and federal schools. Some school districts have dropout rates approaching 100 percent;

Achievement levels of Indian children are two to three years below those of white students; and the Indian child falls progressively further behind the longer he stays in school;

Only 1 percent of Indian children in elementary school have Indian teachers or principals;

One-fourth of elementary and secondary school teachers-- by their own admission -- would prefer not to teach Indian children; and

Indian children, more than any other minority groups, believe themselves to be below average in intelligence...

There are no quick and easy solutions in this tragic state of affairs; but clearly, effective education lies at the heart of any lasting solution. And that education should no longer be one which assumes that cultural differences mean cultural inferiority (Kennedy, 1969).

While the Senate Subcommittee Report presented its findings in a somewhat sensational manner, other studies reported similar findings.

The National Study of American Indian Education reported that:

Indian children do not achieve as well on tests of school achievement as do the children of the white majority.

Indian children are not basically or genetically less or more intelligent than other children in America.

Indian children, on the average, are disadvantaged. It seems clear that many American Indian children are seriously handicapped for success in school due to the family and local community factors.

Most schools and educators have expected Indian children to accommodate to styles of instruction and curriculum which were not designed with reference to the special requirements of many Indian youngsters.

The complexities of cross-cultural education, though increasingly recognized, are imperfectly understood by most practitioners and Indian communities have not ordinarily been involved in the planning of programs (Havighurst, 1970:5).

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to examine the cultural factors which influence learning in Native American children and determine what implications these factors have in the assessment of these children for school placement.

Purpose of this Study

Native American children -- as well as other ethnic minority group children -- have historically and repeatedly scored lower on

intelligence and achievement tests, and, in turn, have been placed in disproportionate numbers into various types of special education programs.

The purpose of this study is to show that the cultural factors which influence the development of Native American children do, in fact, have an effect on the way these children learn and, in turn, on their test performance.

General Questions to be Answered

The broad question to be answered is what are the cultural factors affecting Native American's which differ from those of the dominant culture? More specifically, how does language affect learning? How does one's value system affect learning? If such differences exist, how might they affect school and test performance?

General Procedure

A review of related literature is used as a basis for obtaining information needed in this study. The material will be selected primarily from professional journals in the fields of education, psychology and anthropology. The emphasis of the study will be the Native American child; however, studies which have used other ethnic groups in their population will be cited throughout. The material gathered will then be used as a basis to suggest some approaches for addressing the issue of cross-cultural awareness as it relates to teaching and assessing Indian children.

Limitations

Native Americans, as a cultural group, are diverse people. The words "Native American" used as a collective describing all Native Americans, obscures important historical tribal differences. The dominant society readily perceives subtle "differences within itself among persons of Jewish, English, Italian, or Scandinavian descent, but does not extend the same appreciation of differences to the Seminoles, Chippewas, Navajos" (Antell, 1974:6) and other tribes because they are all "Native Americans" or "Indians".

Recognition of cultural, historical, and current socioeconomic differences among sub-groups of Native Americans is of paramount importance in the development and implementation of educational programs which serve them. It cannot be overemphasized that those responsible for curriculum and special program development for Native Americans must be aware of this diversity, which should appropriately be taken into account at local level.

Therefore, this researcher feels that the primary limitation of this study is that tribal differences and degree of acculturation will not be taken into consideration.

Definition of Terms

These terms are used throughout the paper:

Culture exists when a group of people are alike in the five characteristics listed below:

1. They make the same sounds or use the same language;
2. They have the same diet (eat the same foods);
3. They dress the same (have the same costumes);
4. They have predictable patterns of relationships with one another (common social patterns); and
5. They have the same pattern of values, beliefs and ethics (Aragon, 1970).

These components of culture are reinforced by Cole and Scribner in their discussion of culture: "the people all speak a particular language; they dress in a noticeably different way; they build their houses in a common way; they share common beliefs about the world and treat their children in a distinctive fashion" (1974:5).

Native American is used interchangeably with American Indian.

For the purpose of this paper, Indian is defined as:

any individual who (1) is a member of a tribe, band, or other organized group of Indians, including those tribes, bands, or groups terminated since 1940 and those recognized now or in the future by the State in which they reside, or who is a descendent, in the first or second degree, of any such member; (2) is considered by the Secretary of the Interior to be an Indian for any purpose; (3) is an Eskimo or Aleut or other Alaska Native; or (4) is determined to be an Indian under regulations promulgated by the Commissioner of Education, after consultation with the National Advisory Council on Indian Education, which regulations shall further define the term "Indian" (Title IV, Indian Education Act).

Cross-cultural is a descriptive term which is used throughout this paper. This term simply refers to the fact that more than one cultural group is existent -- as in cross-cultural setting -- or that more than one cultural group is being dealt with -- as in cross-cultural assessment.

Summary

Studies of children from culturally-different backgrounds have repeatedly shown these children to be of lower intelligence and to achieve lower on achievement tests. Minority group children are over-represented in special education classes. Education of Native Americans has had an even longer history of failure. Therefore, the culturally-different children in the schools of this country are often thought to be inferior. This paper will hopefully lend some light on the factors that influence learning among various social class and ethnic groups, particularly Native Americans, and further, how these factors influence school and test performance.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter deals with the research and related literature on the factors which may influence school and test performance of minority group children; particular emphasis will be given to the Native American child. Topics appropriate to this study include the following: History of Indian Education; Indian Culture and Value Systems; Conflicts in Values; Testing in Cross-cultural Settings; Over-representation of Minorities in Special Education; and Standardized Tests and Minorities.

History of Indian Education

The following historical review outlines the major themes and patterns that have shaped the educational experience of the Native Americans.

The statistics on educational problems of Native Americans are familiar: high dropout rate, rampant absenteeism, low standardized test scores, inadequate reading skills, and parental apathy. The dilemma of Native American education is part of, and yet separate from, the general problems of other minority groups. The unique issues which exist in Indian education can only be understood from an historical context. The treatment of Native Americans by the United States government which has vacillated between assimilation and isolation began as an unofficial policy of annihilation. "Within the first 100 years

of contact there was a 90 percent reduction in the indigenous population" (Forbes, 1969:58). Indians were killed by disease, were forced from their traditional homelands and died of starvation and neglect. Military expeditions were mounted to control them and make large new tracts of land safe for white settlers.

The goal, from the beginning of attempts at formal education of the Native American, has been not so much to educate him as to change him -- civilize him, Christianize him, Americanize him.

Concern for American Indian education dates from the birth of the nation, when the "Continental Congress stationed a few ministers and teachers among the northern tribes in 1776 in order to gain their support in the fight against Britain" (Havighurst, 1970:2). Though conducted almost entirely by missionaries until late in the nineteenth century, the federal government was concerned with education throughout this period, for they felt that the influence of teachers was essential in keeping the Indians friendly as well as making them economically self-reliant. The policy of educating Indians so that they might participate in the national economy and thus be assimilated goes back to George Washington, who favored such a policy so that the "blessings of civilization could be imparted to Indians" (Adams, 1946:27).

In the period following 1845, white Americans began pushing westward beyond the Mississippi and many Indian tribes resisted this effort. As the conflict grew, the U.S. Army assumed the job of subduing the

Indians. "After a Congressional Committee toured the west in 1865 to examine the conditions among the Indian tribes, it issued a pessimistic report on the whole situation, noting that teachers and missionaries were discouraged about their work" (Dreyer, 1973:3). Authors of this report recommended establishment of reservations and a system of education.

"It was suggested that boarding schools remote from the Indian communities could be good. President Grant saw the purpose of this process as the civilization and the ultimate citizenship of Indians" (Adams, 1946:47).

The year 1878 marked the beginning of the era of the federal boarding school system. The founding of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, by General Richard Henry Pratt was the first of such schools. In Pratt's words, the Indians were like other people and could be easily educated and developed industrially:

To achieve this, the essential process was to immerse the Indians in our own civilization and when we get them under, hold them there until they are thoroughly soaked... Indian children were taught to speak, read and write English, dress like white people, and to perform various tasks to prepare for certain trades (Dreyer, 1970:4).

A significant aspect of the system at Carlisle was that when a student completed school training, he was placed with a white family for three years. The purpose was to clearly immerse the Indian child in the white man's way of life and to woo him away from the life his parents led.

Carlisle was widely publicized and other boarding schools were opened. The boarding schools on and off the reservations have been described in investigative reports as more resembling penal work-houses than schools. Children were taken from their families, sent far away and dressed in military cadet uniforms; reveille at 5:30, marching, pledge of allegiance and cadence to classroom were the standard patterns. The Indian students lived in military-type barracks. Attendance was compulsory. Schools were kept filled by persuasion, if possible, or by withholding rations or annuities from parents, if necessary. Non-reservation schools were preferred since they accomplished removal of students from the influence of family and tribe.

Opinion slowly shifted. Commissioner Frances Laupp felt that Indian parents should not be deprived of their responsibility for their children and recommended that "day schools replace boarding schools and also that Indian children began to be educated in public schools. By 1920, more Indians were in public schools than in federal schools" (Adams, 1946:65).

In implementing the transfer of Indian students to public schools, it was emphasized that they would be given equal treatment; this meant that Indians should go through the same program as non-Indians. While this policy was most probably meant to prevent unfavorable discrimination against Indians, it also meant that no provisions were made for the special needs of many Indian children who were attending public

school.

Indian Culture and Value Systems

Cultural values are the concepts by which a society understands life:

Cultural values determine the way a people see and understand the world. These values put a frame upon life and they predetermine for the individual what is of worth in ideals, attitudes, relationships, goals and material objects. What an individual finds important and meaningful depends upon these values. The value concepts of each society may contrast greatly (Schutz, 1976:1-5).

Many of the cultural values of the Native Americans do contrast with values of the non-Indian. This cultural difference must be first explained, understood and then worked with -- and not against.

As shown by statistics throughout the history of Indian education, the educational system has been a failure in many ways. Psychologists have found that Indian children have one of the lowest self-images in the nation and that their anxiety level is the highest. The Oklahoma State University Indian Education Needs Assessment Project reported that Indian and White students in Oklahoma differed on two indicators of psychological adjustment, namely self-esteem and locus of control. "It was found that Indian students had lower self-esteem than White students and evidenced less control over their behavior and environment as well" (Martin, 1977:15). These results are supportive of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Indian Education (Kennedy, 1969:29) which reported the following:

There is a close relationship between the achievement of disadvantaged children and the way they feel about themselves and their future...A pupil attitude factor which appears to have a stronger relationship to achievement than do all school factors together, is the extent to which an individual feels that he has control over his own destiny. It was discovered that Indian students have far less conviction than whites that they can affect their own environments and futures.

The concept has been that the Indian must acquire the behavior of the dominant white society if he wishes to be granted acceptance. "It has been noted that the Indian child entering school at six years of age has control of his marbles. By the sixth grade, he does not. Somewhere between the fourth and seventh grades, he loses out" (Pepper, 1976:134).

Little attempt has been made to show that Indians were fighting for things that rightfully belonged to them -- their homes, lands, hunting grounds, and their right to live with their own customs and traditions. Indians have been portrayed as enemies of progress, holding back the settling of the frontier.

The following chart presents a comparison of the values held by Indian people as contrasted with those held by people in the dominant group. A word of caution in reading them is necessary here. Whenever characteristics of individual people are considered as representing the whole of a particular group, there is the danger of stereotyping. These identified characteristic values are broad generalizations, broad tendencies in the behavioral aggregate of

many people. Applied to any given individual, they may easily be found non-applicable (Pepper, 1976:135):

TABLE I

A Comparison of Values

<u>Indian</u>	<u>Dominant Society</u>
Wisdom of age and experience is respected. Elders are revered by their people.	Older people are made to feel incompetent and rejected.
Excellence is related to a contribution to the group -- not to personal glory.	Competition and striving to win or to gain status is emphasized.
Cooperation is necessary for group survival.	Competition is necessary for individual status and prestige.
Children participate in adult activities.	Adults participate in children's activities.
Family life includes the extended family.	Family life includes the nuclear family.
Time is present oriented; NOW -- a resistance to planning for the future.	Time is planning and saving for the future.
Clocktime is whenever people are ready -- when everyone arrives.	Clocktime is exactly that. Work is from 9-5 (or some specified time) and to obtain possessions and to save for the future.
Work is when necessary for the common good. Whatever Indian people have, they share. What is mine is ours.	What is mine, stays mine.

TABLE I (continued)

Good relationships and mutual respect are emphasized.

People express their ideas and feelings through their actions.

Early childhood and rearing practices are the responsibility of the kin group.

Native religion was never imposed or proselytized other groups.

Land gives the Indian his identity, his religion and his life. It is not to be sold, not owned, but used by all.

Going to school is necessary to gain knowledge. Excelling for fame is looked down upon by the Indian.

Indians have a shorter childhood and the male is held to be a responsible person at the age of 16.

People are usually judged by what they do.

Success, progress, possession of property and rugged individualism is valued above mutual respect and maintaining good relationships.

People express themselves and attempt to impress others through speech.

People try to dominate and desecrate nature.

Religious groups proselytize, coerce and impose their beliefs on others.

Land is for speculation, for prestige, to be owned, sold, or torn up.

Going to school is necessary to gain knowledge and to compete for grades.

There is an extended childhood and the male is held to be a responsible person at the age of 21.

People are usually judged by their credentials.

Certain of these Indian values warrant further explanation: Family life includes the extended family. A primary aim in life was to be a good relative, one of which to be proud. All of one's relatives were

not blood relatives; the affinity of relations extended from the immediate family to very distant relatives and those individuals who had just been special. Very often, for example, a cousin or a grandmother had just been so named because of an acquired closeness.

The basis of the Indian society is cooperation. This is to be expected among a people with such extended kinship. Conformity is the ideal. Competitiveness did not enter their lives, except in games and sports and in "give-aways". The Indian child is brought up to get along with the group, to work with instead of against other individuals.

Indians are oriented to the present. Time is a very relative thing. One does things as they need to be done. Life is governed by necessity. To the Indian child there is a right time for everything, and hurriedness and rush are looked down upon. Indian people generally live each day as it comes.

Conflicts in Values

Closely tied to their value systems, the Indian child has some unique characteristics which often become evident in the classroom setting.

Many children need to learn English as a second language. "More than one-half of the Indian children between the ages of six and eighteen use their native language. Approximately 300 different

Indian languages are in use today" (Banks, 1976:136).

Indian children are influenced by the anxieties, taboos, mores, aspirations, religion and behavior patterns of their culture. According to Zintz, the area of elementary science presents a segment of the school curriculum likely to be most in conflict with the child's out-of-school life, that is, with his set of cultural values. He reports one study which found a "strong inverse relationship between the science achievement status of Indian children (Navajos and Pueblos in New Mexico) and the extent of their acceptance of certain unscientific societal beliefs," (Zintz, 1963:297).

One could conclude from this study that preserving indigenous religion and learning modern science are incompatible. But Havighurst's findings in the domain of game rules suggest an alternative. Twenty-four children in an isolated Navajo community were familiar with both traditional Navajo games and white games like baseball or marbles. When asked who made the rules and whether they could be changed, the children gave two separate answers:

Concerning the "white games, they generally said that the rules were made by the coach, or the teacher, or some person in authority, and that those rules would be changed by agreement among the people playing the game. This kind of answer is also given by white children. But when asked about rules of traditional Navajo games, the Navajo youth said unanimously that the rules were first made by the "Holy people", or by the "ancient ones", or by the "animals" -- who in ancient days possessed human characteristics -- and that no human could change the rules (Havighurst, 1957:108).

Borrowing terminology from the bilingualism area, this type of compartmentalization can be called a "coordinate belief system" (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1969:10).

Differences in time orientation could affect school performance in at least four ways. First, attendance may be lowered, particularly where school bus schedules increase inflexibility.

Second, in school, it may be harder to command children's attention according to teacher-designed schedules. Wolcott suggests that the "fooling around" of Indian children which teachers interpret as poor motivation and short attention span "is more of an unhurried view of the cosmos: pupils seem to pause to daydream, to draw, or to do anything except what the teacher has planned" (1967:92).

Third, differences in time orientation probably affect scores on any tests or test-like assignments which are timed.

The social withdrawal of Indian children in school is frequently attributed to value conflicts over cooperation versus competition, aggression versus compliance, or anonymity versus self-assertion, depending on the author and tribe being discussed.

Psychologist, Professor S.E. Asch, has noted that the Hopi Indian children of Arizona refuse to compete against one another. One school teacher tried to get them to do so by an ingenious method:

She wrote a number of arithmetic problems on the blackboard, lined up the children, each one facing one problem, and instructed them to turn around as soon

as they had finished. She observed that as each child completed his problem, he looked along the line to see how the others were progressing; only when they were all through did they turn around -- together (Klineberg, 1965:11).

This attitude would not only affect classroom performance but would also affect test performance. Test performance would be reduced, particularly in the application of group tests which are administered to a number of persons at the same time.

Throughout the literature on Indian children, we find suggestions that their style of learning is more visual than verbal, more learning by looking than learning through language.

There is considerable evidence that Indian children from various tribes excel in the kind of ability tapped by the Draw-a-Man test, which is scored for accuracy in proportion and detail. In 1942-1943, as part of the Indian Education Research Project of the Committee on Human Development at the University of Chicago, this test was given to 1,000 Hopi, Navajo, Papago, Sioux, Zia and Zuni children. When converted to I.Q.'s, the average scores ranged from 117 to 102.

Havighurst, Gunther and Pratt conclude from these data:

The children of Indian tribes which have kept close touch with the world of nature and with their indigenous cultures are specially stimulated to observe accurately, to organize their observations and express them aesthetically, and thus may be expected to do well on the Draw-a-Man test. White children, and urban white children especially, may have much less chance to form concepts from firsthand observation, but must rely more upon books and words (1946:61).

Learning through imitation is reported in many ethnographic studies. It may be related to the previous kinds of learning by looking, or it may represent a different underlying process. From his survey of ethnological literature, Pettit agrees that the dominance of imitation is a commonly accepted characteristic of education in non-literate societies. In contrasting non-literate and literate societies, Pettit suggests that:

A greater proportion of the culture of a primitive society is within the direct reach of the sensory organs of the primitive child while in more complex societies adult activities are less understandable by observation alone, less appropriate for the active play needs of children, and therefore play at home and learning at school have perhaps inevitably become more separated (1946:40).

Other frequently mentioned sources of value conflicts are indigenous patterns of socialization. The complaint voiced by many school personnel is that Indian parents were unwilling or unable to discipline their children. However, previous studies of Indian communities have consistently concluded that "discipline is maintained through teasing rather than direct criticism or restraint" (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1969:13). Teasing appears to be the primary form of discipline within Indian groups; therefore, it follows that the parents cannot be expected to directly criticize their children in the principal's office or to lecture their children at home.

Direct orders, rules, or requirements for specific behavior are not given by parents as authority figures to subordinate children. It is assumed that the child "can and will decide what, where and when things are to be done (Morris, 1976:18). Children are allowed, in fact expected, to decide where they will go, when they will eat, and with whom they will live at an early age without direction or control by parents." Adults exhibit this noninterference by refusing to speculate about the opinions of others. Indians are reluctant to give advice. "This is not a part of the parental role" (Department of Education, 1967:5); consequently, unasked for advice may not be accepted and/or used.

The result in the classroom may be that children are not prepared to accept the teacher's word simply because she is the authority figure.

Gay and Cole, in the study of the Kpelle of Liberia, discuss similar traits within that culture:

A child must know what is expected of him without explicit instruction. A violation of unstated rules is as bad as a violation of explicit commands. He learns the proper way to behave by observation...Gradually the child is inducted into the full life of an adult. He is almost never told what to do in an explicit, verbal or abstract manner. He is expected to watch, learning by imitation and repetition. Education is concrete and nonverbal, concerned with practical activity -- not abstract generalization. There are never lectures on farming, housebuilding or weaving. The child spends all his days watching until at some point he is told to join in the activity. If he makes a mistake, he is simply told to

try again. He is not punished for mistakes, unless he willfully rebels against the traditional procedure, or if the error is very costly (1967:16).

This is definitely a difference in learning for these indigenous cultural groups. In today's educational system, students are judged in many ways: board work is judged not only by the teacher but by the peer group as well; papers, speeches and art work graded. This appears to make learning a riskier situation for these children coming from certain culturally-different backgrounds.

Testing in Cross-cultural Settings

The social and cultural background and experience of an individual may affect the test performance of a particular child in many ways. His very attitude toward the test itself may play an important role. An extreme example of this phenomenon is to be found in a situation described by Klineberg:

An investigator was testing children in a mountainous region in Kentucky where educational opportunities were, at that time, rare and inferior. He was using an American revision of the Binet scale, which included the following question: "If you went to the store and bought six cents worth of candy and gave the clerk 10 cents, what change would you receive?" A boy replied, "I never had 10¢ and if I had I wouldn't spend it for candy, and anyway candy is what your mother makes." The examiner tried again. "If you had taken 10 cows to pasture for your father and six of them strayed away, how many would you have left to drive home?" The boy answered, "We don't have 10 cows, but if we did and I lost six, I wouldn't go home." The examiner made a final attempt. "If there were 10 children in a school and six of them were out with measles, how many would there be in school?" The answer came promptly.

"None, because the rest would be afraid of catching it, too (1965:10).

The test situation frequently requires the subject to react to an imaginary situation as if it were real; if the subject has had no previous experience or training in doing this, he may find it difficult if not impossible to give the examiner the correct answer to the question. This does not necessarily prove that he is incapable of subtracting six from 10 in a situation which is meaningful to him in terms of his own interests and needs.

The very act of competing against others in a test situation is itself influenced by the values and attitudes developed in a particular society. Professor S.D. Porteus tells of another interesting experience in the course of administering psychological tests to a group of Australian aborigines. The tests that he used were made up of a series of mazes, the problem consisting of tracing a pathway through the maze until the exit was successfully reached.

Each subject was, of course, expected to perform the task by himself, without any assistance from others. This situation turned out to be a strange one for these Australian natives. They are accustomed to solving their problems together, in groups. Not only is every problem in tribal life debated and settled by the council of elders but it is always discussed until a unanimous decision is reached. The subjects were frequently puzzled by the fact that the examiner would give them no assistance when they experienced some difficulty in solving the problem of the maze. Such an attitude naturally resulted in a great deal of delay, as the subject would pause again and again for approval or assistance from the examiner. It goes without saying

that the test scores suffered correspondingly (Klineberg, 1965:11).

The similar indifference to the kind of competition taken for granted in the larger American society was noted by Klineberg in an investigation undertaken among the Yakima Indian Tribe living in the state of Washington. The tests used were a group of performance tests in which no knowledge of language is necessary, and the task consists of placing pieces of wood of various shapes into the appropriate areas of a wooden frame. The scores obtained depend on the speed with which the task is completed and the number of errors made in the process. The subjects were told to put the pieces in their correct places as quickly as possible. These Indian children, however, never hurried. They saw no reason to work quickly. "Our culture places a premium on speed, on getting things done in as short a time as possible; the Indian children had not acquired this attitude. They went at their task slowly and deliberately, with none of that scrambling impatience that is so often found among American children" (Klineberg, 1965:11). The Indians, as a consequence took much longer to finish the tests, though they made somewhat fewer errors than the white Americans with whom they were compared.

These examples all indicate the possibility that the cultural background of the individual may determine his general approach to the test situation in such a manner as markedly to influence his test score. In addition to this general effect, what an individual learns --

or does not learn -- as the result of his membership in a particular society may also affect his performance in a number of very specific ways. A few concrete examples may help to make this point clearer. In one portion of a psychological test in wide use in the United States, the National Intelligence Test, the subject is presented with one word followed by five other words; out of these five, he is to underline the two words which represent what the first word in the line must necessarily have. Thus, one line reads: Crowd: closeness, danger, dust, excitement, number. The correct answers are closeness and number, since only these two are invariable characteristics of a crowd. Two American psychologists, Fitzgerald and Ludeman, conducted a study of Indians in South Dakota by means of this National Intelligence Test.

On this particular item, many of the Indian children made the "error" of underlining the words danger and dust, and frequently also excitement. For these Indian children, a crowd may have meant these things (Klineberg, 1965:12).

The authors point out that there is some indication that the Indian considers answers to be logical and correct due to his environment and because of his experience.

Another portion of the National Intelligence Test consists of a series of incomplete sentences in which the task of the subject is to supply the missing word. One such sentence reads '...should prevail in churches and libraries'; the correct answer is silence. Anyone who has visited an American Negro church in the south of the United States knows, however, that silence is neither the rule nor the ideal.

"The worshippers are expected to respond, to participate actively and audibly; in many of these churches a religious service could be regarded as a failure is silence prevailed" (Klineberg, 1965:12). On the basis of their experience, southern Negro children would be less likely than others to answer this question "correctly".

There have been many attempts to study more directly the differences in personality and temperament among racial or ethnic groups. The tests used vary considerably in nature. They include the measurement of such relatively simple phenomena as speed of performance, degree of neuroticism, or various other forms of behavior.

One test, known as the Pressey Cross-Out Test, represents an attempt to measure emotional responses. It consists of a series of words presented to the subject, who crosses out all those words which he regards as unpleasant or wrong, or as referring to matters about which he worries. In one study, the test was given by the authors of the test, Professors S.L. and L.C. Pressey, to a number of different American Indian tribes.

There were marked differences in the results obtained from the various tribes; what is important, perhaps, are that the scores appear to reflect the degree to which these various tribes had been exposed to the ideals, manners, customs, and attitudes of the whites. the more the Indians had retained their own traditional culture, the less did the "emotional" responses resemble those given by white subjects,

and conversely (Klineberg, 1965:32).

The authors conclude that the tests really measure the degree of contact with the white man's culture.

Over-representation of Minorities in Special Education

Research indicates that there is an over-representation of minority children in special education programs.

Of 1,268 Anglo children in the total sample of one study, only 23 (1.8 percent) were enrolled in special classes for the Mentally Retarded. On the other hand, 16 of 124 (12.9 percent) black children were enrolled in classes for the Mentally Retarded and 32 (18.6 percent) Mexican-American children were enrolled in special classes out of a total of 172 in the sample (Jones, 1976:3).

Using Office for Civil Rights forms 101 and 102, this researcher sampled two Montana schools with significant numbers of Native American children in their student populations. One of these schools is Hardin, adjacent to the Crow Indian Reservation. The other school is Great Falls, one of Montana's largest school districts. The following statistics were obtained:

The total school enrollment at Hardin consists of 1,207 students, with 484 being identified as Native Americans. Therefore 40 percent of the total population is Native American.

The Hardin Middle School has an Indian student enrollment of 37 percent, yet 65.5 percent of the students in Special Education programs represent the Native American population.

The Hardin Intermediate School has an Indian student enrollment of 24 percent, yet 66.6 percent of the students in Special Education programs represent the Native American population.

The Hardin Primary School has an Indian student enrollment of 25 percent, yet 31 percent of the students in Special Education programs represent the Native American population.

The Hardin High School has an Indian student population of 20.5 percent, yet 27 percent of the students in Special Education programs represent the Native American population.

The total school enrollment for the Great Falls Junior High and High Schools consists of 7,528 students, 320 of whom have been identified as Native Americans. Therefore, 4.25 percent of the total population is of Native American descent.

Of the total school enrollment, only 2.5 percent of the population are enrolled in Special Education programs. However, 9.38 percent of the Native American student population are enrolled in Special Education programs.

The total school enrollment for the Great Falls Elementary schools 7,186 students, 515 of whom have been identified as Native Americans. Therefore, 7.17 percent of the total elementary student population is of Native American descent.

Of the total school enrollment, 7.79 percent of the population are enrolled in Special Education programs. However, 13.79 percent of the Native American student population are enrolled in Special Education programs (Office of Public Instruction, 1979).

On the basis of actual data, then, allegations that minority group children are over-represented in special education classes have some basis in fact.

A question of why arises. Among the several important factors are the types of rules and regulations drawn up by school systems for referral of children to special services, the type of consultation given by psychologists, and teachers ignorance of factors that influence learning among various social class and ethnic groups. In addition, there is general agreement that biased tests and a host of

factors related to assessment practices are also implicated.

"It was noted that at the national level in 1968, minorities comprised more than 50 percent of the mentally retarded" (Samuda, 1973:4). Similarly, the figures issued by the Bureau of Intergroup Relations of the State Department of Education for the State of California in the fall of 1970, "reveal that whereas blacks who represent 9.1 percent of the total student population of the state account for 27.5 percent of the educable mentally retarded, they constitute only 2.5 percent of the mentally gifted" (Samuda, 1973:4). Such statistics further demonstrate the existence of racial imbalance in classes for the retarded, and -- in this case, in the classes for the gifted, as well.

Standardized Tests and Minorities

The fact that minorities score significantly lower than whites on tests of mental ability has been well-documented. Roger Lennon, in a speech at the 1969 Invitational Conference on Measurement in Education stated the following:

There is a deep-seated conviction that the performance of poor black, Puerto-Rican, Mexican-American or just poverty-stricken examinees on these tests will be relatively poor; that because of this poor performance, inferences will be made as to the ability of these examinees, which inferences will lead to treatment either in school or on jobs that will, in effect, constitute a denial of opportunity (Samuda, 1973:2).

Special education has not been noted for its responsiveness to cultural differences in student populations" (Bernal, 1977:xiii).

Its typical methods of appraisal and intervention have been devised with children from the dominant white population in mind. One may speculate that many initial referrals to special education are made because some teachers mistake normal but culturally divergent behavior with abnormal episodes -- or perhaps because they simply do not approve of a pattern of activity which a particular ethnic group engenders.

Mercer (1977:1) research indicates "that teachers and principals refer Mexican-American children at a higher rate than Anglo children". There were 509 Mexican-American children in the regular classes of the same school district who were administered the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children hereafter referred to as (WISC) as part of a study conducted for the public health service.

Fifteen percent of these Mexican-American children scored 79 or below and thus would have been eligible for a class for the mentally retarded if the teacher had referred them for evaluation and they had been tested. Only one percent of the 500 Anglo children similarly tested were found to have I.Q.'s of 79 or below (Mercer, 1977:6).

This indicates that many Mexican-American children who are potentially eligible for classes for the mentally retarded on the basis of intelligence test scores are not referred by teachers, but few Anglo children who are eligible remain in the regular classes. Thus, even though these minority group children are referred at a higher rate than Anglo children, the preponderance of Mexican-American

children in classes for the educable mentally retarded does not appear to be the results of over-referral from teachers and principals, but rather results from the diagnostic process itself. Evidence points to clinical assessment rather than the referral process as the primary factor in disproportionate placement of minority children in classes for the mentally retarded.

The primary instrument used to diagnose mental retardation is the standardized intelligence test, usually the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test, Form LM, or the Weschsler Intelligence Scale for Children.

A sort of mythology has grown up around the Intelligence Quotient (hereafter referred to as I.Q.). The average layman often implies that the I.Q. is a measure of knowledge of information; when, as a matter of fact, it is supposed to be a measure of something quite different. Webster gives one definition of intelligence as "the power of meeting a situation, especially a novel situation, successfully by proper adjustments; also the ability to apprehend the interrelations of presented facts in such a way as to guide action toward a desired goal (Beatty, 1953:500). If then, it is this power and ability which the I.Q. presumes to measure, the difficulty of measuring such an abstract should be apparent.

In the early days of mental measurement, it was believed by many persons -- including many teachers -- that a "convenient and

constant measure of innate mental capacity had been devised and it was as invariable throughout an individual's life as his fingerprints" (Beatty, 1953:501). However, after the collection of evidence over a period of years, it is now known that this usually is not true. From the moment of birth, environmental forces begin to operate upon the child and influence his responses.

Although the clinical definition for mental retardation adopted by the American Association for Mental Deficiency defines a "mental retardate as one who is subnormal in both intelligence and adaptive behavior, there are no recognized scales for measuring adaptive behavior" (Mercer, 1977:5), and this dimension has not been systematically evaluated as part of the clinical diagnostic process in the public schools. In actual practice, a child's score on an intelligence test is the primary factor in his diagnosis as a mental retardate.

If the placement of minority children in classes for the mentally retarded is to be understood, one must focus specifically on the nature of the intelligence tests typically used.

It is useful to remember that Binet and Simon began their work on the development of tests of mental ability in order to identify children not likely to profit from the kind of education offered in France at the start of this century.

In the beginning, the tests were viewed quite pragmatically: Could they accurately predict whether or not a child would succeed in school? But very soon this practical question was mixed up with another, more theoretical question: Did the tests measure a fixed property of each child tested? Did the tests measure intelligence? Though Binet protested against those who regarded the score as a fixed quantity, the principal American translators and users of his tests from the outset claimed it was a measure of native ability, and early, linked variations in score to "racially determined" mental capacities. Much of the cross-cultural work on mental testing was inspired by the objective of discovering and measuring racial differences in intelligence, and to this day, such tests are used to support claims of racial superiority of one people over another (Cole and Scribner, 1974:35).

Today, however, the intelligence test is ordinarily treated as a measure of an individual's intellectual capacity, his mental abilities. Obviously, intellectual capacity cannot be measured directly because that would require assessment of the genetic component of performance, the genotype.

An individual's genotype can only be expressed through behavior learned in a social and cultural setting, his phenotype. The intelligence test, of necessity, measures what a person has learned, his phenotype. On the basis of this performance, psychologists make inferences about the nature of the person's genotype from a properly normed and administered intelligence test. Psychologists who make diagnoses of children in the public schools too frequently make inferences about the characteristics of genotypes on the basis of the phenotypes (Mercer, 1977:6).

These inferences are based on the following set of assumptions.

If two persons have had an equal opportunity to learn certain types of cognitive, linguistic, and mathematical skills and to acquire

certain types of information; if they were equally motivated to learn these skills and to acquire this information; if they are equally motivated to exert themselves in a test situation and equally familiar with the demands of the test situation; if they are equally free of emotional disturbances and anxieties that might interfere with their test performance; and if they are equally free of biological dysfunctions and organic difficulties that might interfere with their performance; then any difference in their test scores probably reflects differences in their genetic intellectual endowments. Simply stated, if learning opportunities and all other factors are equal, those persons who perform better on the test probably have greater innate mental capacity than those who perform most poorly.

Of course, the major difficulty in applying logic based on these assumptions in actual test situations, especially situations that involve children from very different sociocultural backgrounds, is that all other factors are never equal.

Some of the basic problems in cross-cultural application of mental testing were recognized more than 30 years ago by Florence Goodenough:

Examination of the literature in this field over the past 20 years shows that approximately two-thirds of all the publications dealing with racial differences in mental traits have been concerned with the measurement of intelligence by means of tests designed for use with

American or European whites...Now the fact can hardly be too strongly emphasized that neither intelligence tests nor the so-called tests of personality and character are measuring devices, properly speaking. They are sampling devices. When, however, we leave the field of direct measurement, and endeavor to classify individuals or races on the basis of some presumably general trait that cannot be measured directly, we are faced with another and much more difficult problem of sampling. Not only must we be sure of the adequacy of our sampling of subjects, but we must also be sure that the test items from which the total trait is to be judged are representative and valid samples, of the ability in question, as it is displayed within the particular culture with which we are concerned. The reason that the ordinary intelligence tests work as well as it does for American urban population is simply because the items of which it is composed are intellectual tasks that American city dwellers are likely to be called upon to perform (Cole and Scribner, 1974:35-56).

Summary

The review of literature addressed the following topic areas:

- (1) History of Indian Education (2) Indian Culture and Value Systems
- (3) Conflicts in Values (4) Testing in Cross-cultural settings (5)
- Over-representation of Minorities in Special Education and (6) Standardized Tests and Minorities.

Review of historical literature reveals that the dominant policy of the Federal Government toward the American Indian has been one of forced assimilation. Boarding schools were established remote from Indian communities in the hope of immersing the Indian in the ways of the white man while at the same time removing them from the influence of their family and tribe. Opinion slowly shifted so that

eventually there came to be more Indian students in the public schools than in federal boarding or day schools.

Many of the cultural values of the Native Americans do contrast with values of the non-Indian. For example, family life includes the extended family; and very often relatives are so named because of an acquired closeness. The basis of the Indian society is cooperation and the Indian child is brought up to get along with the group, to work with instead of against other individuals. These cultural differences must be explained, understood and then worked with -- not against.

Indian children who are tied to their value systems bring with them to the classroom some unique characteristics which often cause conflict situations. Language, religion and social patterns may very well have considerable influence on the way in which an Indian child will respond in the classroom and perform in school. For example, an Indian child in some sense knows that certain kinds of conduct show respect for others and that other kinds of conduct show disrespect and are shaming. The child may not have brought such patterns to consciousness and a frame of reference in which to analyze them closely; neither may the child's teacher. Hymes notes that "inadequate mutual comprehension" (1972: 9) of conduct on the parts of both teacher and students leads to situations that frustrate both of them, and decrease the likelihood that educational efforts

will be successful. Learning through imitation or by observation is more prevalent in the Indian culture and, thus, child-rearing practices reflect this. Advice-giving, for example, is not considered to be a part of the parental role. These differences in culture will have an affect on the Indian child in the classroom.

The social and cultural background and experience of an individual may affect the test performance of a particular child in many ways. If a subject has had no previous experience or training in taking tests or reacting to certain situations, he may find it difficult to give the examiner the correct answer. This does not necessarily prove that he is incapable of performing a certain task, but that perhaps a test situation is not meaningful to him in terms of his own background, interests and needs. The very act of competing against others in a test situation is itself influenced by the values and attitudes developed in a particular society.

Research indicates that there is an over-representation of minority children in special education programs. This is true of Black children and Mexican-American children in studies which have been conducted around the country. In two of the schools surveyed in Montana, this holds true for Native American children, as well.

The fact that minorities score significantly lower than whites on tests of mental ability has been well-documented. One study showed that Mexican-American children were referred to Special

Education programs at a higher rate than Anglo children, but that the primary source of over-referral results from the diagnostic process itself. The primary instrument used for placing children in special programs is the standardized intelligence tests. There has been some differences of opinion about what intelligence tests actually measure and whether or not they measured a fixed quantity. Ordinary intelligence tests appear to work well for the American urban population simply because the items of which it is composed are intellectual tasks that American city dwellers are likely to be familiar with. There are experiences with which persons from certain sociocultural backgrounds are not familiar.

CHAPTER III
PRESENTATION OF DATA
METHODS FOR APPROACHING
CROSS-CULTURAL ASSESSMENT

Introduction

Research has repeatedly shown that education is not working for the minority child. High dropout rates, low achievement and intelligence test scores, and high placement in special education programs -- especially classes for the mentally retarded -- appear time and time again in studies with the culturally different child.

There is, no doubt, a need to discuss methods for approaching cross-cultural assessment. The methods discussed in this paper are not limited to the study and interpretation of the standardized test itself, but with assessment in a broader sense.

The reader might well distinguish between testing and assessment. Testing is to be done with assessment in mind, but assessment does not necessarily result in a score. The functions of assessment are classification and educational programming, decision-making, and intervention (Bernal, 1977:xi).

That means that some methods of approaching cross-cultural assessment will be not only for special education teachers and school psychologists but the regular classroom teachers and the administrators as well. All educational personnel have some type of contact with the students and many times it is the personnel other than the school psychologist who make the recommendations for referral and testing.

The discussion has moved off the pages of educational and psychological journals onto the pages of mass media.

Its forum has moved from the classroom and the psychological laboratory to City Hall and the courts. The tone of the discourse has become strident and emotional. The matter of bias and relevancy of test results has become political and central to a great many other concerns in the entire civil rights movement (Samuda, 1973:2).

State Legislatures, the U.S. Supreme Court, and educational organizations have had to address the needs of education for this country's minorities.

Related Policies

The first expression of executive policy in the area of equal educational opportunity for language-minority students and national-origin minority students took place as late as 1970. The U.S. Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, issued a memorandum to school districts with "more than five percent national-origin minority group children to provide equal educational opportunity" (Federal Register, 1970:11595-96).

In 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court, in the case of *Lau vs. Nichols*, examined the allegation that Chinese speaking students in the San Francisco School district were being denied equal educational opportunity. The court ruled that "...there is no equality of treatment by merely providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum..." (1974, 566-68).

Following up the decision of *Lau vs. Nichols*, the U.S. Office for Civil Rights, in 1975, issued a series of guidelines for Office for Civil Rights officers to use in reviewing school districts' compliance plans. Of direct relevance to research on cognitive styles and learning strategies in Section II of the guidelines, which says, in part:

The second part of a plan must describe the diagnostic/prescriptive measures to be used to identify the nature and extent of each student's educational needs and then prescribe an educational program utilizing the most effective teaching style to satisfy the diagnosed educational needs. The determination of which teaching style(s) are to be used should be based on a careful review of both the cognitive and affective domains and should include an assessment of the responsiveness of students to different types of cognitive learning styles and incentive motivational styles..." (1975).

Hunter (1974:11) emphasizes the obligation of education to society; "to maintain and perpetuate itself, a society and nation must set forth education as one of their essential institutions and systems to reflect and administer to the diverse needs of their people." American education today must recognize that the society it serves is culturally pluralistic -- that is, made up of more than one cultural group. Several national education organizations, the Association of American Colleges of Teacher Education (hereafter referred to as AACTE) and the National Education Association (hereafter referred to as NEA), have issued statements calling for multicultural education, that is, education "oriented toward cultural

enrichment of all children and youth through programs rooted to the preservation and extension of cultural alternatives" (AACTE, 1972:1). Within this framework a commitment to cultural pluralism means going beyond awareness or understanding of cultural differences to develop "an effective educational program that makes cultural equality real and meaningful" (AACTE, 1972:3).

Banks (1975:19), in his overview of the discipline of Multi-cultural education, identifies two general objectives:

- (1) to help individuals clarify their ethnic identity and function effectively within their own ethnic community and
- (2) to learn to function effectively within other ethnic groups.

In addition to providing an educational climate beneficial to the ethnic child, Multi-cultural education must promote the development of a positive attitude toward cultural pluralism throughout the society.

Multicultural education "encourages people to accept and respect both their own cultural heritage and that of people of different cultural backgrounds" (Gollnick, 1976:10).

Gollnick further discusses (1976:12-22) the impact of multiculturalism on education as the recognition by educators:

- 1) that there are unique emotional and learning needs of children from different cultural backgrounds;
- 2) that there are distortions and omissions in curricula because of unrecognized bias;
- 3) that to be culturally different is not to be culturally inferior;
- 4) that a single set of educational goals and values may not be acceptable for all students;
- 5) that teachers must be professionally trained in a multicultural model; and

6) that a commitment to cultural pluralism must permeate all areas of the educational experience.

Giles and Gollnick (1976:115) report that at least "28 states currently have state provisions regarding multicultural, bilingual, and/or ethnic studies programs...". This required training varies "from knowledge about the role and contributions of ethnic groups to training in intergroup relations to structured experiences in cultural settings".

When the Constitution of the State of Montana was redrafted in 1972, the following provision was included:

The state recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of the American Indians and is committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity (Article X, Section 1 (2)).

In that same year, the National Education Association published a resolution on American Indian Education in which they stated that "schools must preserve Indian culture" (NEA, 1972:20).

First through research which has produced statistics reflecting failure on the part of the educational system to provide adequate education and finally, through national and state policies, the need for identifying methods for approaching cross-cultural assessment has been established.

Cultural Awareness

Before the educator can develop any specific remedies for the Native American child in his classroom, he must first understand where

the child comes from -- what his background consists of. This is true not just for the Native American child but for all children -- especially those from culturally different backgrounds.

The goal of cultural awareness is to raise consciousness about cultural differences. It is "becoming aware of the diversity of ideas and practices to be found in human societies, of how these ideas and practices compare, and of recognizing one's own cultural captivity and perspective" (Smith and Otero, 1977:1). Human differences are widely known at the level of myth and stereotype. These differences appear to matter the most when persons feel uncomfortable with them. There is a disturbing feeling that comes when well-established behavior and thinking patterns are interrupted by coming into contact with contrasting values and practices.

Cole and Gay, in their book The New Mathematics and an Old Culture: A Study of Learning Among the Kpelle of Liberia, reaffirm the need for educators to have knowledge of the culture in which they are teaching in order to be more effective in the classroom. The study is about teaching mathematics to Kpelle children and demonstrates how a traditional culture affects the learning readiness of children who are being taught concepts for which there are no exact antecedents in that culture.

It documents the points of conflict between the methods and intent of Western schools and belief and practice of other cultures...Children are decisively

influenced by the culture of their home and non-school community. The teacher must identify this culture and understand how it has molded the child's thinking and affected his or her ability to learn, then devise effective strategies of instruction in the light of this understanding (1967:vi).

The Kpelle have been influenced in their country by missionaries, the government, and urbanization/industrialization in much the same way as the Native Americans. They, too, have been placed in schools of someone else's choosing -- Western-style schools, where the culture bears little resemblance to the culture of their homes. They are being forced to adjust themselves to a technological world whether they wish it or not. Too often this induction takes place in a haphazard, disorganized, and insensitive fashion.

Therefore, the educators must become closely acquainted with the customs, values, and expectations of the Indian community in which they live and teach. This knowledge is essential for all of those educational personnel who come into direct contact with students.

Assessment in Cross-cultural Settings

As new trends in educational thought and practice emerge, new approaches to assessment need to be developed. As the emphasis in education moves toward recognizing and valuing differences in learning styles and cultural and linguistic variability, and as the curriculum moves toward further individualization, professional educators -- especially those in the field of assessment -- must work together toward new and creative solutions.

As has been previously pointed out in the review of literature, most tests do not adequately sample the experiences of Black, Native American, and Spanish-speaking urban and rural youngsters. Neither do they reflect the experience of the poor white child in urban or rural America.

Examples of bias can be found in some school districts where yet today children are assigned to special education classes largely on the basis of their test scores. A Michigan State University Ph.D. candidate discovered that 85 percent of children in special education classes in that state were from black, Spanish-speaking, Appalachian white, or low-income families. White children placed in these special education classes are not white children from middle- or upper-middle income families, but white children from families of the poor (Green, 1975:90).

"Special education, as in other areas of education, has not yet learned how to discover and build upon the cultural strengths of minority students and as a result, inadvertently risk estranging them from their ethnic ties" (Jaramillo, 1974:585). Jaramillo goes on to say:

It is unfortunate that many special education programs cannot functionally separate the teaching of important skills and competencies from the inculcation of a different way of life. Of all the student populations, exceptional children are the ones who can least deal with such potential alienation from friends and family (1974:586).

There is a need for greater sensitivity to cultural diversity and community expectations during all phases of assessment. Parents, for example, should be viewed as "active agents of their children

during the referral and assessment process; they need not be merely passive permission granters or potential legal liabilities" (Bernal, 1977:xii). Advice from an ethnic community can help "shape the educational process and ensure that many of the extra-school factors which impinge on a child's life are considered" (Ibid).

In general, there have been three different approaches to the issues raised in cross-cultural intelligence testing: "Attempts to develop 'culture-free' tests; adapting present tests for cross-cultural applications; and developing multiple culture-specific tests, each adapted for a particular sociocultural group (Mercer, 1977:7).

Efforts to develop culture-free tests have, at best, met with only limited success because "an intelligence test can measure only phenotypic behavior, the product of learning in a specific social and cultural setting...there are few human behaviors that are culture-free" (Mercer, 1977:7).

One of the most common procedures in cross-cultural testing has been the attempt to modify either the language or administrative procedures when tests standardized in one society are used in making cross-cultural comparisons. The translation approach, while helpful, has limited value. Translating existing intelligence tests for non-English-speaking children has been one response to criticisms of testing practices. The primary pitfall of this approach is that the content of the examination is still culture-bound.

The content of information questions and the concepts used in recognizing conceptual similarities are related to a particular society. The materials used to test comprehension and perceptual skills all reflect the content of the culture in which the test was developed (Mercer, 1977:8).

This problem is compounded in the case of Native American speakers because many tribes have no written language even though the children speak their native language fluently.

A fourth approach -- which has been proposed but not pursued to any great extent -- is to develop culture-specific tests for each of the major cultural groups in American society. One example is the "Black Intelligence Test of Cultural Homogeneity, a vocabulary test comprising 100 multiple-choice items that deal exclusively with the black experience" (Laosa, 1977:15).

Again, this approach would be even more complicated when designing culture-specific tests for Native Americans. Even though all tribes are frequently lumped into the category of "Indians", each individual tribe has a unique culture of its own. Add to this, the degree of acculturation of an individual Indian student, and the designing of culture-specific tests becomes even more difficult.

While this approach is certainly worth further exploration, the creation and standardization would be expensive and it would be difficult to determine the cultural boundaries for each of the cultural groups. In addition to these problems with culture-specific tests, the scores would not indicate the child's position relative to

members of the larger society or his probability of later success in the public schools.

There is another alternative which differs from those four approaches just described. The alternative explored by Mercer is called pluralistic diagnosis:

The logic of the pluralistic evaluation of intelligence is based on a three-step process:

(1) Identifying those sociocultural characteristics that account for the greatest amount of the variance in the intelligence test scores of minority children,

(2) Developing a socioculture index, using those characteristics most highly correlated with I.Q., for placing children into the sociocultural group that their own background characteristics most closely approximate; and

(3) Interpreting the I.Q. against two normative standards: a) the standardized norms of the test as published in the test manuals and b) the pluralistic norms based on the distribution of scores for persons from comparable sociocultural backgrounds (1977:11).

Mercer and Lewis (1977) have further developed a pluralistic model which they call the System of Multicultural Pluralistic Assessment (hereafter referred to as SOMPA). SOMPA utilizes three assessment models -- the medical model, the social system model, and the pluralistic model. Each model provides a different and important perspective of the child's competencies:

(1) Components of SOMPA that conform to the medical model measure perceptual-motor development and health conditions that may be related to learning difficulties.

(2) Components of SOMPA that conform to the social system model measure the child's adaptive behavior in family and community roles, and the child's performance in the role of student in the social system of the school.

(3) Elements of SOMPA that relate to the pluralistic model measure critical aspects of the child's sociocultural background. Additionally, they yield an estimate of learning potential based on a comparison of the child's WISC-R scores with the average WISC-R scores predicted for children having the same configuration of sociocultural characteristics (1977:2).

Information for assessing the child is gathered from two sources, an interview with the child's parent or guardian, and direct individual examination of the child.

There is no question that testing and test results have been abused and used in negative ways. Much has been written and much documentation has accumulated to establish this fact. But what would standardized tests be replaced with? Teacher judgement alone? Teachers also have prejudices built in and they are just as vulnerable as a test is to manipulation.

As has already been discussed, some combination of measurement would appear to be the best approach -- not utilizing test scores alone.

Such a combination has been put into practice at Flandreau Indian School.

A student is administered a standardized achievement test, the results are then compared with teacher observation and finally a diagnosis is done including all elements of a child's life, social history, medical history, education history and psychological information. His strengths and weaknesses are then put in perspective and a plan of remediation is set. The standardized test plays a key role in the whole process. It is not used to reject or discriminate against anyone, rather, it is

used to understand where the student is having problems. A program is then planned to compensate for and teach skills that are deficient. A thorough assessment is done using such tests as the WISC to understand the students learning pattern...there is no attempt to answer the question, how intelligent or how dull a student is, rather how can the student be helped through understanding (Pray, 1975:4).

The Department of Education of the State of Nevada made some recommendations regarding the use of standardized tests with Indian children. These have been compiled into a booklet called "Suggested Techniques in Guidance and Counseling with Indian Youth and Adults" (1967:6-7):

The administration of achievement and intelligence tests and of aptitude and interest inventories, should be interpreted to the child, parents and tribal education committee. This will promote cooperation in devising a plan.

An item analysis should be done on tests administered to Indian children in order to determine which items have little or no meaning for Indian children.

Interpretation of test results should be based on class norms, developed both for Indians and non-Indians and for the class as a whole. Interpretation of tests on the basis of national norms will too often work a hardship on the Indian child.

Summary

The need for seeking methods of assessment in cross-cultural settings has been established. Because of the research and statistics which indicate that minority children are not performing par with the dominant culture of this country, there has been strong encouragement -- and in some instances, even mandates -- for the educational system to examine their policies, curriculum, staff training and, finally,

assessment programs.

Assessment is used as a tool for classification, decision-making and intervention. Testing is only a part of the entire assessment process.

First, it is essential that school personnel have an awareness of the culture from which they have children. Indian children and children from other minority groups have too often been placed in schools which bear little resemblance to the culture of their home and/or community.

New approaches to the assessment process must be developed as the emphasis in education moves toward recognizing and valuing cultural differences and the resulting learning styles. Present standardized testing procedures do not adequately sample the experiences of most ethnic minority groups.

There have been numerous attempts to overcome the issues raised in cross-cultural testing situations. For various reasons, most of them have had their limitations. One approach which certainly seems to have merit is that approach called pluralistic diagnosis. Pluralistic diagnosis takes more of the cultural background factors into consideration.

In the assessment process, test results should be used as only one small part of the total picture of the Indian child and only as a

supplement to knowledge of his family ties, cultural background and individual hopes and ambitions. Parents and the ethnic community can become partners with the school for the benefit of the child.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Studies of children from culturally-different backgrounds have repeatedly indicated that these children score lower on intelligence and achievement tests. These same minority group children are over-represented in special education classes. Native Americans, as a part of this country's minorities, have had an even longer history of failure in the educational system. The federal government's policy regarding the education of this country's native peoples has been one primarily of assimilation. Forced assimilation has not worked.

Due to the low performance on standardized tests by culturally-different children and their over-representation in special education classes, they are often thought to be inferior.

Many of the cultural values of the Native Americans contrast with values of the non-Indian. These cultural differences must be studied, explained, understood and then worked with -- not against. Because of the value differences and the differences in upbringing, Indian children often bring unique characteristics with them upon entering school. The child's responses to the teachers, his peers, or to certain classroom situations might very well be influenced by his cultural background. If neither the child nor the teacher are aware of these unknown perceptions, values and/or attitudes, a type of conflict will exist that will be frustrating to both the teacher and the student.

The social and cultural background and experiences of an individual may affect the test performance of a particular child in many ways. For example, competition or speed of performance may not be within a particular child's frame of reference and will create difficulties in a classroom or testing situation which calls for either of these.

Research on both the national level and in the state of Montana affirms the allegation that minority students are over-represented in special education programs. Over-referral comes about through the referral process itself (teachers and administrators) but most often occurs because of the diagnostic or assessment process. The primary instrument used for placing children in these programs is the standardized intelligence test. However, while these tests work for the majority of white Americans, there are experiences with which persons from certain sociocultural backgrounds are not familiar. It is only an assumption to think that all children have had an equal opportunity to learn certain things. Most tests do not accurately reflect the experiences of Black, Native American, and Spanish-speaking youngsters. Neither do they reflect the experience of the poor white child in urban or rural America.

Special education, as in other areas of education, has not yet learned how to discover and build upon the strengths of minority students. There is a need for greater sensitivity to cultural diversity and community expectations during all phases of assessment. For

example, parents and the other members of the ethnic community could be called upon for advice or for participation in the referral and assessment process.

There have been various approaches to the problem of cross-cultural assessment; however, most of them will not work in isolation. Test results should be used as only one small part of the total picture of the Indian child.

Conclusions

Cultural factors -- including language, value systems, perceptions of the world around them, and socialization patterns -- do have an affect on the way in which an Indian child performs in the classroom. Because of his or her experiences -- often times limited to his or her home and immediate community -- it is difficult for him or her to relate to certain classroom situations, teacher reactions and test items.

One might be tempted to state that these cultural differences affect school and test performance in a negative way; however, if education begins to recognize, in a positive way, the idea of cultural diversity, the system and the child can meet "half-way".

Related to the acquisition of diversity in learning and teaching styles is the goal of achieving biculturalism or multiculturalism -- "an individual's ability to function optimally in more than one cultural context and to switch repertoires of behavior appropriately and adaptively as called for by the situation" (Laosa, 1977:29). This worthy

achievement would constitute a major step toward cultural enrichment, greater understanding, and cooperation -- not only among the multiple ethnic and linguistic groups that comprise our complex society, but also with the nations of the world. The goal of developing individuals through our educational system who might so adapt to various situations without generating interpersonal conflict or intrapsychic conflict is most appealing. The question of how educators might achieve this goal deserves as much attention as possible by researchers and educators.

It is essential that this country's educational institutions began to address the concept of cultural diversity -- both through an awareness of the existent culture(s) and through the development and teaching of certain approaches in the classroom.

Recommendations

There are numerous recommendations which can be made for further research. It is the opinion of this researcher that the following areas are of primary concern.

It is recommended that a comprehensive survey of Montana schools be undertaken in order to obtain the following information:

- (a) Minority student enrollment and minority student enrollment in special education programs.
- (b) Standardized tests in use.
- (c) Assessment procedures, including any unique procedures adopted for Native American or other

minority children in the school.

- (d) Availability of and interest in staff development in the area of cultural awareness -- both as it relates to regular classroom teachers and for those involved in the assessment process.

It is recommended that studies be conducted in regard to beliefs and belief systems prevalent among individual tribes. Aspects to be considered in such a study are the beliefs the Indian child brings to school as part of his specific Indian culture; the attitude towards language and intellectual activity, with emphasis on such questions as whether different generations express different beliefs and expectations; whether there is a language shift taking place in the community; what human achievements are valued. Studies should include the most conservative Indian beliefs in the community, since the acculturated Indians of today are somewhere between actual practicing of or knowledge of the traditional beliefs of their own culture and those of the wider American community.

It is recommended that a survey be conducted among practicing teachers to see what types of pre-service training would have benefitted them in teaching the culturally-different child. This survey would also include questions regarding the types of on-site activities or formalized types of staff development which would be helpful to them in terms of better understanding the children in their school.

It is recommended that a survey be conducted among the teacher-training institutions in this state in order to determine what types of learning experiences are available for pre-service educators that address the area of cross-cultural awareness. Are there specific classes that address this issue? To what extent are any of these issues addressed in other classes?

The need for further studies cannot be over-emphasized if education is to address the unique needs of the culturally-different child without simply teaching him or her in a manner which will only create a poor imitation of a white middle-class American.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- AACTE, Commission on Multicultural Education. No one model American. Washington, D.C., 1972.
- Adams, Evelyn C. American Indian education, government schools and economic progress, 1946.
- Aragon, Juan Cultural Conflict in Traditional Curriculum. Office of Education, 1970. (Film)
- Banks, J. Teaching strategies for ethnic studies. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1975.
- Beatty, Willard W. Education for cultural change. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1953.
- Bernal, Ernest M. Introduction: Perspectives on nondiscriminatory assessment. Psychological and educational assessment of minority children. New York: Brunner/Mazel, Inc., 1977.
- Cole, Michael, and Scribner, Sylvia Culture and thought. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1974.
- Dreyer, Philip H. The self-esteem of American Indian youth. National Study of American Indian Education Research Reports, Volume 1, 1970.
- Forbes, J. The education of the culturally different: a multi-cultural approach. The Indian Historian Press: Sacramento, 1969.
- Gay, John and Cole, Michael The new mathematics and an old culture. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967.

- Gollnick, D.M. Multicultural education and ethnic studies in the United States. Washington, D.C.: AACTE and Eric Clearinghouse on Teacher Education, 1976.
- Green, Robert L. Tips on educational testing: what teachers and parents should know. Phi Delta Kappan, 1975
- Havighurst, R.J. Education among American Indians: individual and cultural aspects. American Indians and American life. Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1957.
- Havighurst, R.J. National study of American Indian education research reports, Volume 2, 1970.
- Havighurst, R.J., Gunther, M.K. and Pratt, I.E. Environment and the Draw-a-Man test; the performance of Indian children. Journal of Abnormal Sociology and Psychology, 1946.
- Hunter, W.A. Multicultural education through competency-based teacher education. Washington, D.C.: AACTE, 1974.
- Hymes, Dell Function of language in the classroom. New York: Teachers College Press, 1972.
- Jaramillo, M.L. Cultural conflict curriculum and the exceptional child. Exceptional Children. 1974.
- Jones, Reginald L. (ed.) Mainstreaming and the minority child. Reston, Va.: Council for Exceptional Children Publications, 1976.

- Kennedy, Edward M. Indian education: a national tragedy, a national challenge, U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Labor and Public Welfare, 1969.
- Klineberg, Otto Race and psychology. Paris: UNESCO, 1965.
- Laosa, Luis M. Multicultural education: how psychology can contribute. Journal of teacher education. New Jersey: Educational Testing Service, 1977.
- Laosa, Luis M. Nonbiased assessment of children's abilities: historical antecedents and current issues. Psychological and education assessment of minority children. New York: Brunner/Mazel, Inc. 1977.
- Martin, James C. Self-esteem and locus of control as predictors of Indian student attitude toward school. B.I.A. education research bulletin, Volume 5, 1977.
- Mercer, Jane R. Implications of current assessment procedures for Mexican-American children. Bilingual Education paper series. Los Angeles: National Dissemination and Assessment Center, 1977.
- Mercer, Jane R., and Lewis, June F. SOMPA: For the meaningful assessment of culturally different children. New York: The Psychological Corporation, 1977.
- Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 1 (2). 1972.
- Morris, Nancy Tucker A method for developing multicultural education programs: An example using Cahuilla Indian oral narratives

(Doctoral dissertation, Iowa State University, 1976)

National Education Association, Resolution on American Indian education, Science and children, 1972.

Office of Public Instruction, Office for Civil Rights forms 101 and 102. Helena, Mt., 1979.

Pepper, Floy C. Teaching the American Indian child in mainstream settings. Mainstreaming and the minority child. Reston, Va.: Council for Exceptional Children Publications, 1976.

Pettit, G.A. Primitive education in North American. Berkeley, Ca.: University of California, 1946.

Pray, Bruce S., Sr. The use of standardized tests with Indian students. B.I.A. education research bulletin, 1975.

Samuda, Ronald J. Racial discrimination through mental testing: a social critic's point of view. IRCD bulletin. Columbia University, 1973.

Schutz, Linda American Indian history and culture: an inservice training course for teachers, Office of Public Instruction, State of Montana, 1976.

Smith, Gary M., and Otero, George G. Teaching about cultural awareness. Denver, Co.: Center for Teaching International Relations, 1977.

Styles of learning among American Indians, an outline for research. Center for Applied Linguistics: Washington D.C., 1969.

Suggested techniques in guidance and counseling with Indian youth and adults. State of Nevada, Department of Education, 1967.

United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; Office for Civil Rights. Identification of discrimination and denial of services on the basis of national origin. Federal Register, 1970.

United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; Office for Civil Rights task force findings specifying remedies available for eliminating past educational practices ruled unlawful under Lau vs. Nichols. Washington, D.C., 1975.

United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; Office of Indian Education, Title IV, Indian Education Act, 1972.

United States Supreme Court, Lau vs. Nichols, 1974.

Wolcott, H.F. A Kwakiutl village and school. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967.

Zintz, M.V. Education across cultures. Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown, 1963.