



Perceptions of Native American women in college of the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on their K-12 learning
by Koleen Parker

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education
Montana State University
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Abstract:

The purpose of this research was to ascertain the perceptions of Native American women in college of the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on their K-12 learning. The researcher was interested in determining if there were any connections between Native American females in college and their earlier (K-12) school experiences.

The researcher used the qualitative method of idiographic analysis, in which each of the eight women's responses were analyzed. In addition, nomothetic analysis was used on the data in order to compare all the Native American women's responses from the interviews.

Results showed that some Native American women's perceptions on learning were impacted through their K-12 teachers' attitudes and through the classroom environment. Results further showed that all the Native American women's learning was impacted through a parent or a grandparent.

The researcher concluded that according to the perceptions of these Native American women in college, all would have been influenced if their K-12 teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment had been positive. The perceptions of the women were that the true impact on their learning resulted from the expectations of a parent or a grandparent.

PERCEPTIONS OF NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN IN COLLEGE
OF THE IMPACT OF THE TEACHERS' ATTITUDES
AND THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT ON THEIR K-12 LEARNING

by

Koleen Parker

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Koleen Parker

This thesis has been read by each member of the graduate committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citations, bibliographic style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the College of Graduate Studies.

4/16/99
Date

Ann de Luis
Chairperson, Graduate Committee

Approved for the Major Department

April 19, 1999
Date

[Signature]
Head, Major Department

Approved for the College of Graduate Studies

4-22-99
Date

Bruce R. McLeod
Graduate Dean

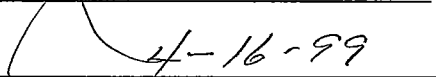
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to ascertain the perceptions of Native American women in college of the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on their K-12 learning. The researcher was interested in determining if there were any connections between Native American females in college and their earlier (K-12) school experiences.

The researcher used the qualitative method of idiographic analysis, in which each of the eight women's responses were analyzed. In addition, nomothetic analysis was used on the data in order to compare all the Native American women's responses from the interviews.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, some educators and researchers (Ardys Bowker, 1993; Hap Gilliland, 1986) have written about and discussed ways to ensure a classroom climate that promotes a positive humanistic orientation to learning wherein success is attainable for all students. Abraham Maslow (1968) considered to be the founder of humanistic psychology, proposed a theory of learning based on motivation of human needs. The highest need is for the fulfillment of one's unique potential, which Maslow called self-actualization. Another major humanist, Carl Rogers, also advocated self-actualization. Rogers viewed his learning theory as a similar process in both therapy and education: the need for a positive relationship between client/therapist and student/teacher in order to become self-actualized is critical. In fact, Rogers' client-centered therapy is often equated with the learner-centered approach in education because Rogers believed that there should be significant principles of learning that lead to human growth and development.

Over the course of my teaching career, I have been interested in knowing how the impact of a positive relationship between the teacher and the student in the classroom effects the academic performance of the students so that self-actualization becomes a reality. There is a growing body of popular literature which is read by educators and lay

people alike concerning the impact our schools have on females. Books such as Reviving Ophelia, Finding Our Way and Thirty-three Things Every Girl Should Know are examples of widely read and acclaimed works which put gender concerns to the forefront of education. After reading Dr. Ardys Bowker's book (1993) Sisters in the Blood, I became intrigued and wanted to know about the perceptions of Native American women in college of the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on their K-12 learning. This interest of mine is a specific focus that grows out of the larger issue of gender equity in schools.

Searching through the literature, it became apparent that there is little research on the relationship of Native American women and their teachers within the educational setting. Due to this fact, Dr. Ardys Bowker's book, (1993) Sisters in the Blood, is the prime source of reference on the education of Native American women for this study. However, from what research is available (Lisa Smulyan, 1986; Theodore Coladarci, 1983; and Anne Hafner, 1990), several commonalities stood out about Native American women and women in general who stayed in school: women stayed in school and graduated because of the linkage with a caring, competent teacher who not only modeled appropriate behaviors, but also encouraged the women and served as an advocate when necessary; women stayed in school and graduated because they viewed school as a happy place where students were encouraged to become all they could be and were invited to become involved in a variety of activities; and women stayed in school and graduated because teachers took special interest in them and understood their personal problems.

Research indicated that school sometimes is the single stabilizing factor in students' lives, providing "more structure and stability than they receive from any other source" (Lynette Long & Thomas Long, 1989, p.110). Time spent at school may represent the only positive interaction with peers and adults that some students encounter during an entire day.

After discovering the limited research on the relationship of Native American women and their teachers within the educational setting, I became interested in ascertaining the perceptions of Native American women of the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on their K-12 learning.

Significance of the Study

In the past decade, dropping out of school has been a major political issue in America. This focus upon school drop-outs is undoubtedly timely as America 2000 (1992) reported that 25% of Americans now fail to complete high school. However, in Native American educational circles, this issue is not a new concern. The National Center for Education Statistics study, *High School and Beyond* (1992), surveyed 30,000 sophomores in high schools throughout America. The purpose of the study was to provide descriptive information about the drop out rates among various subgroups in the country. The study reported the drop out rate for Native Americans at 18.2%.

In addition, exploring the perceptions of Native American females on what teachers can do to improve their students' K-12 school experiences, in order to prevent

dropping out of school, is critical to this study. Teachers are powerful role models who have the potential to create classroom environments that maximize student learning.

Contributing Factors Influencing Females

There is little research on specific factors that contribute to Native American females dropping out of school. However, research (Bowker, 1993) of female drop-outs in general isolate four major factors that place females at risk for dropping out of school: (1) the socialization process, (2) teacher-student interaction, (3) cognitive differences, and (4) curricular choices.

Society placed females at risk by limiting their options (Smulyan, 1984). Smulyan stated that females in our society define their roles by forming bonds with others and by learning through cooperation, which is different from males who are encouraged to be assertive and competitive. Lilian Katz and Sylvia Chard (1997) claimed it is especially important that teachers and female students in the classroom plan together and are open to each other's ideas. Katz and Chard believed that the resulting classroom activity would likely be undertaken with greater interest and more enjoyment than if the teacher had planned the lesson alone.

Research on teacher interaction with students indicated a more favorable attitude toward male development and independence (David Sadker & Myra Sadker, 1994). Females, suggested the Sadkers, are more invisible in the classroom than males and receive less teacher attention and fewer rewards. The fact that females are treated like they are invisible makes them think the teachers do not care about them. An example of

this feeling was demonstrated when Coladarci (1983) interviewed forty-six Native American students who had dropped out of school in Montana. Coladarci found that Native American female drop-outs reported more frequently than males that teachers did not care about them.

A 1990 report that compared ethnic students' attitudes toward teachers found few Native American students stating that they felt teachers were truly interested in them; nor did they feel that their teachers listened to them (Hafner, 1990). Gilliland (1986) asserted that the teacher's attitude toward Native American students is critical to their success in school. He suggested that a teacher who can demonstrate interest and respect for students is on the way to succoring Native American students' success in the classroom.

Native American women graduates are in agreement with Gilliland (1986). These graduates viewed in a more positive light those teachers who created a classroom environment that was conducive to student adjustment and happiness. They liked a classroom where the teacher had a sense of humor, where the teacher respected students' rights, and where the teacher listened to students instead of talking all the time (Bowker, 1993).

Jeremy Finn's (1989) research on the general population of students echoed what these Native American women graduates shared about the classroom environment. Teachers who encourage students to try their best, listen to and show interest in students, and demonstrate care and respect for students may foster greater interest in school and participation from their students. Finn said that students who feel comfortable and

accepted in school are likely to become more involved and more than likely, this involvement may in turn lead to greater achievement.

Roger Prossise's (1995) research also suggested that in classrooms where interaction between students is characterized as "open, honest, and positive," the classroom climate is conducive to learning. Such classrooms offer a "safe comfortable environment" in which students are free to focus on instruction and learning rather than on basic behavior needs (Prossise, 1995, p. 19-27). Then, when a teacher is consistent, the teacher becomes predictable to students. This predictability becomes a source of comfort and the classroom becomes a safe place to learn.

Gender differences in cognitive orientation have been extensively researched (Smulyan, 1984). Smulyan asserted that females learn through cooperation, whereas males are more competitive and assertive, and work more independently than females. Such differences, said Smulyan, will influence a student's academic performance and achievement because of the way the classroom is structured. For example, Bowker (1993) stated that Native American females are predisposed to learning cooperatively in groups due to their ethnic values. If the Native American female is placed as the center of attention or singled out in the classroom, she will withdraw. Native American females prefer a classroom environment that is focused on cooperation, rather than one with a more competitive structure.

Some research (Shirley Malcolm, 1984) indicated that females of all ethnic minority groups are underrepresented in science and engineering fields. Malcolm suggested that despite the research addressing this issue, females and minorities have not

been encouraged to take courses such as math, science, and computer education.

Gilliland (1986) observed that teachers often refer to these students as being disadvantaged. He pointed out that the disadvantage might only be the fact that some teachers do not know the culture or that teachers lack the understanding to adapt instruction in order to meet the needs of culturally different students.

Self-Esteem: Another Factor Influencing Females

Sundra Flansburg (1991) noted that self-esteem has been difficult for researchers and others to define. However, Flansburg suggested that there is a growing consensus that self-esteem is more of an image of one's self that is made up of many factors that include being academically competent. Flansburg saw self-esteem and the way it is being examined these days, as being strongly effected by cultural values and expectations. In a study, Bowker found that Native American females cope with attacks on their self-esteem by defining their self-value in terms of service to others: "Being a good daughter or being a good sister, being responsible and dependable, and not doing 'bad things' to other people" (Flansburg, 1991, p.3).

Polly Greenberg (1992) suggested that the first step in building self-esteem is to create a classroom where all students are valued and for the teacher to be aware of being negative toward minority cultures. Greenberg also said that teachers have to examine their own behavior first, then make sure that every student understands that insulting, discriminatory behavior would not be tolerated in their classroom. Cameron McCarthy

(1991) added an additional element, teacher sensitivity, as a necessity, before a classroom can become a center of cultural understanding and acceptance.

These suggestions for creating a classroom where all students are valued, and for teachers becoming culturally sensitive (Greenberg, 1992; McCarthy, 1991), affirmed what Native American women graduates said when interviewed by Bowker (1993). These graduates indicated one of the admirable characteristics of teachers who made a difference in their lives was the assistance given to them when their self-esteem was under attack from other teachers or peers. For example, some of the women graduates talked about teachers who intervened in the classroom when they became humiliated by other students. Others spoke fondly of teachers who had become their advocates and had intervened with other teachers and administrators on their behalf when a situation seemed unfair or inconsistent. Some told of teachers who became their personal advocates, saving them from abusive home situations or abusive relationships with peers.

Therefore, it is the self-esteem of all learners -- those progressing well, those underachieving, and those culturally different, that can be enhanced when it is clear that persons or individuals have the highest value in the classroom (Ross Van Ness, 1995). Judy-Arin Krupp (1992) felt that self-esteem cannot be changed by another, but when a teacher builds a climate in the classroom that is positive, students then are able to raise their own levels of self-esteem. A society really cannot afford to raise students with low self-esteem because low self-esteem manifests itself in negative behaviors which often result in dropping out of school (Krupp, 1992).

Self-Esteem and Academic Performance

School personnel generally believe that if students are self-confident, they are more likely to do well at whatever they attempt (Shmuel Friedland, 1992). Friedland summarized this view by stating, "healthy self-esteem is an indispensable quality for all young people today if they are to be successful in their lives" (p.98). Further, Friedland suggested that students who possess healthy self-esteem are less likely to drop out of school, have a greater tolerance of others, have a greater sense of community, and have superior academic achievement. Of all behaviors associated with self-esteem, academic achievement receives the greatest attention from the educational community. Hence, the notion that those individuals who have enhanced self-esteem are more likely to achieve academically has made powerful inroads into educational practice (Friedland, 1992).

Research findings confirmed this notion (California Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem, 1990). Studies undertaken by the California Task Force, clearly indicated a persistent and significant relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement. Joseph Gwin (1990) summarized the findings of various psychological studies and asserted that an accurate positive perception of self plays a vital role in individual students' academic success. Conversely, continued Gwin, students with a negative perception of self are more likely to fail. Xiaoru Liu and Howard Kaplan (1992) examined the relationship between academic achievement and self-esteem with 242 students in grades 7-12. Results confirmed that self-esteem both influences and is influenced by academic achievement. Furthermore, the principles of self-esteem theory

suggested that definitions of self are formed through interactions with others and interpersonal channels (Liu and Kaplan, 1992).

Lily Hedelin and Lennart Sjoberg (1985) believed that self-esteem is directly influenced by teacher/student interactions. Hedelin and Sjoberg said that students' perceptions of themselves and their interactions with their teacher play a major role in their attitude toward school. These perceptions not only influence their attitude toward school but their interest in subjects and therefore, school achievement. A teacher who gives thought to the students' need for self-esteem is likely to improve the students' intellectual ability. Teachers who get to know their students personally, make the students feel more attached and secure (Hedelin & Sjoberg, 1985).

Students appreciate receiving praise and rewards. In proper measure, this can motivate them to do their best and assist them in becoming confident, self-assured individuals (Merrill Harmin, 1994). Harmin believed that teachers should tell the students how well they have performed and how much their work is appreciated. Students should know exactly what they have done and the positive behavior that is being praised. Once the behavior standard is set and the task is accomplished, the reward of praise is given. This is an example of a simple three-step method of enhancing self-esteem (Harmin, 1994). In giving praise, Shirley O'Brien (1989) proclaimed that the teacher needs to clarify the appropriate behavior so the student can reflect upon the action used to achieve success. O'Brien insisted that students are then able to identify the skills and abilities used to be successful and analyze how they feel about this success. The students can therefore realize that they, not the significant other, are responsible for their

success or their failures. This type of praise gives the student tools necessary to succeed when the significant other cannot be there (O'Brien, 1989).

Self-esteem is also thought to increase achievement test scores. The linkage between self-esteem and student achievement suggests that students who are not confident in their abilities do poorly in academics because they have convinced themselves that they cannot achieve much academically. If students do not believe they can do well, those students do not study, do not persist at difficult tasks, and therefore do not do well in school (Allan Sterbin & Ernest Rakow, 1996).

Far too many students come to school day after day afraid to take chances because they are not confident in their academic abilities (Larry Dorrell, 1991). If teachers do not provide a caring environment, students will continue to be afraid to take risks and never learn, for learning requires some risk taking (Dorrell, 1991). When the classroom environment is not comfortable, students experience anxiety over how to please the teacher and the reaction of their peers if they make a mistake. Anxiety can prevent students from participating in class because they think they may look foolish or appear ignorant; therefore, risk taking may not occur and learning is inhibited (Harmin, 1994). Educators who create a comfortable classroom environment and encourage students to take risks enhance students' self-esteem and their academic performance.

Definition of Terms

Client-centered therapy: Individuals have within themselves vast resources for self-understanding and for altering their self-concepts, basic attitudes, and self-directed

behavior; these resources can be tapped if a definable climate of facilitative psychological attitudes can be provided (Rogers, 1962).

Cooperative learning: An atmosphere of cooperation and mutual helpfulness with individual accountability within each group. Students spend time in groups sharing with each other. Teachers are still very much a part of the groups, but now the teacher's role is a supporting one, helping students learn from each other, as well as from other sources.

Discrimination: Any action which limits or denies opportunities, privileges, roles, or rewards on the basis of a person's group (gender, race, or physical handicap).

Ethnographic study: Focuses on the question, "What is the culture of this particular group?" This means intensive fieldwork in which the investigator is immersed in the culture under study.

Feminist Pedagogy: Expands the notion of cooperative learning, particularly as it applies to women. It envisions a cooperative relationship in which students are conscious of context and the individual with emphasis on becoming self-directed learners.

Grounded theory: Theory developed through inductive analysis of data; the theory emerges from many pieces of evidence that have been collected and which are interconnected.

Humanistic psychology: The study of a philosophy or way of life centered on human interests or values; it asserts the dignity and worth of human beings and their capacity for self-actualization.

Qualitative research: Methodology involving descriptive rather than empirical evidence to support results; the concern of qualitative research is with process rather than outcomes or product.

Self-actualization: Refers to an individual's desire for self-fulfillment, namely, the tendency for him/her to become actualized in what he/she is potentially. This tendency might be phrased as the desire to become more and more-what one is to become, everything that one is capable of becoming (Maslow, 1971).

Title IX: A federally funded education program initiated in 1972; this chief federal law was to prohibit sex discrimination in all federally funded education programs.

Questions to be Answered

Bowker (1993) attributed the poor achievement of Native American students to teachers who were unable or unwilling to pay attention to the cultural background, such as customs and language of students. Bowker said that some teachers were aware of the differences in customs and language, but were not aware of the more subtle, intangible differences, such as values and attitudes.

If indeed changing teacher attitudes and classroom environments would meet the needs of culturally different students, a question arises as to what extent teacher attitude and classroom environment have on learning. I am interested in knowing perceptions of Native American women in college of the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on their K-12 learning. This curiosity serves as the impetus for the following questions to be asked in the interview:

1. How do Native American women in college indicate that the teachers' attitudes impacted their K-12 learning?
2. How do Native American women in college indicate that the classroom environment impacted their K-12 learning?
3. What teacher characteristics do Native American women in college indicate as having a positive impact on their K-12 learning?
4. What resources do Native American women in college suggest that are available to assist K-12 teachers in developing these characteristics?

Review of Literature

When Title IX was passed by Congress in the 1970's, the federal government offered both moral and legal support to educators. Title IX, a federal law, made gender discrimination in schools illegal for the first time. This law became a legal weapon to use against schools that refused to treat females fairly. However, as the 1970's drew to a close, disappointment mounted. It became clear that the hope placed by educators in the power of Title IX was not to be fulfilled (Sadker & Sadker, 1994).

A Native American educator wrote her reaction to the disappointment of Title IX in an Alaskan Native Women's Caucus Newsletter:

Testimony indicated that Title IX the chief federal law prohibiting sex discrimination in all federally-funded education programs, was neither understood, nor enforced. (Bowker, 1993, p.47)

Gender Discrimination in the Classroom

Judy Mann (1994) noted that educators have known for more than a decade that gender discrimination is rife in America's classrooms and that it has a damaging effect on females. A study by Sadker and Sadker (1994) showed that the males in a fifth-grade classroom called out eight times more often than females during a class discussion. According to the Sadkers, sometimes what the males had to say had little to do with the teachers' questions. They found that whether the males' comments were insightful or irrelevant, the teacher responded to them. However, when the females called out, suddenly the teacher remembered the rule about raising hands before speaking. The Sadkers observed that the females, who were not as assertive as the male students, were quickly put back in their place.

Julie Ellis (1993) declared that teachers' perceptions of males and females are very important. Students' understandings of themselves are constructed through teachers' perceptions of them. According to Ellis, in our society intelligence is associated with personality characteristics of independence and self-confidence. Ellis claimed that males have manifested these characteristics more freely than females. She also observed that the teacher has protected the male ego so that when sloppy, incorrect, or incomplete work is handed in by males, the teacher has been more supportive and more attentive. Meanwhile, when compliant and able females turned in tidy, correct, and completed work, the females' efforts were often taken for granted by the teacher (Ellis, 1993).

Research by Carol Gilligan (1989) on gender discrimination revealed that teachers initiated more communication with males than with females, strengthening males' sense

of importance. She observed teachers asking males more complex questions, abstract ideas, and open-ended questions, providing better opportunities for active learning.

A study by Hall and Sandler (cited in Barbara Bate, 1988) also indicated that teachers initiated more communication with males because teachers were more attentive to male comments and questions than to female questions. Teachers gave more eye contact to males and probed for more elaboration from them.

Bernice Sandler and Edward Hoffman (1992) observed teachers initiated more communication with males through nonverbal behaviors. Behaviors such as nodding and gesturing were recorded more often in response to males' questions and comments than to females; varying their tone of voice; communicating interest when talking with males, but speaking to females in a patronizing or impatient tone; and assuming a posture of attentiveness, for example, leaning forward, when speaking with males. They concluded opportunities for active learning by females is subsequently stifled.

The Project on Equal Education Rights (1985) looked at nonverbal cues, many of which were selectively directed on the basis of gender. The most obvious cues were the nonverbal factors involved with the location of classroom seating. The Project found that males vigorously separated themselves from close dependence on the teacher earlier and more extensively than did females. High achieving males tended to sit nearer the teacher and when they did, females and males received equal attention from the teacher. However, males in seats far from the teacher received much more attention than females in such seats, largely because they acted more independent and were more aggressive in demanding such attention.

Teachers who believe that participation is an indicator of learning, are more likely to ignore females because they tend to participate less than males. Often times, teachers are unaware that they concentrate on teaching males because the process of classroom interaction is unconscious, and the teachers respond automatically to student demands for attention (James Redpath & Hilary Claire, 1989). The researchers asserted that males demand more attention, complain more that they had not received enough attention, and their teacher and female peers expect them to get the attention. When Redpath and Claire analyzed a classroom discussion that involved students between the ages of nine and eleven in different settings, males took three times as many turns speaking.

Donald Cooley, Jerome Chauvin and Frances Karnes (1984) found that both male and female teachers viewed male students as more competent in critical/logical thinking skills and creative problem solving skills than females. However, male teachers held more gender role stereotyped views than female teachers. They believed females to be more emotional, more high strung, less imaginative, less inventive and less impulsive than males. One parent described that situation:

My daughter, an honor student...was experiencing difficulty in an honors physics class of ten students. Only two girls were in the class and when I contacted her teacher (a male), he threw up his hands and told me that girls were never good at physics! I wonder if part of the problem could have been his attitude and lack of understanding (Sally Reis, 1987, p.85).

Surprisingly, the Sadkers (cited in Carol Funk, 1993 from earlier publications of Sadker and Sadker) found that both female and male teachers are guilty of these behaviors that lead to discrimination against females in their classrooms. The researchers reported that the majority of school teachers in both elementary and secondary schools

are females, and this discriminative behavior on the part of teachers continues to perpetuate lowered expectations for students of their own gender.

According to Sadker and Sadker (cited in Funk, 1993), females actually lose ground as a result of their schooling. They reported that females start school with higher test scores than males but trail them by fifty-seven points when they take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) in high school. They said that females lag in mathematics and science scores, and even those who do well in these subjects tend not to choose math and science careers. These researchers asked, "What other group starts out ahead in reading, writing, even in math, and 12 years later finds itself behind?" (Sadker and Sadker, cited in Funk, 1993, p.515).

The net effect of years in the classroom is that females learned to doubt their ability, creativity, and importance. Even academically capable females failed to perceive their academic strengths accurately or experienced satisfaction from their successes; instead they focused on what they perceived to be their shortcomings. No one enabled them to believe that they are "really good at something and that this is really important" (Ellis, 1993, p.3).

Math and Gender Discrimination

Research (Wendy Schwartz and Katherine Hanson, 1992) over the last decade showed that males and females have different classroom experiences because their approach to learning is different and because teachers have tended to treat them differently. Achievement expectations for females in some subjects were usually lower, as they were for members of certain racial and ethnic groups and for poor students.

Traditionally, females found achievement in advanced mathematics to be elusive. Females' mathematic achievement in the elementary grades is equal to males' but by the middle grades, females decreased in their achievement (Leroy Callahan & Douglas Clements, 1984). An analysis of math achievement of twelfth-grade females in 15 countries revealed that in all but three countries, females were less successful than males (Gila Hanna, Erika Krudiger & Carl Larouche, 1990). John Dossey, Lawrence Mulis, Mary Linguist, and David Chambers (1988) suggested that the decline of female achievement could be the result of a strong pattern of socialization to mathematics success or failure rather than to gender differences in innate ability.

Historically, the adage "math is not for girls," and the belief that females should not reveal their intelligence (Schwartz & Hanson, 1992) squelched some females' interest in advanced mathematics. Seldom are they introduced to women role models who made math a successful career choice.

The socialization pattern of females continues in the school where the "hidden curriculum" that trains white males for public discourse and success is carried out, even if female math underachievement does not become manifested until high school. Whether it is a curriculum that fails to engage females, unconscious behavior patterns and expectations, outright hostility of females by teachers and male students, or lack of encouragement from guidance counselors, the process of disengaging females from mathematics continues (Cheris Kramarae & Paula Treichler, 1990).

Educators placed some emphasis on developing strategies to encourage equal participation of young men and women in mathematics, science, and vocational studies

(Gerald Burke, 1993). However, in a recent report by the American Association of University Women, How Our Schools Shortchange Girls (1992), in concert with the work of gender education, several problem areas have been identified: (1) pervasive gender bias in classroom teaching styles (Sadker and Sadker, cited in Funk, 1993); (2) the bias that females are not able to think logically to the same extent as their male counterparts (AAUW, 1992); (3) uneven teaching behaviors reflecting that females favor learning via cooperation while males prefer competition (Gilligan, 1989); and (4) cultural attitudes that are still taught which presume a less significant status for women in careers (Burke, 1993).

Many women are held back because of deep-rooted, persistent beliefs about the proper roles of men and women in our society (Burke, 1993). Both women and men, said Burke, have inappropriate stereotypes about what each can accomplish. These stereotypes limit choices and opportunities. Educators must take particular care to eradicate gender bias which lingers in the math curriculum in both content and the methods of instruction.

Students' belief that mathematics has utility in their lives, and the teacher's belief that students should be active participants in learning and doing mathematics are important components in building an affinity to mathematics (Donna Cutler-Landsman, 1991). For instance, a study of gender-related involvement with Lego TC logo, found that middle school females' interest and involvement with Lego TC logo increased considerably when mixed gender groups were designed to give females the key roles of keyboarder and spokesperson. According to Cutler-Landsman, females were included as active learners in all groups, but the projects students undertook did not seem relevant to

the females, so they quickly lost interest. However, when the structure was changed to truly integrate females and males in team projects and to provide females with an opportunity to select projects, the females began to express considerable interest because they had the opportunity to share the males' expertise in legos. The change in classroom structure to place the females in a position of relative power and importance as spokespersons enabled the females to familiarize themselves with computer language and to develop skills and confidence in mathematical strategies.

Since a goal of Education 2000 (Schwartz and Hanson, 1992) is to promote students' achievement in science and mathematics, it is crucial to remove the barriers that prevent females from learning advanced mathematics. Schwartz and Hanson suggested that the first step is to encourage an attitude change. They said that if parents believe that their daughters can succeed in math and master technology, these parents will provide their daughters with toys that promote math learning readiness, and they will encourage them to sustain their perseverance in math courses. If teachers understand and respect female learning styles, these teachers will alter their classroom discourse to accommodate females' participation and provide a message to both males and females that no single learning behavior is superior to another (Schwartz & Hanson, 1992).

Schwartz and Hanson (1992) suggested that changes in teaching methods and changes in curricula are as important as attitude change. One of these approaches to changing teaching methods and curricula is cooperative learning. Cooperative learning promotes collegiality between male and female students. Structuring lessons around the

thinking process is necessary so that students can arrive at answers to questions rather than focusing solely on the answer itself.

Cooperative Learning vs. Competitive Learning

Gilligan's (1982) work on stages of moral development challenged that of Lawrence Kohlberg (1964) who believed that females' moral reasoning was generally inferior to that of males. Kohlberg found that males highlighted abstract principles of justice, whereas females put more emphasis on context and on individuals (Julia Penelope & Susan Wolfe, 1983). Gilligan saw these as different ways of reasoning, not as inferior or superior to one another. Feminist pedagogy stresses interpersonal relationships, and it is not uncommon for females to place emphasis on context and on individuals (Penelope & Wolfe, 1983). Therefore, cooperative learning interrelates well with feminist pedagogy.

Cooperative learning places emphasis on helping students develop the skill necessary to experience person-to-person interaction (Yael Sharan and Shlomo Sharan, 1992). The Sharans believed that successful small cooperative groups bring to students a feeling of connection to others. The importance of connectedness is a key idea in Gilligan's (1982) work on females' values.

Nevertheless, classroom practitioners continue to use traditional teaching methods and foster competition rather than engaging students in cooperative learning activities (Voorhess, 1994). Voorhess stated that the teacher-student interaction patterns continue to reflect bias in grouping, wait-time, and discipline. Teachers are not cognizant of

students' individual learning styles or gender grouping preferences and systematically teach to the whole group. Voorhess (1994) stated that students, usually males, who act out in class are given more attention and punished more severely than females who act out.

Roger Johnson, David Johnson and Mark Stanne (1986) believed that cooperative learning seems to be more congenial to female learning styles than traditional instructional formats. These researchers collected socio-metric data regarding the desirability of female work partners in a study that compared cooperative, competitive, and individualistic computer-assisted instruction. The results suggested that even though males in all three conditions perceived computers to be more a male domain than female, the students who had worked together in the cooperative condition nominated more female classmates as desirable future work partners than males.

According to Sharon Kagan (1989), cooperative learning is one of the most effective tools in a teacher's arsenal for increasing security, developing a sense of self, and building affiliation within a group. Through her research, Kagan (1989) found that cooperative learning had four major benefits. First, it led to academic gains especially for minority and low achieving students. Second, it improved relations among students in integrated classrooms. Third, there was a positive impact on social and affective development. Fourth, it was most successful when used in conjunction with competitive and individualistic classroom structures to prepare students for the full range of social situations.

Native American Learning Styles

Daryl Wilcox's (1996) research reported that learning styles have been identified as an important variable in school success or failure of ethnic minorities in the United States. Wilcox declared that the whole language philosophy of learning is compatible with the learning style of Native American students because whole language emphasizes meaning and process over product, uses cooperative work, capitalizes on oral language, and integrates subject areas. These features are compatible with Native American students' preference for communal learning and personal meaning, use of time, and holistic world view. Wilcox (1996) described an effective learning environment for Native American students as one where the individual is not singled out, but has many occasions when the teacher can instruct them privately in small groups.

Research (Ruth Bennett, 1997) showed that Native American students learn by doing. Bennett found that Native American cultural values involved communication and action. It is built on the principle that students have to get out and do things. Bennett shared that Native American students learn language through experience and through expressing feelings and ideas. She stated that these students act out their words, use actions to reinforce their words, and communicate with body language.

Additionally, Bennett (1997) asserted that Native American students learned in stages. She said that Native American students were at different levels of proficiency leading to the teaching principle that students need to be introduced to lessons in stages. This idea about learning in stages developed into a method called Communication-Based Instruction. According to Bennett, Native American students begin with listening before

they actually produce language themselves. In using Communication-Based Instruction, Native American students advance step-by-step through the process, gradually taking on a greater role in responding. The process typically begins with a teacher presenting something that requires a yes or no response, and ends with the student producing words, phrases and longer units of language.

In a literacy study, Jane Fraser (1996) specified writing techniques for Native American students where an English writing class worked with personal computerized stories. Students succeeded due to one-on-one tutoring, flexibility of time for instruction, and a climate of trust and respect. These Native American students pioneered the creation of a computer literacy course the following summer, enrolling their friends and family, and proved that personal computerized stories are extremely effective for positive learning outcomes.

According to a study by Linda Chiang (1993), nonverbal behaviors are an important part of learning for students from diverse backgrounds and are largely cultural bound. She suggested that very few teachers have any formal instruction in understanding nonverbal communication and most are prone to make mistakes in producing or interpreting nonverbal behaviors. Chiang reported that nonverbal behaviors are more likely to cause problems in the classroom if teachers are not sensitive and understanding of Native American students' nonverbal messages. When teachers understand and show respect for nonverbal messages, they can make a difference in the learning of Native American students.

The important nonverbal behaviors for teachers to understand and be sensitive to in the study (Chiang, 1993) included: eye contact, distance, time and taboos. Chiang observed that every one of the respondents gazed at the table or looked at their hands when listening to the questions. She explained that they still consider looking directly into other people's eyes as not appropriate, especially to elders. When this concept is applied to classroom settings, she asserted that most Native American students tended to look in the teacher's direction rather than at the teacher.

In the Native American culture, distance between individuals varied. While one mentioned no physical touching among their tribe, another mentioned the individual expectations of space between males and females were different. Teachers, suggested Chiang, need to observe the distance their students are using and follow along.

In the Native American culture, time is another nonverbal behavior that needs to be understood by teachers. Chiang reported some respondents wore watches but some did not. One individual indicated using the senses to tell time, another mentioned the use of rhythm, and still others mentioned they used the position of the sun. According to Chiang, all the respondents expressed that they were able to accommodate western time when needed, but when they were with their people, they used nature's time. When applying this concept to classroom settings, said Chiang, teachers can expect their students to adhere to western time.

Finally, there are some taboos that teachers need to consider when interacting with Native American students (Chiang, 1993). Teachers should not stare at students' eyes, and should not be too direct when talking to students. Also, all the respondents

mentioned that there should be no strong handshakes and no praise unless it is done privately between teacher and student. Thus, concluded Chiang, when these nonverbal behaviors of students are known and respected by teachers, their students' learning is enhanced.

Teacher-Student Relationship and Learning

Learning takes place best through joint productive activity when teacher and students work together for a common product or goal, and when during the activity, students have opportunities to converse about the work (Roland Tharp, 1997). Tharp explained that work which was carried out collaboratively for a common objective and the discourse that accompanied the process contributed to the highest level of academic achievement. He said that discourse which builds basic school competencies can take place only if the teacher shared in the activities. According to Tharp, joint productive activity between teacher and students helped to create a common context of experience within the school itself, which is especially important when the teacher and the students do not share the same background.

The facilitation of significant cultural learning depends upon attitudinal qualities which exist in the personal relationship between the teacher and the student (Hunter O'Hara, 1997). O'Hara said that these attitudinal qualities were characterized by respect, trust, positive regard, and humor. When these attitudinal qualities were found in the classroom atmosphere, then the interaction between the teacher and the student significantly impacted the student's learning.

Tommie Radd's (1994) research reported that the teacher-student relationship enhanced the development and growth of the student. Students remarked that the relationship with their teacher made them feel that they mattered, that they were worth something, and that they were capable students. According to Radd, when dignity and respect, acceptance and positive regard characterized the teacher-student relationship, an environment then existed that supported students' learning in the classroom.

According to Greek philosophy (Mahmound Suleiman, 1998), three major requirements for positive teaching existed. First, the *logos of teaching* required teachers to be intellectually appealing given their exemplar of knowledge about what they teach. Second, the *pathos of teaching* required teachers to be affective in learning teaching contexts. This means, Suleiman explained, that the teacher must create needed intellectual and emotional tension in students. Unless this is balanced with its cognitive counterpart, students would find it damaging to their self-image and their learning potential. Finally, the *ethos of teaching* is the culmination of the teacher's ethical and professional appeal to all learners: teachers who are professionally ethical entice students to learn, provide a good role model for respect, honor and value diversity, believe in students' optimal potential for success and excellence, provide the necessary caring environment, prepare students for civic functioning, and strive to meet learners' cognitive, emotional, social and academic needs.

Summary

Generally speaking, research studies supported that gender discrimination does exist in the classroom. In addition, the studies supported that teachers, both male and female, exhibit behaviors that lead to discrimination against females in their classrooms.

The research studies also showed that cooperative learning was a more effective method for learning among females and minority students than other instructional techniques. Cooperative learning is an effective method for learning among females and minorities because it stressed an interpersonal relationship which is important to them as individual learners.

Review of published literature indicated that Native American students, in general, learned best through small group instruction, through action, through stages and through a climate of respect for nonverbal communication. These studies supported that teachers do need to be sensitive to the non-verbal behaviors exhibited by Native Americans in order to alleviate possible problems in the classroom.

Finally, researchers identified that a positive teacher-student relationship impacted students' academic learning in the classroom.. Work that was carried out collaboratively between teacher and student for a common goal and was characterized by interactive discourse, resulted in academic achievement. Experts' opinions also showed that when there was respect, trust, positive regard, and humor in the classroom, there was a significant impact on the students' learning.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Maslow's Theory of Human Motivation

Maslow's theory plays a prominent role in ensuring a classroom climate that promotes a positive humanistic orientation to learning. His theory of human motivation is based on a hierarchy of need. The basic needs are: (1) the physiological needs, (2) the safety needs, (3) the belongingness and love needs, (4) the esteem needs, and (5) the need for self-actualization which is the highest need for the fulfillment of one's unique potential (Abraham Maslow, 1971).

Maslow (1970) suggested that the most prepotent of all needs are the physiological needs. These needs include food, water, and shelter, plus any number of other needs, depending on the degree of specificity. Fulfillment of the physical needs gives one the feeling of well-being, to include energy, euphoria, and physical contentment. In reference to Maslow's ideas concerning physiological needs, Carol Tribe (1982) suggested that the physical needs could be thought of as survival needs.

Gratification becomes as important a concept as deprivation in motivation theory (Maslow, 1970). Maslow stated that gratification of the needs on level one releases the

person from domination of physiological needs, such as food, water, and shelter, thereby permitting the emergence of other more social goals. He asserted that the physiological needs -- food, water and shelter, now exist only potentially in the sense that they may emerge again to dominate the person if they are thwarted. "A want that is satisfied is no longer a want" (Maslow, 1970, p.52).

If the physiological needs are gratified, (Maslow, 1968), there emerges a new set of needs which may be categorized as safety needs. Maslow listed safety needs as security, stability, protection, freedom from fear, law, limits and need for structure. Assured safety permits higher needs and impulses to emerge in the individual and in turn, directs growth toward mastery of self and environment.

If both the physiological and the safety needs are gratified (Maslow, 1970), the love and affection and belongingness needs emerge. Maslow claimed that now the person would hunger for affection from family, friends and people in general. He said the person would strive with great intensity for a place within a group. Maslow suggested that at this level a person wants to attain a place within a group more than anything else in the world.

Maslow's ideas about self-esteem suggested that people in society need "a stable, firmly based, high evaluation for self-respect, self-esteem and for the esteem of others" (1970, p.35-36). In discussing Maslow's ideas concerning self-esteem, Tribe (1982) said that self-esteem may be classified into two sets: self-esteem that desires strength, mastery and competence, confidence in facing the world; and independence which leads to freedom. The second set of self-esteem needs are the desire for reputation or prestige,

defined as the respect or esteem from other people which appeared in the form of status, recognition, and appreciation.

Maslow (1970) suggested that satisfaction of self-esteem leads to feelings of self-confidence, self-worth, and being useful and necessary in the world. Maslow said that the thwarting of these needs produce feelings of inferiority, weakness, and helplessness. Maslow believed that when these feelings of inferiority, weakness, and helplessness exist, they in turn give rise to basic discouragement in the person.

The need for self-actualization, explained Maslow (1971), can be thought of as an episode in which the powers of a person came together in a particularly efficient and intense way, when a person is more integrated and more whole, and more independent of his lower needs. He becomes "more truly himself, more completely actualizing in his potentialities, closer to the core of his being, more fully human (Maslow, 1971, p.25) in these episodes.

Maslow (1971) suggested that self-actualization is not only an end state but also the process of actualizing one's potentials at any time. One example is becoming more knowledgeable through studious habits. Self-actualization, or using one's intelligence, meant that a person worked well and did the thing he wanted to do, which was to be self-actualized (Maslow, 1971).

Rogers's Client-Centered Therapy

Rogers's therapeutic approach (Robert Nye, 1996) was called nondirective in its earlier stages. Later it became widely known as client-centered. Many psychologists and

others remain attached to the client-centered label, although Rogers and his colleagues, since the middle 1970's, have used the name person-centered. Nye said that the point of the name change was to reflect more strongly that the person, in his or her full complexity, is at the center of focus. Also, Rogers and his colleagues wanted to emphasize that their assumptions were meant to apply broadly to almost all aspects of human behavior and were not limited to a therapeutic setting.

Rogers' views on education followed his basic assumption that persons are able to direct their own lives if the proper conditions exist (Nye, 1996). Rogers advocated that teachers be facilitators of learning, providing an atmosphere of freedom and support of individual pursuits. Rogers believed that when students are able to choose their own paths to discovery, and are encouraged to do so, real learning is likely to occur. Also, learning should involve feelings as well as ideas because students who respond emotionally as well as cognitively will learn most effectively. Carl Rogers (1980) viewed the facilitating teacher as having the same attitudes as the effective therapist, who is genuine, accepting and empathic.

Rogers (1980) stated that these attitudes of genuineness, acceptance, and empathy, must be present in order for a climate to be growth-promoting. Being genuine or real, asserted Rogers, is when the therapist/teacher is honestly in the relationship, putting up no professional front or personal facade. When this takes place, claimed Rogers, then greater is the likelihood that the client/student will change and grow in a constructive manner. In reference to Rogers' ideas on genuineness, Brian Thorne, (1992) suggested that being genuine requires at all times that the therapist/teacher resist the temptation to

seek refuge behind the mask of professionalism. When the therapist/teacher resists this temptation then trust begins to build with the client/student.

The second important attitude in creating a climate for change is caring, or warmth (Rogers, 1980). Rogers said that there must be unconditional positive regard for the client/student. Rogers explained that when the therapist/teacher demonstrated a positive, accepting attitude toward the client/student, movement or change is more likely to occur. The therapist/teacher is willing for the client/student to be free to feel whatever he/she is feeling at the time, whether it be: confusion, resentment, fear, anger, courage or pride. Such caring on the part of the therapist/teacher is nonpossessive. Rogers stated that the therapist/teacher then accepts the client/student in a total rather than a conditional way.

Such an attitude (Carl Rogers & Richard Stanford, 1989) is not a sign of the therapist's/ teacher's ignorance, but rather one which engenders trust and thus leads to deeper self-exploration. Acceptance of this order is not easily accomplished for it requires of the therapist/teacher a capacity, from deep within, to accept the client/student as he/she is and not as they would wish him/her to be. Rogers and Stanford (1989) said that a defensive, aggressive, vulnerable and conflicted client/student requires the healing energy of unconditional positive regard if they are to discover the enormous potentialities for growth within themselves.

The third attitude in creating a climate for change is empathy, or understanding (Rogers, 1980). Rogers explained that the therapist/teacher senses accurately the feelings and personal meanings that the client/student is experiencing and communicates this

understanding to them. Rogers asserted that this kind of sensitive, active listening is exceedingly rare in our society. He claimed that people think they listen, but very rarely do they listen with real understanding and true empathy. Yet, Rogers insisted that listening of this very special kind is one of the most potent forces for change.

Rogers (1962) explained this potent force for change works because when persons are accepted and prized, they tend to develop a more caring attitude toward themselves. As persons are empathetically heard, it becomes possible for them to listen more accurately to the feelings inside, and thus the person becomes more real, more genuine. These tendencies, claimed Rogers, would enable the person to be a more effective growth-enhancer for themselves. There is a greater freedom to be the true, whole person.

Rogers came to believe that there is only one single, basic human motive and to this he gave the name "the actualizing tendency" (Thorne, 1992). The actualizing tendency means that persons have an underlying and inherent tendency both to maintain themselves and to move toward the constructive accomplishment of their potential. The only constraints Rogers could see upon the actualizing tendency were from the environment in which the person existed (Thorne, 1992).

In his final exposition of client-centered therapy (Rogers & Stanford, 1989), Rogers openly acknowledged that the actualizing tendency is in no way unique to his own theoretical viewpoint. He noted that the concept runs through all of Maslow's writings and is reflected in the work of biologists such as Szent-Gyorgi, who concluded that there is definitely a drive to perfection in all living matter.

Erikson's Theory of Personality Development

Erik H. Erikson's theory of eight stages of personality development is formed on a hierarchy of growth much the same as Maslow's hierarchy of needs in that one stage of development must be attained before moving on to the next stage. In reference to Erikson's ideas about personality development, Tribe (1982), stated that there are more and more teachings of Erikson's concepts in psychology and education in America and in other parts of the world. His descriptions of the stages of the life cycle have influenced psychologists and educators in their work. Psychologists and educators are increasingly looking at their clients/students in Eriksonian terms: an individual has neither a set personality nor a set character structure; the person is always a personality in the making, developing and redeveloping (Erik Erikson, 1963).

Erikson (1980) suggested that his theory of personality development is best understood from the perspective of the life cycle because the growth of human strength takes place in a sequence of stages. Stages represented the patterned development of the various parts of a whole psychosocial personality and must take place not only step-by-step but at a proper rate in a normal sequence. Erikson (1980) asserted that at each stage of life, a new strength is added to a widening ensemble and reintegrated at each stage in order to play its part in the full cycle. These psychosocial development stages are the products of interfactual experiences between each person and the world.

Every stage in the life cycle is marked by a specific psychosocial crisis (Erikson, 1968). Erikson said that the word *crisis* is used in a developmental sense to connote not a threat of catastrophe, but a turning point, a crucial period in which a decisive turn is

unavoidable. He suggested that psychosocial development proceeds in critical steps, those moments of decision between progress and regression, integration and retardation. The very process of growth provided new energy as society offers new and specific opportunities according to the cultural expectations of the phases of life (Erikson, 1968).

Erikson (1963) claimed that an individual life course is decisively influenced by the era, area and arrangements into which he/she is born. He said that development is determined by choice or planned events -- where, when, how and how much other people respond to the ever-developing individual. Erikson (1963) suggested that environmental forces both limit and force the individual because they can downplay or prolong the developmental stages.

Erik Erikson's theory of the eight stages of personality development are important for teachers. They are important because teachers need to be aware that students do not have a set character structure, that a student is always a personality in the making, developing and redeveloping. Consequently, teachers have the opportunity to influence the developmental stages of their students. According to Erikson (1963), development of a person is determined by how much other people respond to the ever-developing individual.

Summary

Maslow's, Rogers' and Erikson's theories are congruent to the humanistic nature of this study. These theorists support nurturing of the students as critical to learning. Thus,

when a student's need for a healthy self-esteem is satisfied, then that student's growth can continue to be realized.

Design of an Ethnographic Study

A qualitative study (Robert Bogdan and Sari Biklen, 1992) has the following characteristics: qualitative research has the natural setting as the source of data, with the researcher as the key instrument; qualitative research is descriptive, in that it uses words and pictures rather than numbers to describe the data; qualitative research is concerned with process rather than merely outcome or product; and qualitative researchers tend to analyze data inductively, contributing to grounded theory. I chose to conduct an ethnographic study because I am interested in a particular culture where (Michael Patton, 1990) detailed description, inquiry in depth, and direct quotations capturing people's perspectives are vital to the investigation.

An ethnographic study seeks to describe a culture or aspects of a culture. According to James Spradley (1980), a culture is comprised of the things people do, what people know, and what people make and use. By interviewing Native American women in college about their perceptions of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment, I hoped to contribute to a grounded theoretical framework that explained the impact of their K-12 learning environment on their academic performance.

Grounded theory depends on methods that take the researcher into and close to the real world, so that the results and findings are grounded in the empirical world (Patton, 1990). Grounded theory emerges from the bottom up, rather than from the top down,

from numerous pieces of interconnected evidence that assists the researcher in unlocking clues that contribute to the researcher's understanding of the subject being studied (Barney Glaser & Anselm Strauss, 1967).

Description and Selection of the Participants

Participants in this study were Native American women. There were eight participants who are college students attending a major university of higher education. I sought help in locating these women to interview from the Native American Studies office and from recommendations given to me by other Native American women.

Investigative Procedure

As an investigative design for this study, I chose naturalistic inquiry. Naturalistic inquiry studies "real world situations as they unfold naturally; non-manipulative, unobtrusive, and non-controlling" (Patton, 1990, p.40). Thus, the researcher is open to whatever emerges and does not have a predetermined constraint on the outcomes.

Individual interviews of each of the eight participants was the main source of data. Each interview was conducted by the researcher for 90 minutes. The interview questions in Appendix A were compiled from the literature studied, primarily based on Bowker's (1993) research discussing the education of Native American women.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

I tape recorded the interviews with the women. After each interview, I transcribed the information pertaining specifically to this study. The interview data was sorted based on categories which emerged from the participants' responses. A descriptive account of the interviews included idiographic and nomothetic analysis. According to Fernando Silva (1993), idiographic analysis deals with discovering patterns unique to each person. Nomothetic analysis, on the other hand, deals with detecting patterns which are found to be within a group of individuals. I looked for patterns within each interview and among the eight interviews conducted.

Summary

A qualitative, ethnographic study describes a particular culture in depth. Qualitative research is descriptive and the data is in the form of language rather than statistics. Qualitative research is concerned with the process of a phenomenon rather than with the product.

For this study, the researcher taped the interview sessions with the eight Native American women in college. After each interview, the process of listening and transcribing the recorded responses took place. When all the interviews were completed, data analysis began. Analysis such as idiographic analysis, looking for patterns within each interview and nomothetic analysis, looking for commonalities among all of the interviews were utilized.

CHAPTER 3

PRESENTATION OF EVIDENCE

The Interview Process

For my investigation, I interviewed eight Native American women attending a university. Seven interviews took place in the researcher's office located on a college campus, and one interview took place in the Native American Studies office on the same campus.

I used a small tape recorder which I placed on the desk between the interviewee and me. First, I obtained permission from the women to use their own words. Then I explained the process of my asking questions and that I would be taking brief field notes to assist me when writing detailed transcriptions of their responses for analysis. I tried to be aware of and monitor my own biases throughout the interviews.

Within hours after each interview, I listened to the tape and made transcriptions of the responses which I considered to be particularly prominent or pertinent to the study. Before completing data analysis, I listened once again to each interview in case I missed pertinent information the first time. The interview data was sorted based on categories which emerged from the participant's responses to the four research questions discussed in Chapter 1:

1. How do Native American women in college indicate that the teachers' attitudes impacted their K-12 learning?
2. How do Native American women in college indicate that the classroom environment impacted their K-12 learning?
3. What teacher characteristics do Native American women in college indicate as having a positive impact on their K-12 learning?
4. What resources do Native American women in college suggest that are available to assist K-12 teachers in developing these characteristics?

The first section in the reporting of the interview material contains an overview of information about the eight participants as a whole. Secondly, I provide a brief description of each of the research participants.

The third section involves idiographic analysis of each participant's responses based on the categories which emerged from the responses as stated above. Idiographic analysis pertains to studying patterns of meaning that emerge within the individual interviews. This section presents each woman's responses and ideas.

The fourth and final portion of the chapter discusses nomothetic analysis in which all interviews are studied in order to discover overall patterns of meaning which are found to be common among all the participants. Any differences among the responses and ideas of the women are also analyzed.

General Information about the Interviewees

As stated in Chapter 2, I interviewed eight Native American women from an institution of higher education. I asked the Native American Studies Office for help in locating Native American women who might be interested in being interviewed. I also asked other Native American women in college if they might recommend Native American women that I could interview.

Eight women, four college graduates and four undergraduates, participated in the study. Of the four college graduates, one holds a bachelor's degree from the University of South Dakota, Vermillion, South Dakota, and a master's degree from Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana. The other three college graduates earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana. Four of the undergraduates earned high school diplomas in Browning, Montana and three graduated from the Blackfeet Community College, Browning, Montana.

The women ranged in age from 19 to 51. Three of the four graduates reported teaching experience in grades K-12. The number of years of teaching experience varied from 2 to 16. In addition, one graduate reported a two-year experience as an elementary principal, and another graduate reported being a project director in a bilingual program.

Description of ParticipantsRochelle

Rochelle is 33 years old, living with her husband and four children in Bozeman, Montana where her children attend public school.

Rochelle holds a bachelor's and master's degree in secondary education from Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana. She is currently working on a doctorate in adult and higher education at Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana.

Margie

Margie is 42 years old, a single parent with three children. She lives in Bozeman, Montana with her children who attend public school.

Margie holds a bachelor's degree in secondary education and two master's degrees; one in school administration and the other in adult and higher education from Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana. Margie taught two years in the Poplar High School in Poplar, Montana, where she also was the project director of the bilingual program. Margie is currently working on a doctorate in adult and higher education at Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana.

Rosalita

Rosalita is 51 years old. She is a single parent with three grown children who are on their own, and one child who lives with her. She and that child live in Bozeman, Montana, where the child attends public school.

Rosalita holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education from the University of South Dakota, Vermillion, South Dakota and a master's degree in school administration from Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana. She taught elementary education for 16 years at Takini Elementary School on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation in Takini, South Dakota, where she was also principal for two years. She is currently working on a doctorate in school administration at Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana.

Mary

Mary is 40 years old. She lives with her husband and four children in Bozeman, Montana, where her children attend public school.

Mary holds a bachelor's degree in secondary education and two master's degrees - one in school administration and one in adult and higher education from Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana. She taught for seven years at the Little Wound High School in Kyle, South Dakota. She is currently working on a doctorate in adult and higher education at Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana.

Victoria

Victoria is 28 years old. She lives with her husband and four children in Bozeman, Montana, where her children attend public school.

Victoria graduated with an Associate Education degree from the Blackfeet Community College in Browning, Montana. She is currently enrolled as an

undergraduate student at Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana working on a degree in education.

Jolene

Jolene is 43 years old. She is divorced and has five children. Four of the children are grown, and one of the children lives with her in Bozeman, Montana, where the child attends public school. Jolene is also a grandmother with five grandsons and three granddaughters.

Jolene graduated from the Blackfeet Community College in Browning, Montana, where she earned an Associate of Arts degree. She is currently enrolled as an undergraduate at Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana, where she is working on a psychology degree.

Lynn

Lynn is 45 years old. She is a single parent with two children. While she is attending school and living in Bozeman, Montana, her children live with members of her family elsewhere in the state.

Lynn graduated from the Blackfeet Community College in Browning, Montana, where she earned a General Studies degree. She is currently enrolled as an undergraduate at Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana, where she is working on a psychology degree.

Nicole

Nicole is 18 years old. She is single and living on the campus of Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana.

Nicole graduated from high school in Browning, Montana. She is currently enrolled as an undergraduate at Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana, where she is working on a degree in physical therapy.

Idiographic Analysis

Definition

Idiographic analysis involves looking for patterns within each interview in order to understand each one separately. This section deals with the main emphases found in the responses of each interviewee. The four patterns identified from the questions which undergird this research on the K-2 teachers' attitudes and classroom environment are: teachers' attitudes, classroom environment, teacher characteristics, and resources for teachers. Each participant provided individual perspectives about teachers' attitudes and classroom environment and its impact on their K-12 learning. Emphasis varied among the participants.

As each participant's responses were recorded and analyzed, patterns began to emerge. Discussion of the analysis follows.

Analysis of Rochelle's Interview

How do Native American women in college indicate that the teachers' attitudes impacted their K-12 learning?

According to Rochelle, the K-12 teachers' attitudes that impacted her learning were "caring about how well she learned, having a positive attitude toward teaching, and, for the most part, wanting to build a supportive relationship with her." Rochelle

said that she felt teachers cared about how well she learned because they did not accept "mediocre" work from her. She shared, "This caring inspired me to try and excel in my studies." For Rochelle, if at any time she could not understand some concept, the teachers would usually find another way to assist her so she was able to understand.

Rochelle said that most of her teachers liked teaching because she could "see them enjoying the job." "They were happy and it was not a chore for them to teach," said Rochelle. They were always pleasant and very accommodating whenever she asked a question about her studies or needed permission to do something.

For Rochelle, the teachers did build a supporting relationship with her by praising her efforts and encouraging her ambition. Rochelle said, "I really liked being praised so I worked that much harder to please them."

Some teachers, in order to build a supportive relationship with Rochelle, would have her file, or would have her hand out papers, or do other extra jobs in the classroom. Rochelle felt she was appreciated and that she had a "special" relationship with her teacher. For Rochelle, feeling appreciated and "special" impacted her self-esteem which led to more success in learning.

How do Native American women in college indicate that the classroom environment impacted their K-12 learning?

For Rochelle, the K-12 classroom environment had an impact on her learning because "it was a place where she was encouraged to learn, and where her individual learning style was accommodated." One of the ways Rochelle was encouraged to learn was through an individualized reading program. According to Rochelle, this program

was something she really enjoyed because she could be independent, the stories were interesting and not too long, and the activities that followed were not boring. She said, "This reading activity was something that I looked forward to every day in school."

Rochelle stated that cooperative learning is beneficial to most everyone, and she has participated in group learning, but prefers individual learning. For Rochelle in the classroom, her style of learning was accommodated through many other individualized activities designed by the teacher. She said, "I was taught at home to be competitive within myself, always doing my best, and I really enjoy learning on my own."

What teacher characteristics do Native American women in college indicate as having a positive impact on their K-12 learning?

Non-discrimination. According to Rochelle, there was one particular teacher who discriminated against her. She was not exactly sure why but offered, "No matter how hard I tried, no matter how hard I studied, I could not pass anything in this particular teacher's class."

Rochelle shared that on one test, a final exam, she received an "F". She said, "I was devastated!" She then went to a friend who received an "A", and together they went over the test, discovering that their answers were basically the same. Therefore, Rochelle went to the teacher and asked if she and her father could meet after school to talk about the final exam, to which the teacher agreed.

One half hour later, they arrived at school, only to discover that the teacher "threw the test away." Immediately, they went to the School Board, and after discussing the situation with them, Rochelle received a "D" and did not fail the exam.

For Rochelle, even though she did not fail the exam, she could never again "trust the teacher" and when there is no trust, she said that learning could be discouraged. However, for Rochelle, she just tried that much harder to "prove" to the teacher that she was a good student.

Treating Students Equally. Rochelle stated that a teacher in her science class did not treat students equally because when the males spoke in class, the teacher really listened to them and would give them praise. When the teacher listened to the females, Rochelle said that the teacher listened, but gave no praise. The teacher also readily accepted sloppy or late work from the males. It seemed to her that the teacher was saying, "males were the only ones who were going to be the leaders of the world."

"I was offended by the male preference in the science classroom because in my upbringing, I was never taught that I was below a male -- ever," shared Rochelle. In spite of male preference in the classroom, feeling inferior or feeling that she was not smart enough or that she would not be making a contribution to the world never entered her head.

Planning Lessons with Students. In elementary school, Rochelle stated that one year she finished the math book by Christmas. Instead of placing her in another math book, which would have moved her to another grade level, the teacher suggested something different. Rochelle said, "The teacher sat down with me and privately praised me for doing such good work, and asked me if I would consider tutoring the other students in math who needed extra help." Consequently, Rochelle said that this really built her self-esteem and made her feel that the teacher recognized her abilities.

According to Rochelle, the teacher did not "single her out as superior," but held her "as an equal" to the other students. She was responsible for completing the new math assignments from the teacher before she was able to assist the other students. Once she completed the assignments, she said that she was eager to share "her gift for math" with the other students.

Encourage More Learning. Rochelle would have appreciated the teachers encouraging her to read more outside the classroom. She said that her reading skills are "lower" than they should be and so are her verbal skills. She felt that if she were a better reader, her English grammar would not have suffered so much. According to Rochelle, "My grammar is getting better, but I am still being corrected."

Adapting Instruction. Rochelle suggested that if the teachers adapted instruction to integrate cultural differences into the curriculum, her "foundation in life would have been stronger." She explained that she was an individual learner rather than a cooperative learner, and if the teachers, for example, invited guest speakers from her culture, they would have "planted seeds" of interest and it would have encouraged her to learn more about her culture on her own.

Having Cultural Knowledge. Rochelle stated that if teachers are going to gain cultural knowledge in order to adapt instruction, whether they are on a reservation or not, they need to take personal time to research and learn about a particular culture. According to Rochelle, "If teachers do the research, then in a class, such as history, they would be able to add accurate facts about that culture." Rochelle declared, "I am

very proud to be a Native American, and I would have enjoyed learning about my culture in history class.”

What resources do Native American women in college suggest that are available to assist K-12 teachers in developing these characteristics?

Literature and the Students. For Rochelle, building a background about cultural differences would be to read about a particular culture and be “open-minded” to the different issues discussed in the literature. Then, present these issues to the students in class, and allow open and honest discussion of them.

She also suggested that the teacher might privately ask the students if they would be comfortable in sharing some of their customs, and then, answering questions about what they presented from their classmates. If they are uncomfortable, then the teacher should find other “avenues” that would bring cultural information to the students.

Native American Community. Another suggestion from Rochelle would be to get involved in the community. She said that teachers should not be hesitant to ask questions of the community members in order to learn first-hand what is important to them and what might be considered offensive to them. What the teachers learn from this interaction could then be implemented into the classroom instruction.

Seminars. In Montana, Rochelle said that the Native American Studies office holds seminars where teachers would have the opportunity to meet and discuss the culture with faculty members. She further suggested finding out about other seminars

that are held for teachers in the school district. In these seminars, teachers are taught how to integrate the culture into the curriculum.

Community Functions. If a teacher is on the reservation, Rochelle said that they are welcome to attend Native American community functions, such as a "give-away" or a "pow-wow" or a "banquet". In this way, the students witness their teachers wanting to learn about their culture. Rochelle felt that the students would then have a better attitude toward the teacher when they are learning in the classroom.

Analysis of Margie's Interview

How do Native American women in college indicate that the teachers' attitudes impacted their K-12 learning?

For Margie, the K-12 teachers' attitudes would have positively impacted her learning if they had demonstrated "cultural respect and understanding," and "caring about her learning." Margie shared that except for one elementary teacher, she did not ever feel that the teachers respected or understood her culture. According to Margie, the teachers only wanted to "take the Indian out of her," wanted her to know that "Indians were dirty," and that "Indians were savages."

Margie stated that the teachers' attitudes about Native Americans never once stopped her from learning. She explained this by saying, "The teachers let me know that who I was was not important, so I withdrew within myself and did what I had to do to learn." For Margie, "quitting was not an option" because her mother expected her to get an education.

According to Margie, there was one special teacher in the fourth grade who was very caring about her learning. She said that this teacher had a "kind heart" and a "soft voice" which made her feel safe and secure to learn. She wished that all the other elementary teachers were as caring as this fourth grade teacher was about her learning. But, the others made her feel "threatened and scared" because they "hollered and punished so severely." Regardless of these teachers, Margie said that she was there to learn "in spite of them."

How do Native American women in college indicate that the classroom environment impacted their K-12 learning?

For Margie, what was needed in the K-12 classroom environment to have impacted her learning was to feel "safe and secure" and have her preference for learning respected. According to Margie, she never felt safe and secure in most of the elementary classrooms because the teachers made her feel that "who she was was not important." Therefore, when the teachers "singled her out" and expected her to answer, her low self-concept kept her "too shy" to want to answer.

Margie shared that the way she preferred to learn was through cooperative learning, which was never respected by the teachers. She said the reason she learned best through "group work" was because "no one is trying to achieve something individually, no one is being singled out over the others; rather, everyone is working together so they all arrive at the same time." For Margie, it is not important for her to be the first one finished or the first one to get it right; it is more important for her that

everyone gets the work done and done correctly. She declared, "At the end, we would all like to be standing there together."

What teacher characteristics do Native American women in college indicate as having a positive impact on their K-12 learning?

Demonstrate Confidence in Students. In high school, Margie said that the teachers were "nicer" than they were in elementary school. One in particular was "nicer" because Margie was encouraged to feel confident about herself and her typing skills. Margie said, "I knew that the teacher had confidence in me and my typing skills because instead of getting on me in class when I began "goofing" around with a friend, the teacher gave me time to get myself together and maintain an "A".

Adapting Instruction to Meet Individual Differences. According to Margie, adapting instruction to meet cultural differences is one of the best ways for learning. However, she said that it was not possible for her because "the main goal of the teachers in school was to assimilate the "Indian" students into "white" society. For example, Margie shared that "any reference or mention" of cultural differences from the students would be followed by a punishment.

Cultural Knowledge. Margie suggested that teachers need to realize that they are "coming into another culture" and, for a time, they are "going to be living in another culture." Therefore, she said that respecting and attempting to address the differences in learning would be necessary for the students' success in the classroom. Margie noted, "Once a teacher gets to that point, then it would be easier for them to

seek out people from the Native American community who would assist them in gaining cultural knowledge that would enhance students' learning."

Margie said that teachers are very important to students in the classroom. When the students view their teachers respecting their culture, such as sharing a cultural story that is of interest to them, then there would be more of a willingness to learn.

Also, Margie said that for students, it is important that they are able to discuss the "beauty" of their culture and customs. She explained that one of the best ways of accomplishing this is having the students discuss "their ceremonies, their history, and their language" in school.

High Teacher Expectations. Margie shared that she was given the feeling by the teachers that their expectations of her were low. She said that she felt they believed she would "get a job in the tribe and stay on the reservation for the rest of her life."

For Margie, the teachers' low expectations of her did not deter learning because her mother's expectations of her were so high. Margie suggested that because teachers play such an important role in students' learning, and because not all students have high expectations from home, the teachers must exhibit high expectations of them.

What resources do Native American women in college suggest that are available to assist K-12 teachers in developing these characteristics?

Internship. Margie suggested that before teachers begin their career, they should be exposed to different cultures through an internship. In this way, she said that the teachers would have some understanding of the different values, customs and

preferences for learning. She thought then this might prevent teachers from "inflicting" their own values and ways of learning on students, which deters learning in the classroom.

Literature. Margie suggested that both "Indian and Non-Indian" teachers read the book (1997), Collective Wisdom. She said that the book was written by Thomas D. Peacock, an "Indian" and Linda M. Cleary, a "Non-Indian". These two authors went into different reservations doing research on what "Non-Indian" teachers experienced on the reservation.

Linda M. Cleary explained the teachers' perceptions in "white terms" and Thomas D. Peacock explained the "Indian" perceptions. Margie felt that the book would benefit both "Indian and Non-Indian" teachers because consideration was given to both sides of the story. In this way, understanding and awareness might become a reality for teachers.

Analysis of Rosalita's Interview

How do Native American women in college indicate that the teachers' attitudes impacted their K-12 learning?

According to Rosalita, the K-12 teachers' attitudes impacted her learning because they "cared about her" and they had "supportive relationships with her." She said that one example of the teacher caring about her began at the age of four in a one-room schoolhouse. She said that because she was so young, the other students would not let her play baseball until "the teacher told the students to let her play." She said, "I hit the ball and showed them I was not too young." For Rosalita, this caring by the

teacher allowed her to feel good about herself and by feeling good about herself, it encouraged her "to keep working hard in the classroom."

An example of a supportive teacher relationship with her was in the second grade. Rosalita said that when she completed second grade, the teacher felt that she should repeat the grade because "she was so young." At first, she said that she was disappointed that she could not go on to the next grade, but she "accepted it over time." According to Rosalita, "It turned out to be very good for my self-concept because the teacher asked me to help the other students when I finished my work." This built a strong student-teacher relationship between the two of them, and made school a happy place to learn for Rosalita.

How do Native American women in college indicate that the classroom environment impacted their K-12 learning?

For Rosalita, the K-12 classroom environment impacted her learning because it was a "place where it was comfortable to learn, and where her needs as a student were considered." Rosalita suggested that this comfortable environment was the reason she did so well academically at the age of four in the one-room schoolhouse. In the classroom, she was allowed to "leave her seat and go over to talk to her older brother and sister when necessary." She also said that she felt very comfortable in the classroom because she knew that the teacher asked her mother if she could come to school. It was very pleasant for Rosalita to know that she was wanted in the classroom.

Rosalita stated she really appreciated the English teacher's attention to her learning in high school. Rosalita said, "English was my second language and it was very difficult for me to learn." So when the English teacher listened very carefully to her response, and then privately assisted her without "singling her out", it made a difference in her learning. According to Rosalita, the English teacher wanted all the students to be able to speak English well, so the teacher held a "helping session" after school for those who wanted to improve their English.

What teacher characteristics do Native American women in college indicate as having a positive impact on their K-12 learning?

Treating Students Fairly. Rosalita said that in general, she did not think that males were given preference in the classroom. However, she said that there was one incident when a teacher suggested that a male should be the editor of the school newspaper. The whole class let the teacher know that they disagreed with the suggestion. The group felt that they should be able to vote to decide who should be the editor. There was a vote taken, and "whether the vote was equal or not--a male and female shared the editor position on the school newspaper."

Planning with Students. For Rosalita, planning lessons with her teachers did not happen. She shared, "I needed the individual time with the teachers, especially in math, because I was not understanding the concepts." According to Rosalita, if the teachers had planned some individualized work with her in math, and then allowed her to work with a group, she would have learned math better than she did." She shared that consequently, her math background is "weak" today.

Meet Cultural Differences. "If the teachers had addressed cultural differences, I would have experienced more success in school," said Rosalita. However, she said that it did not deter her from learning because, regardless of the teachers, her parents expected her to learn "no matter what."

Rosalita shared that meeting cultural differences in the classroom for her would have been to understand that she worked best in cooperative groups due to the fact of "being able to work with each other, being able to help each other in order to reach a goal, and being able to share ideas." Rosalita said that sharing and helping each other is so much a part of the Native American culture that cooperative learning is a "natural" way for her to learn.

Cultural Knowledge. According to Rosalita, she said that teachers need an awareness of the culture. This awareness is "understanding what is important to students, looking at the students' values, implementing the ways students learn best, and adjusting instruction to meet these needs." She said that when the students' learning styles, such as, cooperative learning and hands-on activities are in place, then learning would be more assured for the students.

Demonstrate Cultural Respect. Rosalita said that if she had witnessed her teachers participating in community activities, it would have demonstrated respect. Another demonstration of respect for her culture would have been to "integrate the language, to integrate the history, or to integrate any aspect of the culture" into the curriculum.

What resources do Native American women in college suggest that are available to assist K-12 teachers in developing these characteristics?

Literature. Rosalita suggested that using literature to build background knowledge would impact Native American learning. Through literature, she stated that “teachers will be able to know accurate facts about the culture and customs, will begin to learn what parents want for their children, and will, hopefully, learn to appreciate the values of the Native American community.

There are two books that teachers might read in order to begin building a cultural background about Native Americans. Lois Crozier-Hogle’s (1997), Surviving in Two Worlds and Thomas D. Peacock’s and Linda M. Cleary’s book (1997), Collected Wisdom are examples of reading that would help teachers understand Native American students.

Analysis of Mary’s Interview

How do Native American women in college indicate that the teachers’ attitudes impacted their K-12 learning?

According to Mary, the K-12 teachers’ attitudes would have impacted learning if they had “really wanted her to learn, if they had a positive attitude toward her, and if they had demonstrated that they cared about her.” Mary shared that everyday in the classroom, the teachers “passed over her” when requesting students to respond. She explained, “The teachers never called on me, never expected me to answer, and never treated me as part of the class.” For Mary, the teachers’ actions made her feel “invisible” in the classroom. Consequently, she went quietly about doing only that

which was expected of her and nothing more because she felt that the teachers didn't want her to learn.

Mary felt that the teachers did not have a positive attitude toward teaching, "it was just a job." For Mary, if the teachers espoused a positive attitude, she would have been more inclined "to ask questions, seek help, and volunteer in class." However, because the teachers were not there to make a difference in her life, Mary was "hampered in achieving all she could have achieved in school."

According to Mary, when teachers care about you, you can feel it, you 'just know' and trust begins to build between the two of you. She said, "The trust would have allowed me not to be as passive as I would ordinarily be if there were no trust. I would have openly volunteered in class and my learning would have been enhanced."

How do Native American women in college indicate that the classroom environment impacted their K-12 learning?

For Mary, the K-12 classroom environment would have impacted her learning "if there had been teacher aides, if there had been cooperative learning, and if there had been different methods of teaching." According to Mary, teachers' aides are important for one-on-one instruction with students who need more time to process subject matter. Mary felt that she was often lost when the teacher introduced the lesson to the whole group without taking time for individual attention. Mary said, "Having the aides there in the classroom to explain what I did not understand would have helped me. I needed one-on-one, small group instruction in order to be successful."

Cooperative learning in the classroom would have helped because of her background. Mary said, "We do not compete against each other in our culture. Working cooperatively is who we are as a people. We don't try to outdo each other, instead, we try to help each other as much as possible." Mary felt that if the classroom had accommodated her style of learning, she would have enjoyed school and would have learned more.

According to Mary, different methods of teaching in the classroom were needed for her to learn a concept thoroughly. For example, Mary said, "If hands-on activities would have been a part of the classroom instruction, I would have excelled in my studies, instead of doing only average work. Hands-on activities would have provided me with the opportunity to use my artistic abilities to demonstrate a concept."

What teacher characteristics do Native American women in college indicate as having a positive impact on their K-12 learning?

Non-Discrimination. When Mary was a senior in high school and preparing to graduate, she was called into the counselor's office. The counselor told her that there was going to be a College Fair taking place in the gym. The counselor explained to Mary the purpose of a College Fair, and said that she shouldn't even think about attending any of the colleges because she would not be successful.

She said she did not listen to the counselor because her mother always said that "she could be anything she wanted to be and that no one should ever hold her back." As soon as she could leave the counselor's office, she went straight to the College Fair, signed up for the college of her choice, and was accepted for the fall semester.

Planning Lessons with Students. Mary said that her learning would have been enhanced if she had been able to plan other "options" to learning with the teacher. Options, such as individual reading conferences between she and the teacher, planning curriculum units together, and collaborating with the teacher to design academic games would have been helpful.

Respect for Cultural Differences. According to Mary, if a teacher has respect for cultural differences, the parents will be invited and welcomed into the classroom. The teacher would have them share cultural stories or work one-on-one with students or be a guest during a classroom presentation.

Mary also suggested teachers demonstrate respect for cultural differences by showing films addressing the culture, plays depicting the culture, art work displayed in the classroom, and integrated aspects of the culture into the curriculum, such as history, language arts, etc., whenever possible.

What resources do Native American women in college suggest that are available to assist K-12 teachers in developing these characteristics?

Literature. Mary recommended Thomas D. Peacock's and Linda M. Cleary's (1997), Collected Wisdom as a place which teachers can begin building an understanding of Native American culture. She stated that the book, Collected Wisdom, was written by an "Indian and a Non-Indian" who discuss the different perspectives held by both "white and non-white" teachers about different cultures which should benefit students in the end.

Community Elders. Mary felt that another way to develop these characteristics that impact learning would be from the elders in the community. She especially encouraged teachers to gain their respect and trust because once this happens, the elders will begin sharing cultural stories, customs and traditions, along with the values that are important to Native Americans. Mary noted that if the teacher is a good listener, the information that is shared is exactly what is needed to impact the student's learning in the classroom.

Native American Community College. Mary suggested that the teachers go to the Native American Community College and arrange to meet the elementary education majors and ask them if they would like to spend a few days a week assisting in the classroom. She said that the Native American students need positive role models and these preservice teachers would be excellent for the students and would also benefit the preservice teachers.

Analysis of Victoria's Interview

How do Native American women in college indicate that the teachers' attitudes impacted their K-12 learning?

According to Victoria, the K-12 teachers' attitudes would have impacted her learning if they had been "interested in her as a person, accepted her for who she was and encouraged her to want to learn." For Victoria, there was only one teacher who was interested in her as a person. All the other teachers "ignored her in class, were cold to her in the halls, and were intimidating to her every place else." Victoria said,

"The teachers were so mean, so strict, that I had a hard time relating to them as being 'human'."

Victoria said she could feel their "disdain" for who she was because of their facial expressions. They did not look at her with "kind eyes" nor did they use "soft voices" when they were talking to her. They showed by their actions that they were "not accepting" of the fact that "culturally" Victoria was "different" and needed "understanding" about who she was so that "she could be all she could be."

Victoria said that she would have been encouraged to learn if "just once she could have heard praise given to her by the teachers." All around her, she was hearing praise given to the other students, but never did she enjoy that feeling. Consequently, the feeling of discouragement filled her so much that she "stayed closed-up" which kept her learning at as a "minimum."

How do Native American women in college indicate that the classroom environment impacted their K-12 learning?

For Victoria, the K-12 classroom environment would have impacted her learning if "she was made to feel comfortable in the classroom, and if cooperative learning had been an option, rather than having only competitive learning." The classroom environment was uncomfortable because Victoria felt that she "did not matter." She felt this way because "she was not included in many of the different activities in the classroom, and she did not receive any praise for her academic efforts." The indifference toward her made her "anxious" about how well she was doing academically in school. Consequently, she noted that the "anxiety" she felt kept

her "closed-up" which prevented her from participating in school. In order to escape this "anxious" feeling, Victoria said, "I lost myself in literature. Through reading, I felt less lonely, less scared and experienced great joy. Reading helped me survive those years in the classroom."

According to Victoria, she would have preferred cooperative learning in the classroom. "When there is cooperative learning, there is as a sense of belonging which helps to build "security." noted Victoria. If she had been able to learn cooperatively, she would have felt safe to "open up" and share ideas, learn from others, and not be "anxious" about what was expected of her. In cooperative learning, Victoria felt that "you mattered," that "you belonged", that "you were needed to help complete a task."

What teacher characteristics do Native American women in college indicate a having as a positive impact on their K-12 learning?

Non-Discrimination. Victoria recalled that in a ninth grade history class where she was the only Native American student, the teacher began class talking about Native Americans and the Europeans. The teacher said that when the Europeans came to America to colonize the country, they met "diseased, filthy, savage-like people, whom they called "Indians." Because of the "Indians", disease spread so rapidly that the Europeans were "frightened about becoming annihilated." Victoria was "sick to her stomach" about what the teacher was saying because she knew that "it was not true."

A soon as possible after school, Victoria went home and told her mother what the teacher said in class. Her mother, who was a constant support of her education, went immediately to the principal's office for a meeting about the incident. Victoria

did not know what happened in the principal's office, but shortly after the meeting, she was transferred to another history class.

Planning With Students. According to Victoria, there was only one teacher who ever planned a lesson with her so that learning was more meaningful. In the seventh grade, the teacher met with Victoria individually in order to discover what history topic she would like to research in class for a unit project. Victoria chose to research the "history, traditions, festivals and the art work of her Native American culture." For Victoria, being able to choose a topic did three things for her: "it taught her how to research, gave her the opportunity to share her background with pride and it built her self-esteem among the students."

Adapt Instruction. For Victoria, if teachers are going to adapt instruction to meet the individual differences in learning among Native American students, they need to "slow down" when they are giving instructions. Victoria explained, "When a teacher is giving instruction, the teacher needs to explain what is expected through steps. At each step, the teacher ought to wait to be sure that the students all understand, and then proceed to the next step. Do not give Native American students all the instruction at once."

Cultural Respect. Victoria felt that if teachers had respect for the Native American culture, they would "ask questions" of the students about various aspects of the culture. When teachers demonstrate interest in the background of the students, a "bond" begins to build between the teacher and the students. This bond allows the Native American students to feel "accepted" and "respected" for who they are in the

classroom. For Victoria, "Once a student feels accepted and respected, security begins to take place in the student and learning is enhanced."

What resources do Native American women in college suggest that are available to assist K-12 teachers in developing these characteristics?

Literature. For Victoria, if a teacher is going to impact the learning of Native American students, the teacher will find the literature that addresses "how these students learn best, how positive reinforcement plays such a large role in their motivation to learn, how to gain their trust and respect, and how "humor" in the classroom will impact their learning." If the teacher "takes the responsibility to read about the things that impact the learning of Native American students, then both the teacher and the students benefit."

Native American Community. According to Victoria, if the teachers "honestly want the parents to come to the classroom," then they will be "visible in the community, visiting with the parents and elders and displaying interest in community activities." When mutual respect has been established then the teacher can slowly "begin to ask the parents to attend school functions, to be a guest in the classroom and participate in the parent-teacher conferences."

Analysis of Jolene's Interview

How do Native American women in college indicate that the teachers' attitudes impacted their K-12 learning?

For Jolene, the K-12 teachers' attitudes impacted her learning because they "protected her so that she wanted to learn, they built supportive relationships with her,

and for the most part, they accepted her.” Jolene said that the third grade teacher “treated all the students like her own.” For example, she said that the teacher would “give her the supplies she needed, would hug her when she felt down and protect her from ‘cross’ and ‘unkind’ teachers.” One time the teacher hugged Jolene when she had just been scolded by another teacher and said, “Do not yell at her, if you are going to talk to her, you will do so kindly.” Because the teacher cared and protected her, Jolene felt “inspired” and tried that much harder in the classroom.

The sixth grade teacher had a very supportive relationship with Jolene. At the beginning of the school year, the teacher gave her an aptitude test. Jolene did so well on the test that the teacher recommended to her and her mother that “she move right on to seventh grade.” However, Jolene’s mother did not want her “singled out” and felt that she was also too young for the seventh grade. Therefore, Jolene stayed in sixth grade where her “self-esteem and learning” increased through challenging work prepared by the teacher and through tutoring other students in the classroom.

According to Jolene, the fourth grade teacher was “accepting” and “loving” to her. Jolene said that the teacher accepted the fact that she was bright and continually encouraged her “to go beyond” what was expected of her. Jolene noted that this encouragement was always done in a “loving” manner because the teacher spoke in a “soft voice” and looked at her with “kind eyes.”

How do Native American women in college indicate that the classroom environment impacted their K-12 learning?

For Jolene, the K-12 classroom environment impacted her learning because "it was a safe place where she was encouraged to take chances, and a place where both competitive and cooperative learning was accommodated." In the fourth grade, Jolene was encouraged to try out for the spelling bee. A spelling bee is a contest between students to find out who is the "best speller" from the school. According to Jolene the spelling bee was acceptable to her because the classroom environment had always made her feel "safe to try due to the teacher's encouragement for everyone to be the best speller."

In the fifth grade, because her self-esteem had been enhanced through winning the spelling bee, she was "willing once again" to compete in a speed reading contest where she "read faster and comprehended more" than any of the other students in the classroom. She said that she once again enjoyed the competition because the classroom environment was a place of safety and encouragement for all to win, not just for her. According to Jolene, competing in the "lower grades" was "exciting and challenging", but when she entered high school, she preferred cooperative learning.

In high school, cooperative learning allowed her to experience the different "flavors" others added to an idea. One idea would "stretch" into many ideas when working cooperatively. Because of these many ideas expressed in the group, Jolene became "hungry" to learn even more which encouraged her to "read, read, and read."

What teacher characteristics do Native American women in college indicate as having a positive impact on their K-12 learning?

Non-Discrimination. In the ninth grade, Jolene and her family left Montana and moved to another state where she attended high school. When she first arrived in class, she began making friends with the students and was accepted by the teachers. Then a couple of weeks into school, Jolene was called to the teacher's desk. The teacher said to Jolene, "These papers on my desk say that you are Indian. Is this true?" Jolene answered "yes" and from that instant, she said that she could "feel the teacher dismissing her."

Jolene went back to her desk and from then on, the teacher gave her the assignments with little or no instruction. Jolene noted that the other students were encouraged to "ask questions or secure help," but not her.

According to Jolene, once the teacher knew about her heritage it seemed that everyone knew that she was an "Indian." After that, she found herself totally alone. She felt very isolated and shared the situation with her dad. He said, "I have always told you, it does not matter if anyone likes you, you are there to get your education!" Jolene knew that she had to make it work, so she escaped the loneliness and isolation through reading literature.

Students Treated Equally. For Jolene, the fifth grade was the place where she first experienced students being treated unequally. A male student was praised often and openly by the teacher in the classroom. The teacher's actions toward this student bothered Jolene because while both received the same grades on similar assignments, Jolene was not given the praise. So she decided to give "110%" so that maybe she could receive praise. She noted that only then did she receive "some small praise."

Encourage Learning. In a high school English class, Jolene was not working “up to her potential.” The teacher met with her after class in order to encourage her to work harder because she was so capable. Jolene said that just talking to her did not make an impact on her learning. If the teacher had “sat her down” and set up a time to work privately with Jolene, one-on-one, then the teacher would have impacted her learning. She suggested that when a teacher sees potential in a student, “do not just tell them” and “do not give up on them.”

Adapt Instruction. According to Jolene, if the teachers had integrated the Native American culture into all aspects of the curriculum, and then adapted the instruction to meet cultural differences in the classroom, she would have experienced more success in school. She suggested that adapting instruction meant to understand that Native American students learn best through “cooperative learning and hands-on activities.”

Cultural Knowledge. Jolene said that if a teacher is going to adapt instruction to meet cultural differences in the classroom, the teacher must have “knowledge about the culture.” For example, knowing that Native American students will not have “direct eye contact” with the teachers and knowing that Native American students do not respond to teachers talking in “loud voices” or to teachers “singling them out,” making them feel superior and inferior, are ways teachers can honor the culture. Jolene noted that once the Native American students are comfortable with the teacher and the environment is one of encouragement for all, then they will begin to start responding and raising their hands to participate in class.

What resources do Native American women in college suggest that are available to assist K-12 teachers in developing these characteristics?

Resources. In order for teachers to build background knowledge about the Native American culture, Jolene suggested taking the classes that the Native American Studies Department offers. She especially recommended Native American history, literature, and psychology. Two classes in particular that Jolene recommended were: Native Americans in Contemporary Society and Native American Law. She noted, "Native American Law was an eye-opener" for me because it "opened me up" to the history of the Native American people which I did not know that well."

Native American Community. Jolene suggested that teachers become involved in community service, such as, volunteering at a youth center. When teachers are willing to share their time with the students, there is a real "connection" that takes place between teachers, the students, and the community.

According to Jolene, "visiting is done in Indian country." If the teacher wants a successful parent-teacher relationship, the teacher will be "visible" in the community "visiting" with the parents. For the teacher, at first "visiting" is "listening", then once the parents feel that a teacher understands and accepts the culture, dialogue begins to take place between the teacher and the parents.

Analysis of Lynn's Interview.

How do Native American women in college indicate that the teachers' attitudes impacted their K-12 learning?

According to Lynn, the K-12 teachers' attitudes would have impacted her learning if they "had cared and were concerned about her learning and used positive

reinforcement with her." Lynn said, "I hated school because day after day, teachers demonstrated to me that they did not care nor were they concerned about my learning." For example, Lynn said that the teachers "ignored her in class, stood with their backs to her when instructing, and never sought her out or tried to contact her in order to help her learn better."

She said that since she was "ignored" by the teachers and really did not "matter," it discouraged her from "putting forth the effort" needed for successful learning. Lynn felt that the expectations of her in class were so low that "she probably would have passed without studying." Consequently, Lynn said that she did not "work up to her potential and the opportunity for learning was diminished."

Instead of being ignored, if Lynn had been given encouragement through positive reinforcement, such as, privately being praised, she would have been inclined to "put forth the effort" in her studies. For Lynn, positive reinforcement would have increased her self-esteem if she knew that she had "pleased the teachers, and she would have been "open" to try harder in her studies.

How do Native American women in college indicate that the classroom environment impacted their K-12 learning?

The K-12 classroom environment would have impacted Lynn's learning if it had been a place where "nurturing and sensitivity were employed", and a place where "cooperative learning and hands-on activities were a major part of the classroom." According to Lynn, "nothing effects learning more than the classroom environment." Subsequently, when she experienced a "hostile" environment, she was "subtly" told

that she was not in a nurturing environment where she would succeed because the teachers were sensitive to her needs.

For Lynn, implementing cooperative learning into the classroom environment would have demonstrated to her that the teachers cared more about the "process" of learning, rather than the "product." Lynn explained, "When teachers are concerned with the process of learning, it tells me that they are interested in the 'journey' taken to truly understand the concept, rather than 'memorizing' an acceptable answer. The journey would have been enhanced through cooperative learning because of the opportunity to 'share' ideas pertinent to the understanding of the concept."

According to Lynn, she is a "visually stimulated" learner; therefore, "hands-on" activities in the classroom would have impacted her learning considerably. She noted that whenever she needs to "assemble anything," she begins by "looking" at how the parts are constructed to fit together, rather than "reading" how the parts fit together.

What teacher characteristics do Native American women in college indicate as having a positive impact on their K-12 learning?

Non-Discrimination. In school, according to Lynn, there was not equal treatment in the classroom between males and females. For example, she said that when the "girls" answered the teacher, the teacher said, "That's good" or "That's right", but when the "boys" answered, the teacher responded differently to them. The teacher would say, "That's really good. Could you expand on that idea? Could you

think of another way of looking at that idea?" Lynn said that the time spent with the male students was "significantly" higher than with the female students.

Planning With Students. For Lynn, if teachers had planned lessons with her, they would have become "aware" of how she learned best, and in this way, the impact on her learning would have been substantial. She said that if teachers are going to become aware of her learning style, then they have to "listen to her, question her, and then give her ownership of her learning style so that she can succeed with it." However, according to Lynn, regardless if the teachers planned with her or not, she had "to make it work in school" because of her grandmother's expectations of her.

Cultural Knowledge. According to Lynn, there is a "beautifully illustrated" book called Brother Sky, Sister Moon that talks about Chief Seattle, who lived in 1851, but it is "totally inappropriate." She said that it is inappropriate because the author, Susan Jeffers, wrote about inaccurate information about a "coastal Indian." One inaccuracy was that the author described Chief Seattle as a strong warrior, wearing buckskin and a war bonnet, and riding a horse. Lynn said that the author was describing "plains Indians" not a "coastal Indian", Chief Seattle.

Lynn said that if teachers want cultural knowledge, they must be "cautious" about these types of books that "lump all Indians into one -- the plains Indians." The teacher must be responsible to research "critically" in order to come away with accurate information about a "particular Indian tribe." There are many "accurate and informative books" about Native Americans, and "it is up to the teacher to locate the

books that accurately inform them about the Native American students in their classroom."

Respect for Cultural Differences. For Lynn, if teachers had respect for cultural differences in learning, they would "privately ask questions of the students, such as, how they prefer to learn, and would hands-on activities be beneficial?" She said that too often, teachers assume that they have all the answers, that they are "all-knowing" which "turns off" students because it tells them the teacher is "closed-minded." Instead, if the teachers were "curious" and wanted to be "learners", then students felt "open" to "listening" to them.

What resources do Native American women in college suggest that are available to assist K-12 teachers in developing these characteristics?

Native American Community. According to Lynn, the elders of the community and the Tribal Council members are the best source for helping teachers teach Native American students in the classroom. She said to go to either one of these groups and say, "Here I am, I am a white teacher and I need your help if I am going to impact the learning of the students in my classroom." She said that this immediately tells them that "you respect them and want what is best for their children." The initiative "opens up the lines of communication" between the teacher, the students and the community. Lynn noted that once "the lines of communication are open, half the battle of teaching is done."

Analysis of Nicole's Interview

How do Native American women in college indicate that the teachers' attitudes impacted their K-12 learning?

According to Nicole, the K-12 teachers' attitudes impacted her learning through "caring that she learned, being warm and understanding so that she felt safe to learn, and encouraged her to learn." Nicole said, "I felt that the teachers cared if I understood the lesson because they were willing to explain what was expected one more time." Nicole felt when the teachers responded to her so positively, it encouraged her learning. She shared that it was very comforting to know that the teachers thought that she "mattered" enough to take extra time for her.

For Nicole, when the teachers were warm and understanding, it made her feel "safe" because she knew that the teachers were not going to embarrass her in class. For example, Nicole was struggling in math and instead of calling on her, which would have embarrassed her, the teacher quietly let her know that she was welcome to come after school for individual help. According to Nicole, the teacher's "invitation" to learn after school began her first real understanding of math.

In school, Nicole said that her "hand was always raised" because she was so "eager" to share what she learned. The teachers recognized her need to share her knowledge, so they encouraged her by calling on her often, assigning reports to be given in class, and allowing her to choose a subject to research, and then share the "findings" with the class.

How do Native American women in college indicate that the classroom environment impacted their K-12 learning?

Nicole's K-12 classroom environment would have impacted her learning more if it had separate "areas" where students could learn independently, where cooperative, as well as individual learning was accommodated." The separate "areas" would have been a chance for Nicole to "think on her own." Nicole explained that too often in the classroom, there wasn't enough time or opportunity to think things through on her own in order to discover "what she really learned and what she thought about it."

She also suggested an area where "hands-on" activities would be available. This area would contain materials, such as clay, paints, brushes, paper, books, whatever was needed so that she would be able to "visually" demonstrate her knowledge of the subject to the teacher.

According to Nicole, cooperative learning was beneficial to her because "everybody had input with different perspectives," but she also needed time for individual learning. For example, in a math class, she was working in a cooperative group and found herself "falling behind" the other students, so she decided to ask the teacher for individual help. She said, "Once I was able to think through the math on my own, with the teacher's help, I began to understand and then when I went back to the group, I became a contributor."

What teacher characteristics do Native American women in college indicate as having a positive impact on their K-12 learning?

Treating Students Equally. For Nicole, learning about "cars" intrigued her so much that she decided to take Shop in high school. According to Nicole, she was "the

only girl taking Shop that semester.” When she arrived in class, the non-verbal messages “shouted” to her that Shop was for males.

Consequently, Nicole went quietly about “doing her projects” and was soon “scoring higher” on them than the males scored on their projects. “But, only when my car went faster than the guys’ cars, was I treated as an equal,” stated Nicole. She said that she should have been treated “as an equal” from the beginning, instead of having to “prove herself” first. However, learning for Nicole would have happened in any situation because her parents’ expectations of her were so high.

Demonstrate Cultural Respect. When Nicole attended high school in Texas, teachers demonstrated respect for all cultures. The school demonstrated respect through setting aside special weeks in school for celebrating the different cultures. For example, Native American Week was celebrated by displaying posters on the walls around the gym, with some of the customs being depicted in art that lined the halls, and with the librarian sharing stories and having books available on the Native American culture.

During Native American Week, Nicole’s mother, who was always eager to participate in Nicole’s education, was invited to be a part of the celebration. For her part, she chose to perform the “fancy” dance in full regalia, which is an important cultural activity during a festival. After the dance performance, her mother served various kinds of foods that are typically enjoyed at a festival celebration.

According to Nicole, the years spent in that Texas high school, where she was recognized and appreciated for who she was, impacted her self-esteem significantly.

Subsequently, with a strong self-esteem in place, Nicole's confidence grew, and she became a more successful learner.

Student-Teacher Relationship. According to Nicole, an English teacher took a "special" interest in her learning because Nicole "put so much effort" into her work. The teacher prepared lists of vocabulary words with the meanings for Nicole to take home and study. The teacher said that if Nicole studied nightly, it would improve her English. Consequently, because of the "special" interest shown to Nicole by the teacher, her confidence emerged, along with her learning of English.

What resources do Native American women in college suggest that are available to assist K-12 teachers in developing these characteristics?

Resources. For Nicole, the best way for a teacher to impact learning of Native American students is through the student. Nicole said that teachers need to really communicate with the students in order to "hear" what is important to them. She said that if the teacher is "truly" listening, not always talking, the student will begin to "open-up" and together they can plan learning activities that are meaningful to the students.

Secondly, the best way a teacher can impact learning for Native American students is through the Native American community. Nicole said that a teacher who participates in community activities is saying to its members that "they want to belong." The community, as a whole, will respect this teacher, and over time, this teacher-community relationship will benefit the students.

Nomothetic Analysis

For this study, nomothetic analysis involved examining all of the interviews to see what patterns existed among them. As I looked at the interviews for commonalities, the patterns derived from this study's four research questions continued to emerge. The participants in this study expressed many similar ideas about their K-12 teachers' attitudes, the K-12 classroom environment, K-12 teacher characteristics, and K-12 teacher resources. I examined each of these patterns for analogous ideas. At the same time, I looked for concepts from the interviews that were discrepant, or anomalous, in contrast to those which were most frequently discussed.

Generally speaking, the women who were interviewed shared many of the same perceptions about their K-12 teachers' attitudes, the K-12 classroom environment, K-12 teacher characteristics, and K-12 teacher resources and the impact on learning. In fact, many of the women's perceptions that emerged agreed with the research.

K-12 Teachers' Attitudes

Half of the Native American women perceived their K-12 teachers' attitudes as having a negative impact on learning, while the other half perceived their K-12 teachers' attitudes as having a positive impact on learning. An attitude that women perceived as negative was when educators did not care if they learned in school. Two women experienced being ignored in class and not being expected to answer or participate in class. Two other women indicated that this negative attitude of not caring was felt because the teachers were so strict, so cold and so indifferent to them.

A negative attitude that the women experienced was when their teachers did not encourage them to learn in class. Two women said that they would have been encouraged to learn if their teachers had just praised them for their efforts. One woman felt that if the teachers' expectations would have been higher, she would have been encouraged to work up to her potential.

An attitude of disdain for their Native American background was especially hurtful for two women. For one woman, this attitude was demonstrated through facial expressions. The teachers never looked at her with "kind eyes." For another, the teachers let her know that "Indians were dirty" and that "Indians were savages."

However, there were four women who perceived that their teachers' attitudes positively affected their learning. Supportive relationships with their teachers occurred for two of these women. These relationships were built through tutoring other students in the classroom who needed extra help at the request of the teachers. A third woman noted that filing papers, collecting the homework, and being helpful in other ways, built a supportive relationship with her teacher. Another woman had success in math because she knew she was welcome to ask questions of the teacher who was warm and understanding.

These same four women experienced a caring attitude from their teachers in the classroom. One woman shared that a teacher treated all the students like family. She said that if she needed supplies, a hug, or protection, the teacher was there for her. Another woman felt good about herself because the teacher stepped in when other students were being unfair to her. Two women experienced a caring attitude when it

came to understanding a concept because their teachers took the time to explain it clearly to them.

K-12 Classroom Environment

When discussing the K-12 classroom environment, five women perceived that it would have impacted their learning if cooperative learning had been accommodated. Two women preferred cooperative learning because then no one is achieving individually and everyone is working together to reach a goal. Three other women preferred cooperative learning because everybody has input and because of the input, so many other ideas are expressed and considered.

Hands-on activities in the classroom were suggested by two women in order to impact learning. One woman preferred to demonstrate her knowledge through hands-on activities. Another said that she was a "visual" learner and hands-on activities helped her to see and then understand.

An environment that nurtured and made students feel comfortable would have impacted three of the women's learning. One woman shared that she was uncomfortable in the classroom because she was not included in many of the activities which caused her to feel anxious about learning. Another said that she experienced a hostile environment where the teachers were not sensitive to her needs. Lastly, one woman said that she never felt safe and secure because the teachers let her know that who she was was not important.

The K-12 environment did impact the learning of three women by making school a comfortable place, accommodating learning styles and encouraging learning. One woman found the classroom environment comfortable because of the freedom allowed her. One found that being able to participate in cooperative learning gave her the chance to hear and share many different ideas with others. Two women found the classroom environment as an encouraging place to learn because the teachers developed individualized activities for students.

K-12 Teacher Characteristics

Non-Discrimination. Practicing non-discrimination in the classroom is a K-12 teacher characteristic Native American women perceived that would have impacted their learning. Five women experienced discrimination in one form or another in school. Two experienced discrimination in the form of rejection from the teacher simply because they were Native American. One woman was discriminated against in math because she was female and Native American. Another woman received racist comments from the teacher in the classroom.

Planning Lessons with Students. Planning lessons with students was another K-12 teacher characteristic that Native American women perceived would impact learning. Two women suggested that if they had been given the opportunity to individually plan with the teacher about their interest in a certain area, learning would have been enhanced. One woman said that if the teacher had planned lessons with her, the teacher would have had to listen in order to discover how she learned best. Another woman shared that her math skills would have been stronger if the teacher had

planned lessons with her. Still another said that she did plan lessons with her teachers, and her self-esteem grew and impacted her learning.

Cultural Knowledge. The K-12 teacher characteristic that almost all of the Native American women perceived would have impacted learning was cultural knowledge. A majority of the women said that in order for teachers to understand, honor, appreciate and then implement Native American values, customs and history into the curriculum, the teachers had to have read accurate information about Native Americans.

Adapting Instruction. Adapting instruction is yet another K-12 teacher characteristic that Native American women perceived as having an impact on learning. One woman said that when giving instructions, teachers need to slow down and explain what is expected of the student through steps. Another woman said that adapting instruction would have meant that the teacher understood that she learned best through cooperative learning. Still another woman stated that adapting instruction would have meant to bring in guests that shared information about her culture. Lastly, one reported that adapting instruction meant to accept her as a Native American and not force her to be a different learner.

Treating Students Equally. When Native American women were discussing K-12 teacher characteristics, they perceived that treating students equally impacted learning. Nearly half of the women said that males were praised more often and given more attention and preference in the classroom. One woman shared that a male was considered to be a better leader than the females, even when the students pointed this

out to the teacher. Another related that when she entered a male domain in school, she had to work harder and produce better than the males in order to be accepted.

Encouraged to Learn. For Native American women, encouraging learning would be another K-12 favorable teacher characteristic. One woman would have appreciated being encouraged to read more outside the classroom. Another woman would have been encouraged to learn if the teacher had worked more one-on-one with her. And yet another indicated that she would have been encouraged to learn if the teacher's expectations would have been higher.

Cultural Respect. An important K-12 teacher characteristic that Native American women perceived as having an impact on learning was respect for the culture. For one woman, respect for the culture would have been to privately ask questions of the students about their customs and traditions and ask them if they would be comfortable sharing the information. According to another, she did experience teachers respecting the culture when they scheduled time during the year to celebrate the customs, the art, and the traditions of her culture.

Generally speaking, the women reported that if a teacher has cultural respect, that teacher will not single out Native American students to either make them feel superior or inferior. However, they said that if students are singled out to be of service to the teacher, then the students are comfortable because they are being helpful. In addition, they said that Native American students are also comfortable with praise when other students in the classroom are also being praised at the same time.

K-12 Teacher Resources

Literature. Native American women perceived that reading literature about Native Americans is an important resource for developing K-12 teacher characteristics that impact learning. Two Native American women suggested reading the book, Collective Wisdom (Peacock & Cleary, 1991). While another woman also suggested this, she included another book called, Surviving in Two Worlds (Crozier-Hogle, 1997). Still another suggested researching the literature that addresses how Native American students learn best, how to gain their trust, and how important humor is to them. Finally, building a background through research pertaining to the particular culture in which the teachers are teaching was suggested by another woman.

Native American Community. A very strong feeling about the Native American community as a resource for developing K-12 teacher characteristics impacting learning was perceived by Native American women. Many women said that being involved in the community through volunteering, through visiting, through participating in community activities are ways that the teacher begins to build a rapport with the students, the parents, and the other members of the community. According to two women, asking questions of the elders about their culture demonstrated respect which opens up the lines of communication.

College. For Native American women, varied cultural experiences in college were perceived as developing K-12 teacher characteristics that impact learning. Preservice teachers could be expected to take an internship that exposes them to many different cultures. Two suggested taking classes or seminars in college where Native

American professors are available to discuss the culture. One woman suggested that teachers meet and ask Native American elementary education majors in college to volunteer some of their time in the classroom in order for Native American students to have a positive role model.

Summary

Some of the women's perceptions were that the teachers' attitudes and classroom environment impacted their K-12 learning because they experienced caring, support, comfort and respect. For the remaining women in this study, the teachers' attitudes and classroom environment would have impacted their K-12 learning if they had experienced caring, support, comfort and respect.

In the area of the K-12 teacher characteristics impacting learning, three stood out: (1) no teacher discrimination, (2) teachers having cultural knowledge, and (3) teachers treating students equally. Other K-12 teacher characteristics that were perceived as important for learning were planning lessons with students, adapting instruction, respecting the culture, and encouraging students.

In recommending K-12 teacher resources for developing the characteristics that impact learning, most of the women suggested reading the literature and being involved in the Native American community. Others recommended college classes or seminars where teachers can learn first hand about the culture from Native American professors. Teachers should be encouraged to seek out Native American elementary education majors to act as role models in their classrooms.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Introduction

This study focused on the perceptions of Native American women concerning the impact of the teachers' attitudes and classroom environment on their K-12 learning. I interviewed eight Native American women attending an institution of higher learning about their perceptions pertaining to the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on their K-12 learning and related areas.

I bring this study to completion with the discussion of a number of issues. First, I address the relationship of Maslow's and Rogers' theories about a humanistic orientation to learning to the research data I collected. Second, I examine selected current and past literature in relation to the research findings on the subject of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on K-12 learning. Third, I discuss conclusions derived from the study. Fourth, I relate implications of the research results to educational practice. Lastly, I make recommendations for further research of the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on K-12 learning for Native American women.

Addressing Theoretical Support

The principle theoretical ideas that underlined this study are those of Maslow and Rogers, which were discussed in detail in Chapter 2. A brief review of these concepts endorsed by Maslow and Rogers makes a connection between theory and the research. Then I discuss each theoretical concept in more detail and relate it to what can be learned from the study by the reader.

Maslow's (1970) theory of human motivation is based on a hierarchy of needs with self-actualization being prominent. For self-actualization to be fulfilled, Maslow suggested that people in society need "a stable, firmly-based, high evaluation for self-respect and self-esteem, and for the esteem of others."

Rogers (Nye, 1996) advocated that teachers be facilitators of learning, providing an atmosphere of freedom and support of individual pursuits. Rogers (1980) viewed the facilitating teacher as having the same attitudes as the effective therapist, in other words one who is genuine, accepting and empathic.

Maslow: K-12 Teachers' Attitudes and the Classroom Environment and self-esteem and the esteem of others

In discussing their *K-12 teachers' attitudes*, all of the Native American women in college emphasized that their K-12 teachers' attitudes of caring and supporting would impact learning. However, only four of the eight women experienced a positive impact on learning from their teachers' attitudes. These positive attitudes helped the women in college to experience healthy self-esteem. Some of the reasons women gave for

achieving self-esteem and the esteem of their teachers included being able to tutor other students who needed help, being respected as an individual, and knowing she mattered to the teachers.

When it came to discussing the *K-12 classroom environment*, all talked about the impact of it, only some of the women experienced an environment that impacted learning in a positive manner. Their perceptions were that the classroom environment was comfortable, accommodating, and encouraging which enhanced their self-esteem and their learning. Some of the reasons they gave for the classroom environment enhancing their learning and their self-esteem included freedom in the classroom, cooperative learning and having individualized activities available.

Another area of significance included the *K-12 teacher characteristics*. Non-discrimination in the classroom was perceived as a characteristic that promoted a stable environment. Increasing self-esteem through Native American cultural knowledge was seen as a vital characteristic also. Treating students equally in the classroom was mentioned as a way teachers could demonstrate their esteem for the students. These characteristics coincide with Maslow's theory of human motivation.

K-12 teacher resources were recommended for helping teachers develop these characteristics. Some women who were interviewed suggested books that they perceived would significantly assist teachers in developing characteristics that impact learning. Still others who were interviewed perceived that the Native American community was a viable source of information.

Rogers: K-12 Teachers' Attitudes and the Classroom Environment and accepting, understanding and facilitating learning

The interviewed women, when discussing *their K-12 teachers' attitudes* perceived teacher acceptance and understanding as being critical to learning. These attitudes coincide with Rogers' Client-Centered Therapy. With these teacher attitudes in place, they indicated that then the opportunities for their learning opened up.

The women perceived that the *K-12 classroom environment* of cooperative learning would have allowed them the freedom to learn through the pursuit of ideas that others brought to a discussion and some experienced it. Those who experienced this type of environment suggested that it demonstrated to them that their teachers were truly facilitators of learning because they honored the need for social interaction that cooperative learning provided.

In the area of *K-12 teacher characteristics*, the women said that practicing non-discrimination in the classroom made them feel accepted, which in turn, produced feelings of belonging. These ideas coincide with both Maslow's and Rogers' theories of humanistic orientation to learning. Another teacher characteristic that demonstrated teacher acceptance was treating students equally. In addition, almost all of the women agreed that an important characteristic that leads to understanding of Native Americans is cultural knowledge. Cultural knowledge produces awareness, creates sensitivity, and encourages openness to issues unfamiliar to the non-Native American teachers.

The interviewed women generally perceived that the *K-12 teacher resources* for developing teacher characteristics included reading the literature and participating in

the Native American community. Their perceptions were that the literature such as Collective Wisdom (Peacock & Cleary, 1997) and Surviving in Two Worlds (Crozier-Hogle, 1997) would offer an understanding of Native Americans and the Native American community would offer additional information.

Findings in Relation to the Literature

The patterns that emerged in the course of this analysis complement the review of literature explicated earlier in this document. To review, these patterns involved K-12 teachers' attitudes, K-12 classroom environment, K-12 teacher characteristics, and K-12 teacher resources. The following section examines research data and compares and contrasts the literature in regard to each pattern that emerged.

K-12 Teachers' Attitudes

In discussing the impact of their K-12 teachers' attitudes on learning, women generally perceived that caring about the individual was vital. This was affirmed by Gilliland (1986), who asserted that the teachers' attitudes toward Native American students is critical to their success in school. He suggested that a teacher who can demonstrate interest and respect for Native American students is on the way to succoring their success in the classroom. Dorrell (1991) suggested that if teachers are not caring, students will continue to be afraid to take risks and never learn, for learning requires some risk taking.

The women spoke of the importance of a teacher's supportive relationship and how it influenced their learning. Radd (1994) agreed that a supportive teacher-student relationship enhanced the development and growth of the student. These college students remarked that the relationship with their teachers made them feel that they mattered, were worth something and were capable students. Also, Hedelin and Sjoberg (1985) said that teachers who get to know their students personally make the students feel more attached and secure.

Along with these K-12 teachers' attitudes, women perceived teacher acceptance as having an impact on learning. McCarthy (1991) added an additional element, teacher sensitivity, as a necessity before a classroom can become a center of cultural understanding and acceptance.

K-12 Classroom Environment

The emphasis on cooperative learning in the classroom was repeatedly perceived by those who were interviewed. Their perceptions of working cooperatively reflects who they are as a people because they do not compete against each other in their culture, nor are they comfortable being singled out, by being made to feel superior or inferior. Bowker (1993) affirmed that Native American females are predisposed to learning cooperatively in groups due to their ethnic values. If the female is placed as the center of attention or singled out in the classroom, she will withdraw. Kagan (1989), Sharan and Sharan (1992), Smulyan (1984) and Voorhees (1994) concurred with the notion that cooperative learning is beneficial to females.

In discussing the K-12 classroom environment, women generally perceived that feeling comfortable is critical and does impact learning. Prosise (1995) suggested that in classrooms where interaction between students is characterized as open, honest and positive, the classroom climate is conducive to learning. Such classrooms offer a comfortable environment in which students are free to focus on instruction and learning rather than on basic behavior needs. In addition, Finn (1989) echoed that students who feel comfortable and accepted in school are likely to become more involved and more than likely, this involvement may in turn, lead to greater achievement.

K-12 Teacher Characteristics

During the course of the interviews, women perceived non-discriminatory behavior on the part of the teacher as essential to learning. Greenberg (1992) suggested that the first step in building self-esteem is to create a classroom where all students are valued and for the teacher to be aware of being culturally negative. Van Ness (1995) agreed when he said that the self-esteem of all learners, those progressing well, those underachieving, and those culturally different, can be enhanced when it is clear that persons or individuals have the highest value in the classroom.

From the interviews, women held the opinion that adapting instruction was an important characteristic impacting learning. Gilliland (1986) observed that teachers often refer to Native American students as being academically disadvantaged. He pointed out that the disadvantage might only be the fact that some teachers do not know the culture or that teachers lack the understanding to adapt instruction in order to meet

the needs of culturally different students. O'Hara (1997) said that the facilitation of significant learning depends upon the attitudinal qualities, respect and trust and that these must exist from teachers if they are to impact the learning of culturally different students.

Along with adapting instruction, women perceived that treating students equally can powerfully impact learning. Mann (1994) noted that educators have known for more than a decade that gender discrimination is rife in America's classrooms and that it has damaging effects on females. This idea is confirmed by a number of authors, including Ellis (1993); Gilligan (1989); Redpath and Claire (1989); and Sandler and Hoffman (1992).

The Sadkers (Funk, 1993) showed that both female and male teachers are guilty of classroom behaviors that discriminate against females. They reported that females start school with higher test scores than males but trail them by fifty-seven points when they take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) in high school. The net effect that results after years in such classrooms is that females learned to doubt their ability, creativity and importance.

Another characteristic that women perceived as affecting their learning was being able to plan lessons with the teachers. They indicated a partnership between the teacher and learners resulted in greater achievement. Tharp (1997) suggested that work which was carried out collaboratively for a common objective and the discourse that accompanied the process contributed to the highest level of academic achievement, especially when the teachers and the students do not share the same background.

The women who were interviewed perceived cultural knowledge as a characteristic that would impact learning. Bennett (1997) showed that Native American students learn by doing and that they learn in stages. Fraser (1996) said that Native American students succeed when there is one-on-one tutoring, flexibility of time for instruction, and a climate of trust and respect. Chiang (1993) said that important nonverbal behaviors for teachers to understand and be sensitive to included eye contact, distance, time and taboos.

K-12 Teacher Resources

Women perceived that developing a positive relationship with the Native American community was one way teachers could begin to impact the learning of Native American students. Bowker (1993) agreed with these women. Bowker recommended forming a community task force on at-risk students to determine how the community can help the schools in meeting students' needs. She also suggested a redesigning of school district policies so that teachers, parents, and students work together to keep students in school. Bowker further suggested an "Adopt-a-Student" program among faculty, elders, and other responsible Native American community people to ensure students' success in school.

Conclusions

At the onset of this document, there were three areas that guided my research while working with Native American college women. These areas were:

1. To analyze the impact the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment had on the K-12 learning of Native American women.
2. To discover ideas and perceptions that Native American women have about teacher characteristics and resources that impacted their K-12 learning.
3. To conclude, based on the findings of the research, whether I could contribute to a grounded theory concerning the impact that teachers' attitudes and classroom environment had on K-12 academic performances of Native American females.

The evidence supported the first two areas. The evidence was not strong enough to contribute to a grounded theory concerning the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on K-12 academic performance of Native American females. The reason for this conclusion will be discussed in the K-12 teachers' attitudes and the following section.

Area 1: Their K-12 Teachers Attitudes and the Classroom Environment

My first undertaking was to analyze the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on the K-12 learning of Native American women. These women shared examples of their teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment from their K-12 experiences. Their responses are detailed in Chapter 3.

Typically K-12 teachers' attitudes that women mentioned included caring, supporting, accepting, encouraging and sensitive attitudes. They also mentioned that

cooperative learning needed to be accommodated in the classroom environment. Some women experienced these K-12 teachers' attitudes and this type of learning in the classroom environment and it had a positive effect on learning. Other women did not experience these attitudes or this type of learning in the classroom environment and it had a negative effect on learning.

The women who experienced their K-12 teachers' caring, supporting, accepting, encouraging and sensitive attitudes and who participated in cooperative learning groups in the classroom perceived that these experiences impacted their learning in a memorable way. This finding confirms the ideas of Bowker (1993), Dorrell (1991), Gilliland (1986), Hedeline and Sjoberg (1995), and McCarthy (1991), who posited that caring, supporting, accepting, encouraging and sensitive responses plus a cooperative learning environment are critical to student success, especially for Native American students.

The two findings of this research were unexpected. The literature lead me to suspect that the reason these Native American women were in college was because they must have experienced positive K-12 teachers' attitudes and classroom environments that were especially conducive for their learning. Instead, I found only four of the eight women whose learning was impacted positively by their K-12 teachers' attitudes and only three of the eight, whose learning were impacted by a supportive classroom environment.

Secondly, according to the interviews, the stronger influence on learning for all of the eight women was a parent or grandparent. The women stated that a father,

mother or grandmother expected them to get an education. So regardless of their K-12 teachers' attitudes or the classroom environment, which was nevertheless important to them, the expectations from home outweighed anything else they encountered in school.

Area 2: Perceptions about K-12 Teacher Characteristics and K-12 Teacher Resources.

The second area of my study concerned discovering perceptions that women have about teacher characteristics and teacher resources impacting their K-12 learning. The women I interviewed perceived that having cultural knowledge about Native Americans would positively impact learning. Having cultural knowledge about their students enables teachers to know how Native American students learn best and how teachers can accommodate that learning.

Another characteristic that impacted learning was non-discriminatory action by teachers. When teachers are non-discriminatory in the classroom, then students feel accepted and valued for who they are as a person. Greenberg (1992) agreed with this finding.

The participants in the study identified learning from literature and the Native American community as valuable teacher resources. Books, such as Collective Wisdom (Peacock & Cleary, 1997) and Surviving in Two Worlds (Crozier-Hogle, 1997) were recommended by the women in college for helping teachers gain insight into the Native American culture.

Asking questions of the elders in the Native American community was another resource that the women suggested for K-12 teachers. Also, teachers would be welcome to participate in Native American community cultural activities. Participating in such cultural activities served two purposes: (1) learning about the culture, and (2) demonstrating respect for the culture. These women saw the community as a viable resource which would benefit both teachers and students.

Area 3: Contribution to Grounded Theory

This study's design focused on the possibility of contributing to the development of grounded theory of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment which impact the K-12 learning of Native American women in college. To reiterate, grounded theory is discovered from a comparative analysis of data. This type of analysis was conducted in this study.

The evidence did not support a contribution of grounded theory of the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on the K-12 learning of Native American women in college. There is a contribution which this research might make to the grounded theory of parental expectations and their child's success in school. According to Sukdeep Gill's and Arthur Reynold's (1996) study, Role of Parent Expectation in the School and Success of At-Risk Children, the results supported the view that parental expectations and children's perceptions of these expectations play a critical role in children's school success. Parental expectations, as well as children's perceptions of these expectations more significantly correlated to children's school

success. Kimberly Akimoff's (1996) study, Parental Involvement: An Essential Ingredient for Success in School, also found that parental involvement is an essential ingredient for a child's success in school. Schools and homes working together will help the child achieve optimum school success and perform better both academically and socially. Finally, Nancy Carey's and Elizabeth Farris' (1996) study, Parents and Schools: Partners in Student Learning, concluded that when parents are involved in their children's learning, children earn higher grades and test scores, and they stay in school longer. The most significant ways parents influenced their child's learning were through attitudes and values that demonstrated the importance of education.

This study found and literature supports a relationship between parent's expectations and their child's success in school. To test and verify this assertion, further study of other students from varied social and cultural backgrounds is necessary.

Summary

Through the process of this research, the evidence leads me to conclude that a parent or grandparent is important to the learning of Native American females. This research has also clarified my understanding of the necessity for K-12 teacher characteristics that specifically enhance the learning of students from cultural backgrounds different from their teachers. Although the evidence did not contribute to a grounded theory of the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on K-12 learning of Native American women in college, the evidence

indicated a contribution to grounded theory that explains -- *parental involvement and students' success in school*.

Implications for Educational Practice

This study revealed a number of implications for educational practice. Positive teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment are critical so that K-12 learning may take place for each and every student regardless of cultural background. Hafner's (1990) report compared ethnic students' attitudes toward teachers found few Native American students stating they felt teachers were truly interested in them, nor did they feel that their teachers listened to them. Coladarci (1983) interviewed forty-six Native American students who had dropped out of school in Montana. Coladarci found that the female drop-outs reported more frequently than males that their teachers did not care about them.

This study supported these authors' assertions. Half of the women's perceptions were that their K-12 teachers' attitudes demonstrated that they were not important nor did these women feel that their teachers listened to them. They used words such as "cold, strict, mean, intimidating and threatening" when discussing teachers' attitudes. Even though some of these women experienced negative teachers' attitudes, they succeeded in school because of a parent's or a grandparent's expectations of them.

Sadker and Sadker (1994) reported that females are often treated like they are invisible in the classroom which makes them think teachers do not care. The perceptions of three of the eight women agreed with the Sadkers (1994) using

expressions such as "ignored, dismissed, passed over, a nuisance, and did not matter" to demonstrate the less than positive K-12 classroom environment they had encountered. However, expectations from home outweighed any negative classroom environment these women encountered.

Sharan and Sharan (1992) placed emphasis on cooperative learning in the classroom which helped students develop the skills necessary to experience person-to-person interaction, and to experience a feeling of connection to others. Nevertheless, Voorhees (1994) expressed that classroom practitioners continue to use traditional teaching methods and foster competition rather than engaging students in cooperative learning activities. Johnson, Johnson, and Stanne (1986) believed that cooperative learning seems to be more congenial to all female learning styles than is the traditional instructional format. The majority of women who were interviewed concurred with such phrases as "it provides a sense of belonging, everybody has input with different perspectives, helping each other as much as possible, and no one is being singled out" when describing cooperative learning in the classroom.

Math was an area where many women perceived that they were discriminated against. The adage "math is not for girls" (Schwartz & Hanna, 1992) squelched some females' interest in math. Malcolm (1984) suggested that despite the research addressing this issue, females and minorities have not been encouraged to take courses in math, science and computer education. The women who responded to the interviews agreed and suggested that a non-discriminatory K-12 teacher would be an asset for beginning to change this math pattern for females.

In the area of other K-12 teacher characteristics, many women perceived that adapting instruction, having Native American cultural knowledge and treating students equally would be as beneficial to teachers as to the students. They said that it would be beneficial to both because when the Native American students witness their teachers adapting instruction, having cultural knowledge, and treating students equally, they felt respected. This respect is then transferred to the teacher in the form of behavior that impacted their learning in the classroom.

In conclusion, the K-12 teacher resources were perceived, as a whole, by the women to be the crucial link between the teacher and the students' success in school. They said that without teachers reading the literature about the culture, and without the teachers taking part in the Native American community; students, teachers and the Native American community would miss the opportunity to make a lasting impact on the education of Native American students.

In addition, if teachers would have embraced students as they are, coupled with expectations from home, it certainly would have impacted students' learning in K-12 settings. The powerful combination of parent/grandparent and teachers has the potential to greatly effect students' performance in school.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study contributed to a clarification and understanding of how eight Native American women in college perceived the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on their K-12 learning. I recommend further research of a

qualitative nature be conducted among Native American women in college of the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on their K-12 learning. Comparisons of Native American women in college with varying K-12 educational backgrounds, such as, having attended a tribal school, or public school would help establish if there is a difference in the impact of the teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment on their K-12 learning.

Another possibility for research might be to study Native American women in college who are from the same reservation in order to ascertain if the impact on learning was their teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment or if the impact on learning was due to the expectations of their parents or other family members or a combination of school and home. This information would aid the researcher in discovering which element impacted the learning of the Native American females. Thus, educators and the Native American community might consider the results and envision how such information could be used constructively.

To some extent, previous research has established the benefits that positive K-12 teachers' attitudes and the classroom environment can provide for all students, regardless of ethnic background. Continued research could possibly establish and clarify the necessity for careful reflection by K-12 teachers concerning their attitudes and the classroom environment they create, so that Native American females' learning can indeed be favorably impacted in schools.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEWS
CONCERNING K-12 TEACHERS' ATTITUDES
AND CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

1. Do you believe teachers cared about you? How did teachers demonstrate this behavior? Did this affect learning?
2. Did you feel teachers wanted to build an accepting and supportive relationship with you? How would this type of relationship effect learning?
3. How would you personally define teacher attitude? How did this attitude effect learning?
4. Have you experienced discriminatory behavior in school because of teachers' attitudes? Would you share an incident of this behavior?
5. Was there a teacher who came to your aid when a discriminatory incident happened? Could you share a particular incident?
6. How would you personally define classroom environment? How did the classroom environment effect learning?
7. Were the teachers attentive to you when you were called upon in class? What effect did this have on learning?
8. Did you feel males were given more preference in the classroom? How did this effect learning?
9. What type of learning do you prefer in school -- cooperative, which is group work, or competitive, which is more individual? Would you explain the reason for your choice?

10. Did teachers plan with you to make learning more meaningful? How?
11. Would you have experienced more success in school if teachers had adapted the instruction to meet cultural differences?
12. What cultural knowledge would teachers need in order to adapt instruction to meet differences in learning?
13. What behaviors would teachers demonstrate if they had respect for cultural differences in learning?
14. In what ways do you think teachers could have helped you be more successful in learning?
15. Did teachers demonstrate confidence in your abilities as a student? How did this behavior effect learning?
16. Were teachers respectful of your culture and customs? How did teachers demonstrate this respect? What effect did this have on learning?
17. What background knowledge would allow teachers to have a positive impact on learning?
18. Where and what sources do you recommend teachers to be attentive to in order for them to have a positive impact on learning?

APPENDIX B
PERMISSION FORM

Permission For Use Form

I grant to Koleen Parker permission to use words and ideas acquired during the interview with me for the purposes of research reporting, articles, and/or books.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

_____ I would prefer use of a fictitious name.

_____ I would prefer the use of my real name.

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY - BOZEMAN



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