



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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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.

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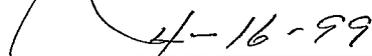
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ABSTRACT

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 Prosis'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 (Prosis, 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 FrameworkMaslow'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.

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