



Wednesday Morning Session: Ethnic/Cultural Identity in Adolescence

Culturally-Embedded Models and Mechanisms of Protection in Identity Formation of American Indian Adolescents

Carol A. Markstrom, West Virginia University

This presentation is a discussion of indigenous perspectives on models of human development, in general, and identity formation, in particular, with pubescence and adolescence the life stages of interest. I am increasingly seeking to conduct research that is culturally-embedded in conceptualizations, methods, and applications. Of relevance is indigenous psychologies (IP, see Allwood & Berry, 2006) which advance culturally-grounded theory and research reflective of the realities of these first peoples. Similarly, Garrouette (2003) writes on radical indigenism—an emerging theoretical perspective that contains methodological tools focused on the philosophies of knowledge of American Indians and other indigenous peoples that, in particular, encompass both the practical and the spiritual. In radical indigenism, American Indian identity is embedded in notions of connection and belongingness as well as social responsibility to kin and all spheres of creation. These emerging theoretical and conceptual tools are illustrated according to my research on American Indian adolescents. More specifically, I have sought to identify and understand indigenous models of human development according to the roles of rites of passage as mechanisms that promote optimal outcomes, including identity establishment, at pubescence and adolescence. My field research along with review of a range of indigenous, historical, and anthropological, works led to the identification of nine beliefs about pubescent girls applicable to some North American Indian cultures. American Indian feminist writings also guided this research that ultimately centered on the identity implications of puberty rites within culturally-based frameworks.

Longitudinal and Reciprocal Effects of Ethnic Identity and Experiences of Discrimination on Psychosocial Adjustment of Navajo Adolescents

Matthew Jones and Renee Galliher, Utah State University

The beneficial correlates of a cohesive sense of ethnic identification and the problematic outcomes associated with experiences of discrimination are well documented among ethnic minority adolescents. This study furthers previous research by examining the unique and interacting effects of ethnic identity and discrimination experiences in a sample of Navajo adolescents over the course of high school. Most adolescents were in 9th or 10th grade at Time 1 (N = 137) and in 11th or 12th grade at Time 2 (N = 92). At both times, participants completed the Revised Multiethnic Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney, 1992), Orthogonal Cultural Identification Scale (Oetting & Beauvais, 1990-1991), a measure of experiences of discrimination from peers and adults (Yoder, 2001), and other measures assessing psychological and behavioral, school functioning, and social functioning across domains.

Affirmation and belonging to Navajo culture was the strongest protective predictor at Time 1. However, at Time 2 very few significant associations emerged among ethnic identification and psychosocial health. Experiences of discrimination emerged as the most salient negative predictor of psychosocial health at Time 2 for males. There were few direct longitudinal links between ethnic identity and psychosocial functioning. However, interactions were observed between Time 1 ethnic identity variables and discrimination experiences in predicting functioning longitudinally. Higher affiliation with majority culture, in the context of higher experiences of discrimination predicted the worst outcomes for boys. For girls, higher reports of



ethnic identity exploration and American Indian cultural identification appeared to moderate the negative association between experiences of discrimination and social functioning.

Ethnic Identity and Psychosocial Development among Canadian First Nations and Aboriginal Children and Adolescents

Barbara M. Gfellner, Brandon University, Brandon, Manitoba Canada

This research focuses on developmental processes and trajectories in cultural identity and psychosocial functioning among Canadian First Nations and Aboriginal (FNA) children and youth. The objective was to investigate predicted associations between ethnic identity and psychosocial development; and the mediating influence of ethnic identity on positive adjustment. The full model will be outlined in terms of the intervention program. Two waves of data collection have been completed with approximately 220 students in grades 5 to 12 each year (63% follow up) in four First Nation communities involved in a Cultural Curriculum Initiatives Program that incorporates Aboriginal artist educators into the school curriculum. The rationale is to make culture more relevant and meaningful to students and to thereby enhance ethnic identity which is expected to facilitate psychosocial development and school engagement. Three measures of ethnic identity were examined (Phinney et al., 1992; Sellars et al., 1998; Moran et al., 1999) in relation to two conceptualizations of psychosocial development (Loevinger, 1976; Markstrom et al., 1996), with outcome measures of prosocial and compromising behaviours. Findings support expected trajectories for ego-level development and psychosocial maturity as well as prosocial and compromising behaviours. Few developmental differences were found across the various measures of ethnic identity; the majority of students endorsed a traditional ethnic identity status with bicultural identity among older adolescents. Psychosocial functioning was associated with traditional identity development and as a mediator in associations with the outcomes variables. Implications are considered in terms of contextual factors associated with optimal adjustment and directions for continuing and future research.



Wednesday Afternoon Session 1: Culture in Education

Examining Michigan's Native American Head Start Programs from a Native Staff Perspective: A Photovoice Project

Nicole L. Thompson, Mississippi State University

Photovoice, as a participatory action research method, puts cameras in the hands of those who know their communities and issues best. Participant control over the knowledge shared about their communities and realities enable them to tell stories from their perspective. As a result of engaging in photovoice processes, participants reveal intimate images of their realities. The 25 posters in this research project represent answers to research questions designed to be addressed by Native staff members from Michigan's nine American Indian Head Start programs. The photographic answers are accompanied by the related verbal explanations initially provided by the photographer and then further discussed by all participants. Each poster tells a portion of the story that explains how life in Michigan's American Indian communities is different from life in other places, and how Head Start has impacted their lives and communities. Further, the nine research participants identified elements of their Head Start programs that policymakers should know about, and collaboratively work to implement change. Analysis of photos and accompanying text from posters reveal that participants view their Head Start programs as crucial to the education and development of children and families; their Head Start program provide safe environments for children that might not be available elsewhere; their teachers and staff encounter challenges related to workload and expectation; economic condition of communities is stifling; and their Native American culture and heritage should be sustained by being taught in program curriculum.

Reconceptualizing Best Practices with Indigenous Early Childhood Programs: Voices from the United States, Canada, Cameroon, India, and South Africa

Michael Niles (Wakshe), Arizona State University

Best practice and evidence-based practice have become familiar terms in early childhood development both in North America and around the world. However, when one looks beneath the surface to determine how these concepts are determined or constructed, questions arise about the degree to which Indigenous peoples are represented in these determinations and in subsequent findings. The author explores these terms from an Indigenous perspective and discusses implications for service providers. The degree to which early childhood practitioners from distinct areas of the world attend to cultural differences and social justice in their pedagogy is emphasized, with a particular reference to Indigenous peoples. This presentation has five sections. In the first section, the author discusses the historical context of the education of Indigenous children. Second, the major theoretical approaches used by the dominant society in early childhood intervention program development are discussed. Special attention is paid to the linear model of time and human development – the view that the dominant society traditionally holds; and the nonlinear perspective of most Indigenous communities. Next, the author discusses the urgent need for the reconceptualization of culturally appropriate early childhood intervention theory for Indigenous families. In the fourth section, the author explains why and how the incorporation of culture in early childhood intervention programs is needed and applied in contemporary early childhood programs tailored for Indigenous children. The final section provides direction for early childhood intervention research with Indigenous communities.



Psychological Factors of Children in Language and Culture Immersion Programs

Billie Jo Kipp, University of New Mexico

Among groups of minority children in the United States, the Native American child has long been neglected in research related to intellectual assessment. Even though generalizations from the assessment of other minorities have been applied to children of American Indian ancestry, psychologists are becoming aware that there are unique language differences specific to the Native American child. Consequently, educational curricula have inadvertently failed to address the unique learning processes that Indian children possess through connection to their native language and culture. The obvious failure to build education around an enormously rich heritage deprives Indian students of an important basis for self esteem development that is crucial to their academic growth. This study investigated an immersion program that improved measured intelligence, achievement, self esteem, and cultural identity of Native American children in a school setting and reviews the evidence for cultural bias in intelligence testing and its effect on Indian children's self esteem.

Cultural Aspects of Children's Attention, Learning, Memory, and Development

Monica Tsethlikai, University of Utah

There has been increasing recognition of the importance of culture in child development. For example, according to Diamond (2007) developmental science has been influenced more and more by an appreciation of the profound and multilayered interrelations between cognitive abilities, social relations, and culture. Few studies have explored cultural aspects of cognitive and social development in American Indian communities. Work on cultural aspects of cognitive and social development could have important implications for children's academic achievement as a number of researchers have shown that basic cognitive skills (e.g., working memory, attention, and inhibition) are linked to performance on tests of text comprehension and conceptual learning. Ninety-nine 7- to 12- year-old children living on the Tohono O'odham Nation in Arizona participated in a study examining the links between cultural participation, basic cognitive skills, social competence, and verbal IQ. On the tests of basic cognitive skills, the children demonstrated age related improvements. Age was negatively correlated with the standardized measure of verbal IQ with older children receiving lower verbal IQ scores than younger children on average. A regression analysis revealed that cultural participation, social skills, and basic cognitive skills predicted higher verbal IQ scores with guardian's education and child's age included in the model. The findings support the interrelatedness of cultural participation, basic cognitive skills, social skills, and verbal intelligence. Moreover, these findings suggest that educators in tribal communities should value cultural participation as augmenting - not detracting from academic achievement.



Wednesday Afternoon Session 2: Parenting in Native Cultures

Stress and Strength among First-time American Indian Mothers in Northern Plains Reservation Community

Michelle Christensen Sarche, University of Colorado Denver

The purpose of this study was to better understand the experiences of first time American Indian mothers, including the challenges they face, as well as the sources of strength they possess. First-time American Indian mothers were recruited from a Northern Plains reservation community for participation in a prenatal interview to assess their history of attachment, loss, and trauma as well as current social and emotional experiences. Seventy-eight women participated in the study. Mothers were an average of 19 years old and an average of 5 months pregnant at the time of the interview. More than half of the women reported life histories that included childhood disruptions in the parent-child relationship, interpersonal trauma, and exposure to violence and alcoholism in the home. As women looked toward becoming mothers themselves, they were particularly concerned about not repeating the same patterns with their children and about the extent to which their children's fathers would be involved in their lives following birth. Despite the challenges many of these young women faced, distinctive sources of strength included feeling positively about becoming a mother, positive behavioral changes as a result of pregnancy and motherhood, and a commitment to improving their long-term prospects in life such as through more education or a better job, and support from family and friends.

Parent-Child Interaction and Infant Development in a Northern Plains Tribe

Paul Spicer, University of Oklahoma

Karen Fehringer, University of Colorado

Mary Eunice Romero, Arizona State University

In this paper we explore the challenges we have confronted in trying to evaluate parent-child interaction in a northern plains tribe. While the NCAST Teaching Scales have, in many respects, disappointed us as scales, and often raised concerns about bias in the kinds of children and parents they presume, they nevertheless appear to have captured meaningful dimensions of parent-child interaction with implications for children's development, especially in the area of language. We begin by situating language development within a more general discussion of human capital before turning to a preliminary discussion of what we have learned over the first three waves of data collected in our project funded under NICHD's program in the Science and Ecology of Early Development. We present data from children 6-30 months of age, detailing trends in language development and situating these findings in the context of ethnographic work conducted over the decade from 1998-2008. We close with the next steps in this program of research, which involve working with community members to develop an intervention that responds, in culturally appropriate ways, to the goals of parents and other community members to see children succeed, both in the American economy and as tribal members.



Wednesday Afternoon Session 2: Mental Health and Achievement Outcomes

The Teen Pathways Study: The Nature of School Transition for Mental Health and Achievement Outcomes among Lumbee Indian Adolescents of North Carolina

Denise Newman, Tulane University

The manner in which individual differences and cultural context mutually influence developmental outcomes is not well understood. *The Teen Pathways Study* examined how characteristics of the person and the rural community structure (with its blended concerns of geography, history, poverty, race, and identity) mutually influence individual development for American Indian youth. This project included describing individual differences in personality development and psychopathology risk during adolescence, examining the role of personality as a risk or protective factor in the context of two major developmental transitions from middle to high school and high school to young adulthood, and describing these relationships in an under-studied but specifically delineated population of rural, American Indian adolescents –Lumbee Indian adolescents living in rural North Carolina. The sample ranged in age from 12 to 21 over the course of the study and included 165 participants along with their parents. The initial wave assessed a variety of individual, familial, and cultural variables among students who attended ethnically homogeneous public middle schools in the community. The second wave occurred after students had moved to the large and ethnically diverse public high school in the county. A third wave followed the students in their transition to young adulthood. Of interest was the role of psychosocial maturation in life transitions for American Indian youth (including avoidance of negative peer influences, continued academic achievement, growth in social capital, and mental health) and the interaction of personality factors with environmental context on developmental outcomes relating to mental health and academic achievement.



Thursday Morning Session 1: Mental Health and Substance Use

Voices of Indian Teens and Pathways of Choice: Longitudinal Studies of Adolescent and Young Adult Development in American Indian Communities in the Western United States

Nancy Rumbaugh Whitesell and Christina Mitchell, University of Colorado Denver

In this presentation we will provide an overview of two linked longitudinal studies of American Indian adolescents and young adults and highlight key developmental findings from these studies. The first study, *Voices of Indian Teens (Voices)*, involved adolescents in four communities (N=2,632); the study was school-based, with extensive community follow-up to ensure that a representative sample was retained across waves. The second study, *Pathways of Choice (Choices)*, picked up where *Voices* left off and followed youth from two of the *Voices* communities into early adulthood (N=1,292). The *Voices* data have been used to examine trajectories of self-concept development across adolescence, particularly focusing on developmental trends in self-esteem and cultural identity and their relationship to outcomes such as academic success. The combined *Voices-Choices* data have been used to address important questions about the development of problem behaviors, including extensive analysis of trajectories of substance use and sexual risk. Here we highlight one particular *Voices-Choices* study that examined the relationship between developmental trajectories of alcohol outcome expectancies and alcohol use, providing important guidance for preventive intervention efforts. Finally, our work with these data have generated new hypothesis about the nature of adolescent development within these AI reservation communities and helped lay the groundwork for the development of an indigenous model of positive youth development to be explored as part of a new research initiative.

Patterns of Hopelessness among American Indian Adolescents: Relationships by Levels of Acculturation and Residence

Teresa LaFromboise, Karen Albright, and Alex Harris, Stanford University

Poor mental health among American Indian adolescents has been a matter of significant concern and work of the AIAN Mental Health Research Center for the past two decades. The study highlighted in this presentation extends the literature on acculturation within the American Indian population by investigating the relationship between hopelessness, levels of acculturation, and residence among American Indian adolescents. Utilizing data drawn from 438 adolescents across 67 American Indian tribes, our analyses show that American Indian adolescents who have bicultural competence (i.e., those who are adept in both Indian and White cultures) have significantly less hopelessness than do those with adeptness in only one culture or in neither culture. Our findings also show a significant difference by residence, with hopelessness reduced among American Indians who live on reservations. Analysis of interaction effects suggests that the beneficial effect of adeptness in White culture is particularly true for American Indians living in urban areas. These findings could provide a blueprint for intervention development and implementation for adolescents to better negotiate dual cultures independently, or at times, simultaneously depending upon levels of acculturation and residence. Bicultural racial socialization and structural ecosystems therapy are interventions recommended within the field to that end. The presentation ends by encouraging researchers to examine hopelessness among American Indian adolescents with context-specificity and to attend to issues of tribal heterogeneity and socioeconomic status in future work on mental health.



Predictors of Alaska Native Adolescent Sobriety and Reasons for Living: A Protective Factors Model for Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention among Alaska Native Youth

James Allen, Gerald V. Mohatt, Carlotta Ting Fok, University of Alaska Fairbanks
David Henry, University of Illinois at Chicago and University of Alaska Fairbanks
Rebekah Burkett, University of Alaska Fairbanks
The Yup'ik Regional Coordinating Council, University of Alaska Fairbanks

Alaska Native youth face significant health disparities associated with alcohol abuse and suicide. *Cuqyun* is a Yup'ik word translatable as 'measuring tool.' In the *Cuqyun* study and two companion feasibility studies that created a CBPR based model of prevention, we developed and refined a set of culturally appropriate measures for Alaska Native youth based in our previous research with the People Awakening project (Mohatt et al., 2004a). We then tested the predictive validity of these measures using a culturally grounded model of Alaska Native sobriety and reasons for living developed through in previous qualitative work (Mohatt et al., 2004b). This study is one step in a long-term program of theory to practice translational research. This step developed outcome measures for use in our alcohol and suicide prevention trial with Yup'ik youth, based upon the empirically derived, theoretical model of protection (Allen et al., 2006). The model employs a strengths-based, positive psychology focus through the study of variables predictive of sobriety and reasons for living as outcomes. The model is a triarchic model specifying individual characteristic (IC), family characteristic (FC), and community characteristic (CC) levels as intermediate, preventative intervention target, change agent variables, that are mediated by the peer drug attitudes of the adolescent social environment (SE) in the prediction of sobriety and reasons for living as ultimate variables. We tested the psychometric properties of new, culturally grounded measures, along with culturally adapted scales, using a sample of 413 Alaska Native adolescents ranging in age from 13-18. New measures were developed, refined, and explored using a two-step confirmatory factor analytic and item response theory procedure. New measures include a three-factor measure of multicultural mastery, culture specific three-factor measures of family protective factors, community protective factors, and reflective processes (RP) associated with the consequences of problematic use of alcohol, and a new four-factor measure of reasons for life (RL). The structural equation path model provided an excellent fit to the data, with IC and CC predicting RP and RL, and FC mediated by SE in predicting RP, with RP predicting RL. *Cuqyun* provides an empirical test of a culturally grounded theoretical model for prevention for Alaska Natives, a set of measures for the study of mechanisms of change within the intervention, and a system of prevention outcome assessment.



Thursday Morning Session 2: Intervention in Native Communities

Intervention Development for Traumatized American Indian Adolescents: A Community-Based Participatory Research Process

Douglas K. Novins, M.D.

In 2006, the Cherokee Nation partnered with the University of Colorado to employ Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) to develop an intervention for traumatized American Indian adolescents with substance use problems. CBPR methods utilized in this study included the use of a Steering Committee with tribal, clinical, consumer, cultural, and university representation; the development of a set of principles to guide the research process; and conducting focus groups and key informant interviews with key stakeholders in the community. The project includes two phases: 1) intervention identification, in which we employed an iterative research process of community-based data collection and Steering Committee analysis and interpretation to identify key intervention characteristics, develop descriptions of 3 potential interventions that embodied these characteristics, and select one of them for subsequent development; and 2) intervention development and testing, in which the clinical procedures for this intervention are being developed and will be pilot tested in 2009. The resulting intervention, *Walking On*, merges science-based practices such as cognitive behavioral therapy and contingency management with American Indian traditions and spirituality. *Walking On* was designed to specifically address the major issues identified by participants through the CBPR methods employed in this study (e.g., services that last as long as adolescents and families need them, drawing on American Indian healing traditions and spirituality, adapting science-based practices for use with American Indians). In conclusion, CBPR methods had a profound impact on the research process and holds great promise for developing interventions that are consistent with the beliefs and hopes of underserved communities.

Evaluation of a Tribal Drug Court for Juveniles

Candace Fleming and Anne Libby, University of Colorado Denver

At this point in time, most drug courts in Indian Country have been developed for adult offenders and only a few tribal courts are addressing the needs of the juvenile offender in a holistic way. One such Indian drug court involves the family members of the youth and early results from a pilot test suggested that the youths and their families can be effectively served. The approach used is multidisciplinary and multidimensional. Collaboration with this tribal wellness court for juveniles and their families led to the funding of an evaluation of their interventions by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. This presentation will describe the various elements of the Drug Court and will summarize preliminary evaluation findings of those elements from the viewpoints of the Court Team members and past youth and adult family participants. The development of a data base that will serve the Court well in tracking multiple long term outcomes will be described. Finally, we will describe the efforts made to increase evaluation knowledge and skills within local Team members.



Evaluation of a Native Hawaiian After-School Program for 5th-6th Graders in Hawai'i

Earl S. Hishinuma, John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Significant disparities exist among Asian/Pacific Islanders (APIs) regarding interpersonal youth violence (IYV). The Asian/Pacific Islander Youth Violence Prevention Center's (APIYVPC's) mission is to reduce and prevent IYV for APIs by developing an effective, public-health, and culturally competent model for one API community (i.e., Kailua-Waimānalo) to serve as a prototype. The APIYVPC is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The 6 aims involve: (1) infrastructure, (2) community partnership, (3) research, (4) training, (5) dissemination, and (6) evaluation. The Research Aim entails conducting innovative, scientifically rigorous, and culturally responsive research that builds upon prior studies, and that fulfills the community-based participatory research agenda. Among the several studies being conducted, one evaluation research will be highlighted—that is, the *Hui Mālama o ke Kai* (HMK) Program. This is an after-school program that serves “at-risk” 5th-6th graders, and addresses academic achievement, healthy behaviors, youth violence prevention, and substance use prevention through Native Hawaiian values. For the past several years, approximately 40 children of primarily Native Hawaiian ancestry have taken part annually in this program. Data from the past few years have provided evidence for robust increases in Native Hawaiian values for the children, as well as positive effects on youth violence prevention attitudes. Future research will involve attempting to (1) compare HMK children with their peers; (2) conduct a longitudinal follow-up study; and (3) evaluate a new program that will incorporate 7th-9th graders who are alumni of the HMK Program who will serve as teachers/mentors to the 5th-6th graders.

Circle of Life: Issues in HIV-prevention and school-based intervention design among young American Indian adolescents of the Northern Plains

Carol E. Kaufman and Christina M. Mitchell, University of Colorado Denver

In spite of significant disparities in sexual health outcomes for American Indian youth, no studies exist examining the effectiveness of HIV-prevention interventions. Circle of Life is an HIV-prevention intervention specifically developed for American Indian middle-school youth. We describe the rationale and methodology of a longitudinal group-randomized trial conducted among American Indian youth aged 11-15 in a reservation community. The project includes extensive community and school support and collaboration. The design uses several innovative features including two pre-intervention waves to determine patterns of behavior prior to the intervention that might be associated with a differential impact of the intervention on sexual risk. We present the collaborative and adaptive strategies for consenting, assenting, and data collection methodology in this community. Achieved response rates are comparable to or better than other similar studies. The project is well positioned to carry out the longitudinal assessments of the intervention to determine the overall impact of the Circle of Life and the differential impact by pre-intervention patterns of behavior across youth.