

The Role of Tribal Languages and Cultures in American Indian Education

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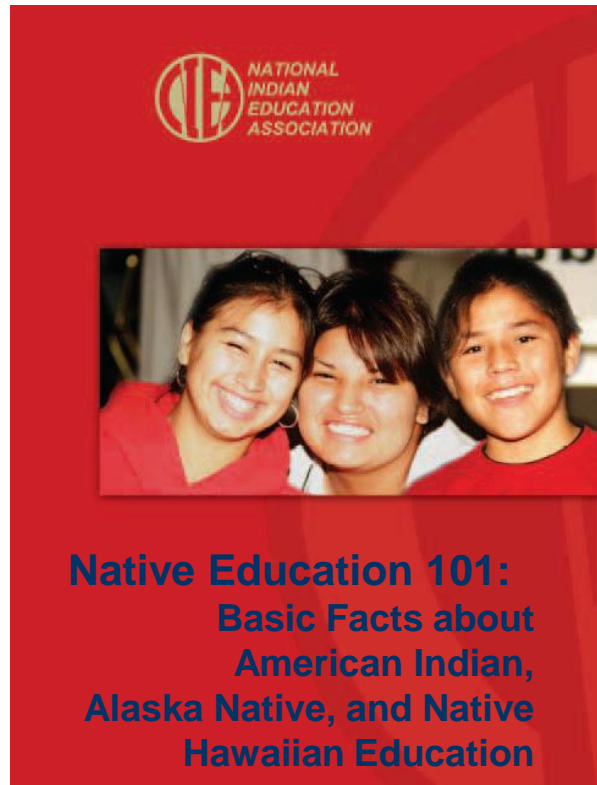
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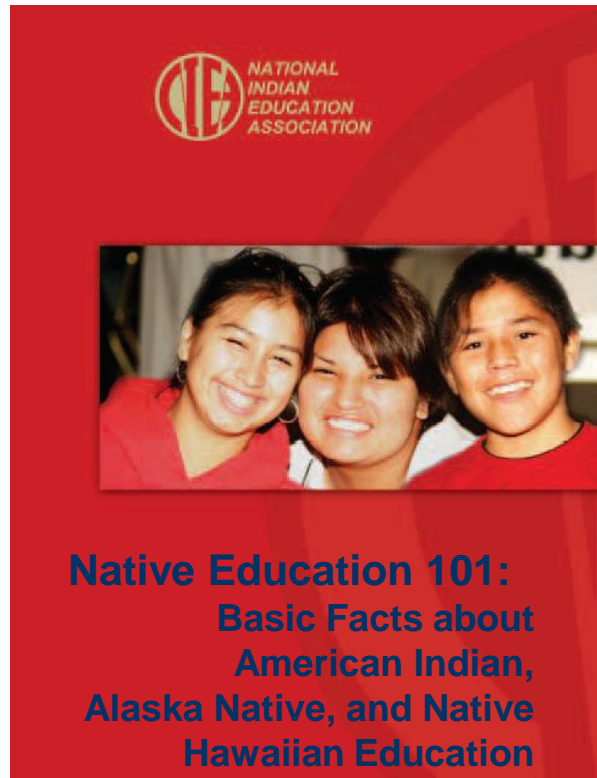
The State of American Indian Education



- ❑ 562 federally recognized tribes
- ❑ 4.5 million U.S. citizens identify as American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Native Hawaiian
- ❑ ~ 634,000 AI/AN students in the K-12 system

Source: U.S. Census 2005; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics 2005 ; National Indian Education Association's "Native Education 101 (2007)."

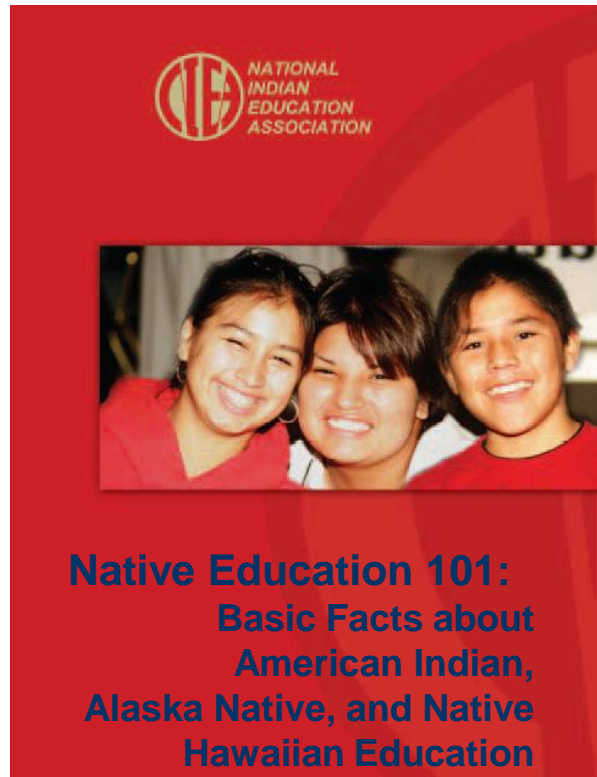
State continued



- ❑ ~ 93% of AI/AN students attend public schools
- ❑ ~ 7% of AI/AN attend BIA schools (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics 2005b).
- ❑ 71% AI/AN have a high school diploma
- ❑ 11% of AI/AN have a BA degree

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics 2005b; U.S. Census 2005; National Indian Education Association's "Native Education 101 (2007)."

State continued



- ❑ ~ 75% A/N over 18 had high school diplomas by 2000
- ❑ 6% adult A/N had 4-year college degrees by 2000
- ❑ 2003-04 school year, A/I high school graduation rate was 49.3%, compared to 76.2% for white students

Contemporary Educational Issues

The most common educational issues that American Indians Students face:

- Educational achievement and attainment gaps are widening
- Cultural dissonance between Native American students and traditional education systems

Research Questions

Three issues:

What is the relationship between a student's knowledge of, and experience with their tribal language & culture and various educational outcomes?

Research Questions continued

What educational outcomes are associated with courses on tribal languages and cultures?

Research Questions continued

What educational outcomes are associated with tribal languages and cultures as mediums of instruction?

Methodology

Review Literature

Summarize Findings

**Demmert Lit.
Review**

- Bibliography
- Citations
- Footnotes

**Annotated
Bibliography**

**Review New
Literature**

**Code & Organize
Literature**

Characteristic of Learner/Home Environment

Synthesis of the literature demonstrated:

1. Tribal language and culture as a characteristic of the student can assist academic performance
2. Tribal Language and culture should be harmonious between the school and community
3. Educational reform establishing uniformity between the culture community and school
4. Curriculum Development & Community Involvement

Characteristic of Learner/Home Environment

- **Tribal language and culture as a characteristic of the student can assist academic performance**
 - ❑ Student culture should be considered a tool in improving school performance (Coggins, Williams & Radin, 1996).
 - ❑ Traditional American Indian Culture positively affects academic performance (Whitbeck, Hoyt, Stubben & LaFromboise, 2001).
 - ❑ Language and culture can promote attainment of knowledge in and out of schools (Yazzie, 2000).

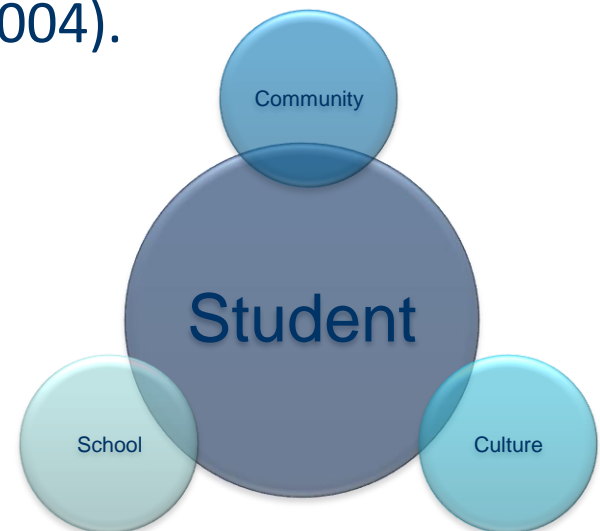
Characteristic of Learner/Home Environment

- **Example:**

- ❖ Participation in the traditional cultural practices confirmed some changes in academic performance; specifically academic achievement was made easier or less difficult for the students (Rubie, 1999).

Characteristic of Learner/Home Environment

- **Tribal Language and culture should be harmonious between the school and community**
 - The mismatch between the school and community cultures may justify the unsuccessful academic achievement of American Indian students (Hammond, Dupoux & Ingalls, 2004).

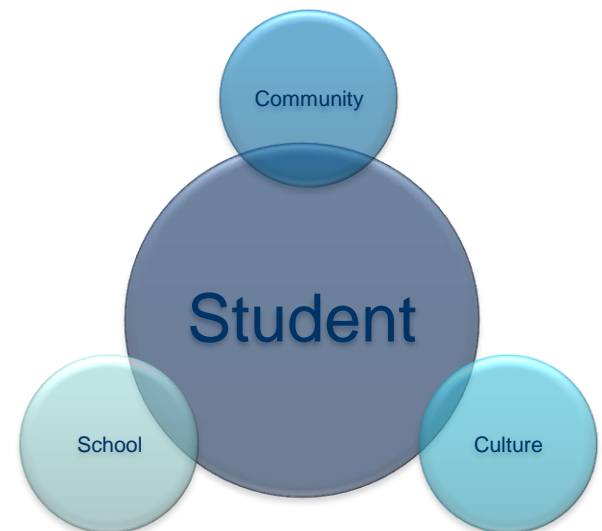


Characteristic of Learner/Home Environment

- ❑ Culturally responsive education practices that reflect the tribal community were identified to be more appropriate teaching methods for A/I (Ingalls, Hammond, Dupoux & Baeza, 2006).
- ❑ Factors contributing to the poor academic achievement of A/I students :
 - Differences between home culture and school culture
 - Ignorance of Native culture among school staff (Skinner, 1991)

Characteristic of Learner/Home Environment

- **Educational reform establishing uniformity between the culture community and school**
 - An educational reform is needed to facilitate American Indian academic success (Macias, 1989).



Characteristic of Learner/Home Environment

- ❑ Due to cultural disparities of A/I student and mainstream schooling, academic attainment indicate
 - Changes in curriculum and instructional methods
 - Materials to incorporate American Indian culture (Agbo, 2001)
- ❑ School reform is crucial to meet the needs of A/I students and to facilitate academic excellence and school improvement should include:
 - Incorporating a curriculum that reflects the culture of the students (Beaulieu, 2000).

Characteristic of Learner/Home Environment

● Curriculum Development & Community Involvement

- ❑ It is important to establish a culturally articulated curriculum that will seek to balance learning through school and community by way of strong community support and community teaching (Barnhardt, 1989).
- ❑ Influence and involvement of the community and the parents are critical factors tied to school and teacher success with Native American students (Demmert, 2001).

Characteristic of Learner/Home Environment

Example:

- ❖ Alaska Native Knowledge Network highlights six major initiatives to document the indigenous knowledge systems of Alaska Native people which cultivate pedagogical practices that properly include indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing into education programs which include: culturally aligned curriculum adaptations; native ways of knowing and teaching; and elders and cultural camps (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998).

Academic Subject

Synthesis of the literature demonstrated:

1. **Culturally Relevant Curriculum:** Employing materials from the student's culture and history to illustrate principles and concepts (Abdal-Haaq, 1994)*.
2. **School & Community Partnerships**
3. **Positive influence of culture and language as academic subjects**

*Abdal-Haaq, I. (1994). Culturally Responsive Curriculum. Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED370936)

Academic Subject

- **Culturally Relevant Curriculum**

- Culturally relevant programs can enhance contemporary American Indian students' chances for academic achievement through its effects on:
 - Instruction
 - Curriculum
 - Evaluation
 - Governance (Martin, 2005).
- Curriculum must reflect the linguistic, cultural, social heritage of the learner's community and tribal society (Beaulieu, 2000).

Academic Subject

- ❑ It is important to provide culturally relevant curriculum that offers a learning environment where students will understand how education is used to enhanced the quality of life for their communities (Van Hamme, 1995).
- ❑ Factors that contribute to the poor academic achievement of Native American students are:
 - ❑ culturally based native learning styles
 - ❑ culturally biased testing
 - ❑ the neglecting of components in developing culturally relevant curricula (Skinner, 1991).

Academic Subject

- Examples:

- ❖ The Kamehameha Early Education Program (KEEP) adapted to meet their cultural needs and abilities, which included a systematic instruction in reading comprehension that has been positively assessed in three different evaluations, which all deemed the KEEP a quality program (Tharp, 1982).

Academic Subject

- **School & Community Partnerships**

- ❑ Educators and communities must work together to incorporate language and cultures in schools to give American Indian students a chance to succeed in school (Ayoungman, 1995).
- ❑ To facilitate student achievement it is essential to work with AI/AN communities to improve a school curriculum that reflects AI/AN experience and learning (Jacobs & Reyner, 2002).

Academic Subject

- **Positive influence of culture and language as academic subjects**
 - Incorporating cultural motifs, stories, symbols, etc. into math, language arts, and reading materials , as in Natural Math, improve raw math scores of student entering kindergarten (Sears and Medaris, 1992).

Medium of Instruction

Synthesis of the literature demonstrated:

1. **Bilingual Education:** Any use of two languages in school – by teachers, students or both – for a variety of social and pedagogical purposes (National Association for Bilingual Education, <http://www.nabe.org/education/index.html>).
2. **Language Immersion Programs:** Academic subjects are taught in the second language for all (full immersion) or part (partial immersion) of the instructional day. Students learn through the language rather than study the language. (Delfosse, DPI-World Languages Education Consultant)

Medium of Instruction

- **Bilingual Education**

- Bilingual Education

- ❑ Students in grades 1-5, taking bilingual Cherokee courses scored higher on standardized test than counterparts taught in English (Bacon, Kidd & Seaberg, 1982).
 - ❑ Students taught in their tribal language outperform counterparts taught in English on standardized test given in English (Rosier & Holm, 1980).

Medium of Instruction

- **Language Immersion Programs**

- ❑ Language immersion as well as language and culture as an academic subject resulted in influenced better attitudes and academic performance for at least some students (Rudin, 1989).
- ❑ Children who are taught in their Native language with culturally relevant pedagogy will do at least as well and may do better on standardized test who receive instruction in a dominant second language(Sherman, 2003).

Medium of Instruction

- ❑ The Hawaiian Immersion program recognizes seven important functions in an indigenous language immersion program, where Hawaiian is the second language
 - Hawaiian as a medium of instruction and a language of survival in school
 - Hawaiian ceremonial, aesthetic and cultural dimensions
 - students as creators of Hawaiian stories and text
 - student as readers and translators of Hawaiian text
 - bilingual empowerment through Hawaiian and English literacy
 - bilingual advantage (Slaughter, 1997).
- ❑ Highlight that strong community involvement and maximum parental involvement are essential in an indigenous immersion program (Slaughter & Lai, 1994).

Medium of Instruction

- Example:
 - ❖ The findings on national exams of the students who participated in the Maori Language Immersion Program in New Zealand concluded that all the students that have take the exams at an accelerated pace passed all the exams in Maori, achieving a comparable level of Maori language competence with the third year of university study in Maori. They students also achieved an 80% passing rate in math, science, geography, history and graphic design (Harrison, 1998).

Recap: Culture & Language as...

Learner/Home Environment	Academic Subject	Medium of Instruction
Assist Academic Performance	Culturally Relevant Curriculum	Bilingual Education
Harmony between school & culture	School & Community Partnerships	Language Immersion Programs
Educational Reform	Positive Influence	
Curriculum Development & Community Involvement		

Recommendations

- Literature & findings as resources
- Be careful with generalizations
- Language & culture diversity
- Community involvement