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Field-Initiated Resarch to Predict Work-Motivation Among Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation Clients

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ABSTRACT

This study presents the results of field-originated, field-based research on the Navajo reservation analyzing the motivation to succeed and the willingness to follow through of Native American clients in vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs. The study was divided into two components: 1) Socio-cultural differences between employed and unemployed Navajo reservation dwellers were analyzed and a number of statistically significant variables were found that correlated with successful employment. 2) These findings were then tested with an intensive case study of one "successful" Navajo VR client and one "unsuccessful" Navajo VR client. Interviews with these VR clients highlighted and verified the usefulness of sociocultural factors that are key variables which can be used to predict motivation for Native American clients to participate successfully in a VR program.

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This research study recommends that VR counselors who work with Native American clients recognize the significant importance of these selected socio-cultural factors in planning VR services for these clients.

Introduction

Community-initiated research often addresses the issues of *practice*, i.e., issues that emerge, for example, in the course of VR counselors working with clients. Such research is often termed "soft research" to distinguish it from experimental, theoretical, or laboratory research. Field-initiated issues also provide an opportunity to "discover" new theory and new approaches to practice problems and also require the use of scientific research methodology to examine VR agency practices and client outcomes. This is a report of one such research-practice experience arising from problems encountered by Navajo counselors in a Vocational Rehabilitation agency located on the Navajo Reservation.

Vocational rehabilitation (VR) service practices for injured Navajo clients must consider cultural and social factors when attempting to place their clients because the differences in value systems between mainstream culture and traditional Navajo culture on the reservation impact on client motivation. In this context, the Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation Project (NVRP) requested researchers from the Native American Research and Training Center (NARTC) from the University of Arizona to assess the level of motivation of its Navajo clients in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their services. The findings presented in this field-initiated study address findings arising from two other field studies of Navajos in the work place conducted by the authors: 1) empirical findings from a survey of the work motivation of Navajo industrial workers, and 2) an analysis of the bicultural blending processes inherent in mainstreaming Navajo people into the labor force, a process and a situation that have been foreign to Navajo culture. Findings from these two studies provided a foundation for the design of this VR-based study of the nature of Navajo client motivation required for acceptance and utilization of NVRP services.

The Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation Program

The Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation Program (NVRP) is a demonstration project under the Rehabilitation Act. Once this resource became available, more

effort was made to identify disabled Navajos. Practice problems emerged from this effort, caused in part by the differences between the cultural views of Navajos and Anglos. Morgan *et al.* (1986) have discussed the failure of mainstream vocational services for one tribe, noting that in general mainstream "rehabilitation programs and facilities have done little to improve the employment prospects of disabled Indian populations" (p. 25). Failures of this kind may be related to cultural differences and insensitivity, and emphasize the inadequacies of conventional vocational rehabilitation practices.

The NVRP developed on the Navajo Reservation in response to these problems by focusing on three issues relevant to the Navajo people:

- The impact on Navajo clients of racial and cultural differences between Anglo and Navajo VR counselors;
- The assumptions that jobs are available and that Vocational Rehabilitation services need only to focus on fitting the disabled person to the job requirements; and
- The need to offer services that do not conflict with the values, lifestyles, and beliefs of Navajo people (Morgan *et al.* 1986).

These objectives are currently being met in the following manner:

Unique Cultural Differences. The Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation Program (NVRP) is directed by the Navajo Tribe with funding under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The project staff are all Navajo persons who live and work on the reservation and are adept at gauging community and family attitudes about the rehabilitative potential of individual clients. The Navajo Nation has adapted an Affirmative Action Plan that calls for the hiring of the disabled. For example fifteen percent (15%) of the successful case closures in 1986 were placed in tribal employment (Elmer Guy 1991; personal communication).

Availability of Employment. Because the Navajo reservation has a high unemployment rate, it is often difficult even for a fully trained, non-disabled Navajo to find *any type of employment* on the reservation. Off-reservation jobs in nearby cities are also difficult for Navajos to obtain because of ingrained racist attitudes and widespread job discrimination. The NVRP faces these larger social issues and focuses on a number of innovative types of alternatives, e.g., by cooperation with Sheltered Employment settings and by developing craft workers and artisans (silversmithing, weaving, etc.). However, the barrier of structural unemployment for Navajos remains, and the project struggles with these barriers as a part of its daily function.

Services That Are Culturally Relevant. The NVRP uses traditional Native healing services to supplement the standard vocational rehabilitation services, i.e., the use of traditional medicine persons to perform native healing ceremonies and prayers. These services serve a psychotherapeutic function. Medicine persons are respected elders in the community, and their support gives credence to the clients' rehabilitative potential.

The NVRP has therefore sought to blend vocational rehabilitation services with the unique cultural lifeways of Navajo disabled clients. However, in spite of these efforts, VR counselors report a number of problems arising out of their practices, e.g., overprotectiveness of the client within his family, diffuse feelings of anger by the client toward some vocational rehabilitation procedures, and finally, the serious problem of assessing individual Navajo clients' level of motivation to carry on the planned rehabilitation process. The Navajo vocational rehabilitation counselors therefore asked NARTC to determine the best technique for evaluating one of the practice problems, that of the *motivational levels of Navajo clients*, i.e., what is the Navajo client's degree of motivation to enter into and follow through with a vocational rehabilitation diagnosis and service plan?

From preliminary studies by the authors, the following three factors emerged that influence Navajo worker motivation: 1) social-structural problems, 2) family variables, and 3) personality issues:

Structural Problems which Affect Navajo Clients' "Motivation"

In the past, reservation-based Indians engaged in wage-work within a major industry have been rare. There are a number of institutionally based explanations to account for this situation:

a) Native Americans reside on small, scattered reservations located on "badlands" around the country, isolated from mainstream American life by distance and lack of adequate transportation;
b) There are very few industries, service organizations, or agencies which can be classified as "major employers" in base geographic areas;
c) There is a high level of racial prejudice toward Native Americans (Talbot 1985), who would not be hired into any scarce job openings in the nearby Anglo community; and
d) Historically there are few cultural role models of "a worker" available among reservation families or groups.

Cultural values and historical destruction of Native American lifeways are only part of the problem. In order to create a "rehabilitated worker," a number of

social requirements with reference to a labor market must exist. For example, in a recent survey of 100 southwestern Indian families, Joe and Miller (1987) found that while two-thirds of the adults had an occupational identity, less than one-half of all of them were currently employed. Furthermore, of those who were employed above the level of unskilled labor, nearly all worked for the tribal organization or for a Federal agency that administered a Native American program. The study concluded that "lack of skills, poor health, low levels of education, and impoverished life-styles are common problems faced by Native Americans."

Family Variables That Impact on Navajo VR Clients' "Motivation"

Sociological studies have shown that "working-class" families are the cradle of every generation of workers. In general, for Native Americans (with few exceptions such as the Iroquois high-rise workers) intergenerational "workers" have been non-existent. This is a socio-cultural phenomenon that has significant implications to employment of Native American peoples.

Native American families exist under great oppression and under threat of destruction—nowhere is this fact more evident than in the high percentage of the absence of Native American fathers in the home (Joe and Miller 1992)—they may be lost to alcoholism, to accidental death, to suicide, to imprisonment, etc. They are not likely to be a stable member of a work group. A Native American child often does not have any worker role-model in his/her family. Psychological studies support the importance of intimate family models for successful child rearing. Native American children, like other children, grow up and forge their identities from their primary group. If their father was a silversmith, an artist, an actor, a rodeo rider—they too wish to fill these roles. If their mother is a weaver, they may begin to weave "schoolgirl" rugs in order to learn their craft. But when they grow up in female-headed households, supported in poverty by public welfare and commodities, subjected to alcohol abuse, poor health, early pregnancy, and despair, and surrounded by embittered, depressed, and defeated adults, it is not likely such Native American children will develop into "worker material" for *any* employer.

Given this socio-cultural background, it is readily apparent that "the lack of motivation to seek employment" may be symbolic of deep-seated social problems inherent in the Indian reservation subculture. Thus the job of "rehabilitating" disabled Indians on the reservation for the labor market requires an understanding of both the cultural values and the social background as they relate to the concept of "work" among Native Americans.

Personality Issues Affecting Navajo Clients' "Motivation"

Most personality based studies in the VR literature examine personal characteristics of the client in order to determine the level of the client's "motivation." Many such personality variables are included in the batteries of psychological tests administered to VR clients. However, the VR tests are often unable to *predict* the level of the client's motivation to accept VR counseling and work placement over a period of time. In this paper, available VR testing data is accepted as given, but this paper suggests that two other levels of analysis might improve the psychological prediction of motivation, i.e., cultural factors and social structure. Therefore, this study also sought to evaluate additional cultural and social variables that might increase the accuracy of predicting Navajo VR client motivation for counseling and job-placement.

Study Design and Analysis

The NARTC attempted to examine "motivational" issues raised by the Navajo VR workers by designing two separate research projects: 1) a study of a sample of both employed and unemployed Navajos residing on the reservation in order to examine the motivation factors among Navajo workers, and 2) an in-depth case study of both a "motivated" and a "non-motivated" Navajo client currently in the Navajo vocational rehabilitation caseload in order to: a) examine empirically these types of clients, and b) to test the predictive value of the findings from the Navajo worker study. The following data represent the empirical findings from these two studies.

Study 1: Survey of Navajo Industrial Workers

The survey sampled four Navajo employee groups: 1) workers at the Peabody Mining Co., 2) workers at the Page Electrical Plant, 3) construction workers employed throughout the western Navajo reservation, and 4) a comparison sample of unemployed Navajo workers. These workers represent the *emergent Navajo industrial work force*, employed on their own reservation by private enterprises operating under contracts with the Navajo Tribe. There is a strong element of Navajo pride and Navajo empowerment involved in their employment. There are also elements of deeply felt conflict, e.g., the use of irreplaceable ground water for the industrial processes and the mining of coal from the sacred Navajo mountain, leading to the pollution of Mother Earth and the air above (Joe and Miller 1992). Navajo workers must face these macro-level conflicts equipped with Navajo traditional values as well as the daily "blending and bending" of their traditions with those of the profit-oriented industrial workplace.

Navajos who are employed in these industrial plants located on the Navajo reservation must adapt to the eight-hour day, to the specialization and divisions of labor, to a hierarchal authority structure, *and* to a high-risk environment. Because these are dangerous jobs, Navajos who work there are potential clients of a vocational rehabilitation agency because of the high levels of injury risk on the job.

The groups of Navajo workers (N=74) were subjects in a study of the "meaning of work" in a rapidly changing cultural situation, and of their understanding of, and use of, Vocational Rehabilitative Services. The survey also collected comparative data on another Navajo subgroup: a group of former workers (N=29) who are now unemployed and who are presently receiving unemployment assistance or temporary work aid from their tribe.

These Navajo workers are traditional, still holding and practicing many of the Navajo cultural and religious beliefs. Joe's Traditionality Scale (Joe 1975) items were used to establish levels of traditionality with the percentage of responses given by the subjects as shown in Table 1.

Table I

Item Responses to Joe's Traditionality Scale by Navajo Workers (N=74)
(Cumulative Table: Does not add up to 100%) (N=73)

Items	%
Speaks Navajo Fluently	82%
Considers family traditional	78%
Spouse is Navajo	77%
Participates in Navajo elections	75%
Uses prayer pollen	72%
Names Sacred Mountains	66%
Uses traditional healers	64%
Traditional or Native American church	54%
Tells children Navajo customs	47%
Can assist with a Sing	42%
Keeps Sacred Earth Bundle	32%

As this table shows, these Navajo workers still hold strongly to many Navajo cultural values and practices.

The degree of traditionality held by Navajo workers becomes an important factor for Navajos who are adapting to the Anglo work ethic—to be a traditional Navajo means that one may hold certain basic values that may differ from those of the majority culture. Such differences can impact upon an individual's perception of the importance of work and his/her motivation to do work. It can also influence a wide range of other behaviors in the workplace.

The Navajo Labor Investigation Task Force (1984) has reported that the Navajo culture often presented problems in the industrial work situation:

> Social and cultural conflicts about jobs are created among employees, and between employer and employees. Where Navajos work, the company philosophy is diametrically opposite to the Navajo work ethics which emphasize the sharing of wealth as the priority. When these priorities cross paths, as they often do, conflict arises. (p. 2)

This study finds that Navajo workers have adopted a number of strategies which enable them to "blend" their traditional Navajo views with the demands of an industrial work setting. For example, these workers still practice "sharing" while at the same time maintaining regular work attendance, engaging in fewer drinking episodes, honoring punctuality at work, and accepting work discipline and work norms.

One might suppose that it is difficult for anyone in an unstable work situation to maintain a high motivational state or to develop a viable worker identity. Indeed, among these Navajo workers, nearly half have been in unstable work situations during the past five years.

Most of the Navajo subjects identify themselves as "workers." In order to empirically study the degree of each subject's identity as a worker, we focused the next set of items on aspects of the "worker identity" as presented in the table below.

Table II
Navajo Worker's Response of Worker Identity Items (N-74)
(Cumulative Table: Does not add up to 100%)

Items	N	%
Work is important to my identity	69	93%
I am a steady worker	64	85%
Father was employed	53	71%
Believes a good job is a steady one	46	62%
Has childhood friend working there	37	47%
Belongs to a union	41	55%
Siblings are employed	28	35%
Would like child to do same work	21	27%
Mother worked for wages	16	20%

The overall worker identity, although strongly held, was not as important to them as their cultural identity (See Table 1).

There is a considerable body of findings (Talbot 1985; 1981) that asserts that the exploitation of Indian resources and discrimination against Indian people foster astronomical rates of unemployment and poverty. For example, Talbot states that "Native Americans occupy a particularly oppressed niche in the working class of the United States." Other factors contribute as well. For example, Jorgenson (1978) asserts that Indian underdevelopment, unemployment, and poverty are due not so much to rural isolation and aboriginal values as to the way the urban centers of finance, political influence, and power have grown at the expense of the rural areas.

American racism also affects the potential motivation of workers. Leukens (1953), in a study of the employment of Navajo miners, found that "Anglos were always hired by the company in preference to Navajos. Navajos were nearly always hired as helpers, the lowest grade, regardless of the economic conditions, mining capabilities, and previous experience. Generally, Navajo workers did not hold any of the other skilled or supervisory positions, even though qualified."

Leukens's assertion is borne out by the survey data in Table III, which shows that only a few of the Navajo work force are employed in either administrative or supervisory positions.

Table III
Work Role Held By Industrial Navajo Workers (N=73)

Position	N	%
Adm. Super.	2	3%
Professional	3	4%
Technical	61	84%
Laborer	7	9%
Total	73	100%

Thus, despite years of on-the-job experience, only three percent (3%) of these Navajos hold administrative or supervisory positions. The Navajo Labor Investigative Task Force (1984) found evidence of on-the-job discrimination against Navajos in favor of other workers:

> Navajo workers complain that non-Navajos are filling job vacancies through patronage rather than based on ability. The company fails to train Navajos for supervisory and management positions, while they do train non-Navajos for promotions. (p. 18)

The report also noted discrimination in the area of worker discipline, i.e., that Navajos are more harshly disciplined than non-Navajos. The report quotes one Navajo worker who stated: "The foremen only complain about us Navajos having poor English, yet they don't complain about Mexican men who only speak their language (Spanish)." Thus, it appears that discrimination against the Navajo worker remains a serious problem in the workplace even on the Navajo reservation.

Vocational counselors are often impotent against the racism and discrimination facing Native Americans in the workplace and often must work with disabled Native American clients as though there were no racist barriers operating in the labor market. There is a need for a broader understanding of the social forces that impact upon the motivation of the disabled Navajo worker. In particular, vocational rehabilitation counselors need to be aware of the problems of structural unemployment, so pervasive and important, that are linked solidly with the distribution of wealth and jobs in the national economic scene.

Training Native Americans for jobs and counseling them regarding the attitudes and motivations toward the Anglo work ethic is only one piece of the picture. In fact, the survey data shows that among Navajos, vocational training was commonplace. Sixty-three percent (63%) of all subjects had some vocational or technical training, i.e., two-thirds of the employed Navajos, and fifty-six percent (56%) of the unemployed Navajos had received such training. As to motivation toward work and personal attitudes toward work, both groups showed a surprisingly *positive attitude* toward the work ethic. For example, positive responses to the statement: "Work is important to my identity" were made by ninety-three percent (93%) of the employed Navajos and eighty-six percent (86%) of the unemployed group.

In fact, the significant differences between the unemployed and the employed Navajos are more related to actual work experience and to disillusionment and anxiety related to the trauma of unemployment itself. *If there were stable, good paying jobs to go around*, one might posit a very low unemployment rate among these Navajos in the reservation work force. Indeed, structural unemployment is a more crucial problem than individual motivational differences between workers.

Such findings tend to illustrate the limited area of personal change that the present clinical practices of Vocational Rehabilitation counselors can address since they cannot impact directly on the broader social issues. Indeed it may be another example of "blaming the victim" for his condition but within a limited area of personal factors, such as "lack of motivation."

Predicting Motivation for Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Data from the Navajo workers' survey responses regarding a series of issues were analyzed and were found to be of potential use to Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation counselors who work with disabled Navajo workers within the clinical model of adjusting an individual to the job market.

Selected social background variables were found to be related to positive attitudes toward work and toward actual employment. These factors derive from a data analysis which compared currently employed Navajos to unemployed Navajos. When comparing and contrasting the two groups on a series of factors, we found several factors related to high employment potential at statistically significant levels. These predictive factors can be divided into two groups: 1) Social Variables, which are related to socio-economic factors, and 2) Attitudinal Variables, which are personal attitudes toward work. "Personality factors" are not the focus in this *motivational* report, because VR Counselors have available to them test scores from a series of standard personality tests. The present study focuses, rather, on cultural and social factors that are related to satisfactory work adaptation and to job satisfaction, and which form the structural background of *motivation to work.*

Table IV

Results of a Comparison of Job Indicators of Employed and Unemployed Navajo Blue Collar Workers By Degree of Statistical Significance (N=103)

Comparing Employed vs. Unemployed Navajos	
Social Variables Positive	Level of Significance
Parents employed	(Trend)*
Had father in the home	(Trend)
Got A-B's in school	(Chi Square=7.65, 1 df, p<.01)
High School grad or above	(Chi Square=4.440, 1 df, p<.05)
Not placed by the court as a child	(Chi Square=7.621, 1 df, p<.05)
Now work with childhood friends	(Chi Square=4.973, 1 df, p<.05)
Friends are employed	(Chi Square=7.594, 1 df, p<.01)
Had a job goal when growing up	(Trend)
Had vocational/technical training	(Trend)
Worked off reservation	(Trend)
Married	(Chi Square=7.783, 1 df, p<.01)
Spouse employed	(Trend)
No serious arrest record	(Trend)

Table IV (continued)

Attitudinal Variables	
Positive	
Is careful at work	(Chi Square=7.312, 1 df, p<.05)
Doesn't drink, miss work	(Chi Square=7.003, 1 df, p<.05)
Doesn't miss work if feels like it	(Chi Square=7.163, 1 df, p<.05)
Think punctuality important	(Trend)
Feels qualified for the job	(Chi Square=7.4, 1 df, p<.05) Re-
tirement plan important	(Trend)

*Trend are those relationships which are at the p < .10 or less, but do not meet the .05 level of probability required in conventional research.

These findings are either statistically significant or are "trend" findings from the comparison between employed and unemployed Navajos.

If Vocational Rehabilitation counselors wished to gauge an individual worker's "motivation" for re-training or for job placement, it would seem feasible to collect similar social and attitudinal data from each VR applicant and to "score" them on the above social/attitudinal factors. One could be scored by the number of positive items in each of the two categories. For example, if a client had eight (8) or more of the positive social variables, he could be scored "high" on the social factors for work motivation. If one scored four (4) or more on positive attitudinal variables, the client could be rated as high on positive attitudinal variables, the client could be rated as high on positive attitudes toward motivation for work. If a Navajo client scored high on social background variables but low on the attitudinal variables, then intense vocational counseling might be *directed at* individual attitudinal change. If the Navajo client scored low on the background social factors, perhaps additional vocational training should be implemented. Persons scoring poorly in both areas would present a motivational problem that would undoubtedly require both retraining and intense counseling in order to prepare that client to re-enter the labor market.

The survey indicates that Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation counselors must have an acute awareness of the broader job market as well, particularly relating to jobs available and to the insidious forces of racial prejudice. They must also be able to "diagnose" each Navajo client's work motivation as indicated by his scores on the social and attitudinal variables that are derived from empirical research.

Study 2: Motivated and Non-Motivated Vocational Rehabilitation Clients: Case Studies

The second empirical study is that of the "Ideal Type" case-study of two Navajo vocational rehabilitation clients, one judged by the Navajo VR counselor to be more "motivated" than the other. The social and attitudinal factors in each case are analyzed according to the previous empirical variables found to be statistically significant in the Navajo industrial worker study. (See Study 1 above)

Case-study methodology utilizes the concept of empathy, insight, introspection, intuition, and reciprocity (Greenwood 1960). For an empathetic initiative relationship to be utilized effectively, the researcher must be thoroughly familiar with the cultural background and the social situation of each client. Assuming data on the natural history of the problem (Indian disability and VR services), the analyst can spot points of change and/or of insight. Data are then subjected to a "free-flowing" analysis, i.e., an unformalized and unformalizable mental process interlaced with intuition and insight. Such an analysis is essential because the researchers must explain the relationships discovered in each case. Glaser and Strauss (1970) state that data should be collected and analyzed in a way which allows the basic social, socio-psychological, and structural processes inherent in a phenomenon to emerge naturally so that the analyst can "discover" what is going on. The "think work" of such analysis requires the analyst to conceptually connect all types of diverse information, attempting to make sense out of what seems to be confused and scattered items. This analytical process clarifies "gaps" in the analysis and suggests additional theoretical issues.

For these Vocational Rehabilitation case studies, we studied two disabled Navajo workers who were currently active Vocational Rehabilitation clients. The cases were selected by NVRP case workers and represent one VR client who seemed "motivated" and one who seemed "not motivated."

Upon analysis, Case A is a "modern, progressive Navajo" and Case B is a relatively "traditional Navajo Indian." Both Case A and Case B were injured on the job and are beginning the rehabilitative process as clients of the Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

Case A: "Motivated" Navajo Client

> This disabled Navajo man, age 34, was a Peabody Mining Co. worker driving heavy equipment. He was injured when his grader ran over a pile of rocks, injuring his spine. This spinal cord injury developed over a number of years of doing this heavy work, and he is now receiving 30% disability. His rehabilitative goal is to be re-

trained for another line of work which will not threaten his injury. He is a member of the Navajo tribe, married to an Anglo woman. They have four children in their home. His wife is regularly employed. He is a high school graduate from a public school on the reservation. He liked school and did well academically (B student) and participated in athletics (football, track and field). When he was growing up, his mother was regularly employed in the health field while his father was a part-time laborer. He does not consider himself to be very religious, although he belongs to the Baptist Church. He says he and his family are considered mostly modern rather than "traditional." he is not really fluent in Navajo, but rather uses English in all of his communication. He states he sometimes speaks Navajo with his friends and relatives. However, he lives apart from his parents and most of his family. He does not use traditional Navajo healers and is not able to assist in a Sing or a curing ceremony. On Joe's Traditionality Scale, the client scores as "high in acculturation." When he was growing up, he wanted to get a job in the field of forestry, and he was interested in outdoor work. However, he applied for a job at the Peabody mine in 1983 and never pursued forestry work. If he had a "real choice" about the kind of work he would like to do, he listed three choices: 1) a job working for the Federal Government; 2) a job working for the tribe; and 3) a steady job off the reservation. He appears to be highly motivated to accept retraining and job placement, indicating he is willing to go anywhere—that "nothing can stop him from accepting a suitable job." He has excellent and positive attitudes toward work, he doesn't drink, and he has had no legal problems. He seems to represent an ideal candidate for Vocational Rehabilitation training.

Case B: "Non-Motivated Navajo" Vocational Rehabilitation Client

This 28-year-old Navajo man was employed as a carpenter in construction, working for a private contractor. He is married to a Navajo woman, and they have four children. He is a high school graduate from a BIA school and a public school on the reservation. He liked school, was a C student, and was a wrestler in the athletic program at school. He had no serious difficulties in adolescence, although he was punished a few times in school for truancy. He has many close friends, and most of them are still his friends today: a few worked with him before he was injured. He has no non-Indian friends. He was reared by his mother and grandmother. His father was not in the home when he was growing up.

He was injured after only three weeks on the job when he hit a nail off center, and it hit his eye, injuring it seriously. This family lives in

poverty, dependent upon General Assistance since his Workers Compensation ran out. His car is unreliable, and he needs better transportation if he is to travel to job training or employment. He considers that he and his family are both traditional and modern, although he states he is a "traditional Navajo" in his religious affiliation. He speaks fluent Navajo in his home and with his friends. He utilizes traditional healers at least twice a year. When asked if he had a "real choice" for the kind of work he would like to do, he first stated he would like to work with his hands or to do seasonal work outdoors, or finally, he would like to work for the tribe in some capacity. He had prior vocational training in the field of carpentry and operating heavy equipment but now feels at a loss as to what kind of work he could get, given the injury to his eye. His drinking sometimes causes him to miss work. He admits he has a drinking problem. Drinking made him careless on the job and may well have contributed to his injury on the job, although he only alludes to this in a tangential way. He admits he sometimes lost his temper on the job. Given his very short work history and lack of stability, this client poses a counseling problem as well as a job training problem for the Vocational Rehabilitation counselor.

Ideal Type Case Analysis and Discussion

Both Navajo clients show areas of strength that will aid them in their rehabilitation process. In both cases, their wives would be helpful in this process since both men have heavy family responsibilities, each with four small children. Both men are young, in good health (other than their injuries), and are high school graduates. Neither are anti-social, nor do they have serious legal problems. One has had a long period of steady employment; the other has had some job-training experience.

Yet these two cases are also quite different and require different counseling approaches. Case A is a "modern Navajo," acculturated and ready to move after training into almost any appropriate job placement, even if it were off the reservation. Case B is a semi-traditional Navajo who could use traditional medicine as well as alcoholism treatment to help him maintain discipline, assume control over his drinking, and move to a higher level of maturity. He needs a wide range of social service and financial support as well as job retraining and intense counseling.

Combining the Case Study With Survey Findings

In search of "motivational" prediction, as requested by the Navajo field workers, NARTC compared the "motivated" vocational rehabilitation client with the non-motivated vocational rehabilitation client on the previous study's "motivational variables" as shown in the following table:

Table V

Motivational Predictor Items Compared Between "Motivated" and "Non-Motivated" Vocational Rehabilitation Clients

	V R Clients	
Motivational Predictor Items Social Variables	Case A Motivated	Case B Non-Motivated
Parents were employed	X	
Had father in home	X	
Got A-B's in school	X	
High school graduate	X	X
Not placed as child by court	X	X
Friends now employed		
Had job goal as youth	X	
Had vocational training	X	X
Worked off reservation	X	
Married	X	X
Spouse employed	X	
No serious arrest record	X	X
Total	11	5
Attitudinal Variable		
Careful at Work	X	
Doesn't drink or miss work	X	
Doesn't miss work if "feels like it"	X	
Thinks punctuality important	X	
Feels qualified for job	X	
Retirement plan important	X	
Total	6	0
Total Score	17	5

When the two vocational rehabilitation clients are compared on the work motivational predictor items derived from the empirical study of employed vs. non-employed Navajo workers, the "motivated Navajo client (Case A)" scored on 17 of 18 of the empirical items.

A Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation counselor faced with such empirical findings might work quite differently in meeting the service needs of these two clients. Case A appears to be ready for retraining and job placement, with a high potential motivation for "success." Case B appears to need extensive personal counseling, perhaps referral for alcoholic treatment, and job training at a level of employment commensurate with his ability and interests (e.g., outdoor work or employment by the tribe, perhaps working with traditional persons).

Discussion

Since the advent of the State-Federal Vocational Rehabilitation program, psycho-educational and vocational assessment have played a critical role in the rehabilitation process. The development of a viable rehabilitation plan and effective services delivery is often contingent upon having comprehensive and accurate assessment data. This allows informed decisions to be made concerning eligibility for VR services, entrance into training programs, job placement, and development of plans for the client to enhance areas of strength and improve areas of weakness.

Currently, a large portion of rehabilitative clients receive traditional psychological, educational, and vocational evaluations as part of the diagnostic and planning process. Some of the specific behavioral areas that may be examined during these assessments include: (1) basic academic skills (e.g., reading and mathematics); (2) cognitive and intellectual abilities, and achievement; (3) personality and emotional functioning, screening for organic brain dysfunction and learning disabilities; (4) career interest and vocational aptitude testing; (5) dexterity testing; (6) physical capacities and tolerances; (7) worker personality; (8) job-seeking skills; (9) work habits; (10) paper and pencil tests (both group and individual); (11) individually administered measures of personality and of cognitive and intellectual functioning; and (12) situational assessments.

A voluminous body of literature exists documenting the fact that many of the traditional assessment instruments and methodologies now being employed were developed using non-disabled Anglo populations. Olmeda (1981), Organist (1982), and Samudo (1975) have summarized critical issues and questions

regarding the applicability of traditional assessment methods to disabled minority populations because of the possible bias of the testing instruments. An important concern is whether any of these instruments and techniques are sensitive to unique cultural variables of Navajo clients.

Native Americans possess values, customs, patterns of thought, language, and interests different from those drawn from the culture for which assessment instruments were designed. A few specific technical questions raised about these instruments include: (1) Are disabled Native Americans represented in the norms? (2) Are disabled Native Americans represented in the samples utilized in the reliability and validity studies? (3) Is the content and level of language appropriate for disabled Native Americans? (4) Are there personality and motivational variables associated with the Native American's cultural identity which have a differential impact on test performance (Organist 1982)? Most important, the examiner must have confidence that the results obtained constitute a reliable and valid basis for making decisions about the client's future.

We used two social research methodologies to determine how Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation counselors could improve their diagnosis of work motivation potential in their Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation clients. First of all, structural, social, and attitudinal factors were examined that differentiated motivational factors found in a survey of employed and non-employed Navajos. Selected variables were found to be either statistically significant or nearly so in predicting employment. Data on two "Ideal Types" of Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation clients drawn from the NVRP's active case load were then analyzed. One Vocational Rehabilitation client was clinically assessed as being "work-motivated"; the second client was viewed as presenting a case of poor "work-motivation." These two Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation clients were then subjected to an in-depth case study using Greenwood (1960) and Glaser-Straus (1970) methodologies, which were used to "test" the work motivational factors that emerged from the survey of Navajo industrial workers. We found that the work-motivation predictors derived from the Navajo worker survey did discriminate the degree of work-motivation clinically noted between the two Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation clients. These results are especially important because of their significance to the vocational assessment processes of predicting the degree of motivation of Navajo VR clients.

Rather than modify or attempt to use pre-set "tests," this research project also evaluated empirical data on Navajo employees who were "successful" and "motivated" in their work roles, deriving statistically significant variables from a comparison study with "unsuccessful" Navajo workers in order to develop a set of social and attitudinal indicators.

After these research studies and analyses were completed, we were able to develop and validate a set of eighteen social and attitudinal variables that appear to permit the Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation counselors to predict motivational levels and to assign Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation clients to different levels and types of Vocational Rehabilitation services.

Not only were the social and attitudinal variables important, but also these variables were found to be of equal importance to Navajo cultural values. We found that in general that the *more "acculturated" the Navajo client, the better that client's level of motivation for vocational rehabilitation services.* The basic dilemma facing the special Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation program, therefore, is that in traditional Navajo culture, "work," i.e., "employment," may not be a dominant value for non-acculturated Navajo clients.

Implications of this Research Study

It is a widely held notion that cultural factors are of crucial importance in any communication or action system that occurs between diverse groups. When groups are other than power-equals, as is the case between Western and developing nations, between Euro-Americans and neocolonist peoples, and between the Federal government and Native Americans, the power and status dimensions combine to make cultural problems even more complex and potentially disturbing. The role of vocational rehabilitation tactics with Native Americans clients might be seen as one such example of a potentially confusing exchange, i.e., the centrality of the value of "employment" is largely an Anglo concept, as is the model of client/counselor relationships as a way of delivering Vocational Rehabilitation services. These models are at cultural variance with the traditional relationship styles of a folk society, such as that found among Navajo tribal members. Most important of all, these cultural values appear to affect worker motivation. Therefore, it seems imperative that there be an understanding of the cultural variables underlying so much of the communication and interactions between Anglos and Navajos, and between Vocational Rehabilitation counselors and Navajo American clients.

Definitions of situations arise from a peoples' understanding of their world, i.e., as a people define a situation as real, so it becomes real in its consequences. Traditional Native American culture did not define "work" in the same way as did Anglo culture, and therefore working for cash wage to the Native American may be a foreign concept. Historically among Navajos, productive activity arose from

deeply held attitudes, beliefs, and unspoken understandings within the group. The social organization of Native American "work" varied greatly from tribe to tribe, since some were hunters and gathers, some were agriculturalists, and some were fishermen, etc. All such activity had in common a direct relationship between man and nature, between human need and natural solutions. Native Americans had no common understanding of exchanging personal time and labor for money, of exchanging money to meet basic human needs, to acquire additional property, to hire the labor of others, or to accumulate goods for "profit." Native American productive task-oriented activity was group oriented, not based on individual greed or on status-attainment goals.

On the other hand, working for wages is the cultural basis and source of identity for the majority of non-Indian persons living in the United States of America. The labor market determines not only their status, identity, and life-style, but also the basis of the nation's prosperity, stability, and economic existence. Taxes from the wages of millions support government functions *vis-a-vis* the Social Security program. The economic wealth of the nation and the financial status of each citizen is rooted in their participation in the labor market.

There are some exceptions to these direct labor market programs, e.g., the so-called "entitled" groups, such as veterans, public-welfare recipients, the elderly, etc. Native Americans, too, occupy a special "entitlement" position within American life in recognition of their relinquishment of their land under agreements and treaties with the federal government. This special status over time, for good or for ill, has formed the basic definitions which impact upon all relationships between Indians in return for giving up their land—among those are the "right" to health, education, and welfare services. How these "rights" are implemented varies greatly, and this implementation is generally the source of much anguish, misunderstanding, and bitterness between Anglo and Native American groups.

Historically, there has been a clash between Anglo and Native American cultural definitions of "work," which have been a constant source of irritation. The majority group has consistently attempted to force Indians into the Anglo labor market model. As Red Cloud, a famous Oglala Sioux chief stated: "Don't take my young men away to work, for they will have no time to dream." And in the religious view of the Sioux [and most Plains Indian people], dreaming *was* the proper work for young men, i.e., to dream, to search for their vision, for their identity, and for their purpose in life. The idea of "working" for wages only to lose individual freedom to a "job" was utterly foreign and totally unacceptable. To read the history of Anglo attempts to "civilize the savages" is to read a long and

sad story of cultural destruction and confusion, failure, bitterness, and mistrust. Likewise, the attempt to "educate the savages" by removing children from their families, their tribes, and their cultural milieu, to place children in public and religious boarding schools in order to "train them to work," has continued the cultural and personal destruction of Native values and has established a great lack of trust between Native and Anglo people.

Navajo children's initial institutional contacts with the Anglo culture are with the Indian Health Service, the tribal welfare system, and the Anglo educational system. However, the work force is not as structured as is the health, education, and welfare systems. There is not a clear bridge between those institutional systems and adult participation in the work force. Approximately 85% of all employment on the reservation is with one or the other of the tribal or government agencies. Private enterprise employment generally occurs when reservation Indians relocate to the cities. The adult socialization mechanisms leading to the work force are poorly institutionalized. Further, Native Americans experience considerable difficulty in obtaining steady work. Since their traditional culture does not necessarily define persons in terms of their occupation nor assign value according to their status in a work situation or a career, adult Native Americans are often termed to be "unsuccessful" in their work roles.

Unemployment is epidemic on most Indian reservations and thus the Native American's personal integration as a "worker" may be flawed. In the Anglo world, adult identities are assigned largely by an individual's work role. In the Native American world, adult identities are assigned largely by the individual's relationships with his family, clan, or friends. Hence traditional Vocational Rehabilitation services that are so closely tied to the Anglo work force, and those VR counselors (both Anglo and Native) who are trained in the technique of preparing and supporting the disabled in filling employment roles, have special problems when working with Indian reservation dwellers.

The differences in values between Anglo culture and traditional Native American culture regarding work are deeply rooted; therefore, if Vocational Rehabilitation services are to be made meaningful to Native Americans, it is essential to understand and utilize their residual cultural values regarding work because these values are a factor in work motivation.

The Navajo Vocational Rehabilitation project is one experiment with bridging the cultural gap and can therefore be seen as one more type of acculturating, culture-blending institution available to bridge reservation Native Americans into the Anglo culture.

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