STUDENT PERCEPTION OF TEACHER SUPPORTS AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Title: Student Perception of Teacher Supports and Cultural Identity Development of American Indian Students

According to the data, American Indian (AI) students have the worst academic outcomes of any racial/ethnic subgroup in the U.S. This study seeks to understand the student perspective in terms of teacher support. Students who have a teacher of the same race are more likely to identify that teacher as supportive. Given that the teacher workforce in the U.S. is 80% White, it is important to understand how race-mismatched teachers can support their non-White students. The extant data used in this study allows for the author to analyze student perspective in four specific supports; 1) Academic Support, 2) Social Support, 3) Cultural Identity Development Support, and 4) Family/Community Relationship Support. The results of multiple chi-square analyses show that AI and White students report experiencing equivalent levels of teacher support. Furthermore, tests of independence indicate that students are able to clearly delineate between different types of teacher support. This outcome suggests to educators that they not focus solely on academic support in order to be perceived as supportive by their students. In order to build positive relationships with students, which research shows is vital for student outcomes, teachers might provide supports in multiple areas to meet the diverse needs of their student population.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

American Indian (AI) students experience substantially worse educational

outcomes in U.S. public schools compared to students of other races and ethnicities. In

2008, the Education Committee of the National Caucus of Native American State

Legislators (NCNASL) reported, "The state of education in our nation's K-12 schools for

Native students is distressing" (NCNASL, 2008).

The distressing situation in education for AI/AN students has not changed since

the 2008 NCNASL study and gaps between AI students and their peers continue to exist

in many capacities. In 2020, the digital gap between AI students and their peers became

apparent with 34% of AI students reportedly not having internet at home compared to

23% of all other races not having internet at home (Sen & Tucker, 2020). On the 2015

National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP), AI students performed two to

three grade levels below their White peers in reading and math (Cai, 2020) perpetuating

the achievement gap. According to available research AI students are less likely to attend

schools with advanced courses and are less likely to attend college than their peers (Cai,

2020). According to data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) AI

students graduated 17 percentage points below their White peers, while also being three

times more likely to drop out of school (NCES, 2018). The available data establishes AI

students as the lowest achieving subgroup in the United States.

AI students are in need of better support from their schools in order to achieve at

higher levels. Support for cultural identity development has been shown to be a

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supportive measure for AI students in school. Teachers may be able to influence and help develop students' cultural identity in school through culturally relevant teaching such as celebrations, language, and curriculum. The available research indicates that AI students who have a strong cultural identity tend to have greater educational outcomes. In multiple qualitative studies Huffman (1990, 2007, 2013) found that AI students who reported having a strong cultural identity were more likely to persevere and complete college. AI students who reported high levels of social supports from their college such as AI curriculum and AI traditional celebrations were also more successful and completed college at higher rates (Lundberg, 2014).

Given the current demographic profile of the U.S. teaching force, if teachers are to build cultural identity in AI students, this will need to be accomplished by predominantly White teachers. During the 2015-2016 school year, teachers of color accounted for less than 20% of all public elementary and secondary school teachers in the U.S. (Taie & Goldring, 2018). Having White teachers serve as a source of cultural identity development may prove challenging given what evidence we have on challenges that emerge from race mismatching in other contexts. Race mismatching between teachers and students may lead to lower levels of academic achievement and an increase in reported behavior problems in Black and Latinx students (Papageorge, Gershenson, & Min Kang, 2020; Lindsay & Hart, 2017; Gershenson, Holt, & Papageorge, 2016; Egalite, Kisida, & Winters, 2015). It stands to reason that race mismatch could also lead to challenges in supporting the cultural identity development of AI students.

Despite all of the research centered on cultural identity in education there is a clear gap that has not yet been explored: whether students are able to distinguish between and identify different types of support being given to them. To address this gap we should first examine if students from different backgrounds experience teacher support differently. Research tells us that AI students tend to have less support in school, but that does not tell us if they perceive support differently than their White peers. Another important concept is whether support is perceived as a singular or multi-dimensional construct by students. Providing insight for these two gaps could provide schools and teachers information on prioritizing supports to better achieve desired outcomes.

Educational research has consistently shown that the relationship between teacher and student is impactful and can have long lasting effects, positive or negative (Skinner, Furrer, Marchand, & Kindermann, 2008; Mitchell & DellaMattera, 2011; King, McInerney, & Watkins, 2012; McMahon, Coker, & Parnes, 2013; Liu, Mei, Tian, & Huebner, 2016). Despite the abundance of research on teacher support there is very little research available that provides insight on the student's perception of the support provided by their teachers.

I used an exploratory design meant to gain understanding of how AI students perceive various teacher supports compared to their White peers to address the aforementioned research gaps. I draw my data from a research team at the University of Oregon (Vincent et al., 2018), which conducted a parallel survey to the National Indian Education Study (NIES) on a small sample of students in the Pacific Northwest.

I analyze four different types of teacher support (Academic Support, Social Support, Cultural Identity Development Support, and Family/Community Relationship Support) to determine if students perceive them independently of each other or if they are interpreted as a single construct. This is important for gaining understanding on how students perceive teacher support. Research does not tell us if students are able to perceive supports separately or if students only perceive support as a single construct. If students perceive these forms of support differently, and in particular if AI students experience cultural identity developmental supports differently than the other dimensions, then support for AI students' identity development may require strategies outside the standard repertoire of education professionals. On the other hand, if students perceive this as largely uni-dimensional construct, building teachers' universal support skills may be more important.

Learning about the AI student perspective not only addresses a gap in the literature but may also lead to a large impact in AI student outcomes. By understanding student perspectives, teachers can better serve students and districts can better utilize limited resources.

The results of this study indicate that AI students perceive their teachers to be equally supportive as their White peers. Given my assumption that the teachers in my sample are roughly equivalent to the national distribution of teacher demographics, this implies that teachers of multiple racial backgrounds (including White teachers) can support their AI students.

The results of this study also suggest that students perceive academic supports separate from family supports and that students perceive academic support separate from cultural identity development support. The outcomes indicate that students are aware and can separate out various supports provided by teachers. This implies that teacher support is a multi-dimensional construct in which better training of teachers is needed to fully implement systems of supports for all students.

In the four chapters that follow, I review the literature on cultural identity and teacher support, present the sample, measures and analytic method, share results and discuss the implications of my dissertation for future practice and research.

More specifically, in *Chapter 2: Literature Review*, I discuss my approach to a systematic literature review which resulted in 15 peer reviewed studies focused on American Indian students' experience of support. I then develop a theoretical framework around humanism, which encompasses support for the whole student, which leads to my research questions.

In *Chapter 3: Methods*, I explain how I conducted my study, the data used, and the descriptive statistics of the sample. The chapter ends with a detailed explanation of how the data analysis was conducted.

In *Chapter 4: Results*, I present the results of the data analysis. The data analysis was completed through a series of chi-square tests. The chi-square test is used to determine if there is a statistical significance relationship among the data. The chi-square test is also used for a test of independence to help determine if students perceive supports separate from each other. The data analysis is conducted to test whether, in the sample,

differences are likely due to idiosyncrasies of sampling or reveal true differences in the underlying population.

In *Chapter 5: Discussion*, I discuss the limitations of the study to provide context and clarity for how the results should be considered and generalized. There are several limitations discussed as well as areas for future research to build off this study. The implications of the results for practice and policy considerations are also identified. The implications of the study are laid out for practicing educators in the classroom and administrative levels. Policy implications are also discussed at the district and state level.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

To better understand the knowledge base on teacher support for AI students, I conducted a systematic review of the literature. A synthesis of these insights informs both my theoretical framework and analytic plan. In particular, I conducted a search of two different search engines: Education Resource Information Center (ERIC) and the University of Oregon Library on-line database, Academic Search Premier. The purpose of this search was to analyze peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2005-2019 to gain understanding and insight on the role teacher support has on AI students and cultural identity.   I used the following two Boolean search phrases: "Teacher Support of American Indian Students" and "Teacher Support for Cultural Identity." The literature review omitted studies that did not focus on support provided within an elementary, secondary or tertiary educational setting and studies that did not include AI students within the research. Selected studies focused on wide range of age groups, the study occurring in a school environment, diverse settings, and diverse methodology.

In total, 15 studies were included in the literature review. Studies that were omitted were either (a) outside the scope of the target population, (b) did not occur in a school environment, or (c) did not include teacher support as a main focus of the study. Though not an exhaustive literature review, this review was thorough and provided very good insight into teacher support and AI students. In addition to the 15 studies generated from the systematic review, I supplemented the literature review by consulting subject-

matter experts and reviewing reference lists of seminal studies for other potentially relevant sources.

I summarize the key characteristics of the studies captured in the systematic portion of the literature review in Appendix B, Table 1, and Appendix C, Table 2. Table 1 discusses the main findings of the literature, identifying key concepts and the measures used in the study. Table 2 displays the settings, design, the number of participants, and the grade level of participants. I attempted to include diverse studies as evident by the features of the studies. The participants ranged from elementary to college age students. The settings included two rural, six urban, and seven studies using both rural and urban settings. The research design methods used were two qualitative studies, three longitudinal studies, one meta-analysis, and nine quantitative studies.

From the literature review there were three main themes that the studies are divided into (1) social supports, (2) teacher support and student mental/behavior health, and (3) perceived teacher support on student attitudes and outcomes.

Social Supports

In general, social supports have been shown to lead to an increase in students reportedly having a strong cultural identity. In a study involving 647 AI college students enrolled in rural and urban colleges, Lundberg (2014) found that colleges which offer high levels of social supports such as culturally relevant teaching, mentoring students in AI programs and beliefs, supporting and offering celebrations of AI culture, AI student groups, and supporting individual cultural identity had a larger impact on educational

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outcomes than academic supports like tutoring, increased office hours, and increased access to curriculum supports (Lundberg, 2014; Powers, 2006).

Social supports show an impact on behavior in the classroom as well. AI students are significantly more likely to receive a discipline referral than any other subgroup, except for Black students (Whitford & Levine-Donnerstein, 2017). AI youth are also 30% more likely to be referred to juvenile detention than their White counterparts (Flanigan, 2015). However, social supports for AI students help lead to strong cultural identities and have outcomes like improved self-esteem that lead to a decrease in behavior problems in school and interactions with law enforcement (Huang & Stormshak, 2011; Stumblingbear & Romans, 2012).

This is important for marginalized populations because the research indicates that social supports also improved educational outcomes in Black and Latinx students as well. In a study conducted by Dee and Penner (2017) involving 1,405 students in the San Francisco school district, a causal relationship was shown between culturally relevant teaching, such as an ethnic studies class, and increased GPA, attendance rate, and credits earned among at risk students. The study had a large male Latinx sample size, but given the large effect size of 1.5 standard deviation the study shows promising results that may be able to be replicated by schools serving various minority students, including AI.

This matters for AI students because as the lowest achieving subgroup in the U.S. a change of support structure could have a large impact on AI student outcomes. It signals that social supports could be a better way to reach minority populations, particularly AI students. In my experience as a practicing educator, assisting students in

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the cultural identity development process, through social supports, is not something taught to me or regularly discussed in schools.

Despite the literature being clear that social supports are a critical factor for the success of AI students, there is little to no research on the student perspective of those supports. The literature does indicate, however, that students who have increased student voice are more likely to be engaged in school and report school as being a welcoming place that motivates them to work hard (Benner, Brown, & Jeffery, 2019). Student voice may be particularly important for historically marginalized populations, including students from Black, Latinx, AI, and low-income communities as well as students with disabilities. Attempting to understanding the student perspective opens up opportunities to provide students a voice engaging them in their own education.

Teacher Support and Student Mental/Behavioral Health

In general, students' mental and behavioral health are impacted by teacher support, either positively or negatively. Perceived teacher support has long lasting effects on students and their perception of their future teachers. The impact a teacher has on a student goes beyond academics.

Mental health of students is an important construct due to its effect on the individual's well-being as well as school success. A longitudinal study involving 9,503 middle and high school students across the nation indicated that students who reported positive teacher support reported fewer mental health problems such as depression and anxiety (Joyce & Early, 2014). Positive teacher support leads to improved mental health while negative teacher support lead to the deterioration of mental health. A meta-analysis

of over 58,000 students of all education levels across the nation showed that students who reported having positive teacher support are less likely to have problem behaviors and psychopathology issues such as depression, anxiety, and suicide while also reporting increased self-esteem and resilience (Lei, Cui, & Chiu, 2018; Stumblingbear & Romans, 2012; Huang & Stormshak, 2011). Likewise, students who report having high levels of teacher support are less likely to report feelings of academic hopelessness, anxiety, and stress (Raufelder, Regner, & Wood, 2018).

This is important for marginalized populations because research indicates that minority populations are less likely to seek treatment for mental health concerns (Williams, 2018). Teacher relationships and support can have a positive impact on student health. Improved student health is likely to lead to improved student outcomes. Teachers play an important role in the emotional health of students (Kim, Dar-Nimrod, & MacCann, 2018). Seemingly innocent interactions like a joke or sarcasm can lead to a negative emotional response in the student. This shows the importance of keeping interactions positive and encouraging.

This matters for AI students because they have some of the highest rates of mental health concerns and suicide rates in the U.S. (Curtin & Hedegaard, 2019). The impact a teacher has on a student cannot be understated. The literature indicates that a teacher not only impacts the outcome of a students' education, but perhaps their emotional well-being as well.

The literature shows that teacher support extends well beyond their classroom, but does not explore if minority students perceive these supports similarly to their White peers. A

bad experience with a teacher directly impacts a student's perspective beyond that single classroom. With 80% of the teacher workforce being White it is important to discern how AI students interpret supports provided by their teachers. The literature does not explore this and leaves a gap that this study seeks to address.

Perceived Teacher Support on Student Attitudes and Outcomes

In general, teacher support is an important construct that impacts students long after the student has left the teacher's classroom. A study of 1,303 7th grade students reporting on their perception of the support they received the year before showed a relationship between students who reported having an unsupportive teacher in the past and their lack of trusting teacher in the future (Schenke, Ruzek, Lam, Karabenick, & Eccles, 2018). The lasting effect of a negative teacher can have a drastic impact on student success for many years. Students who perceive their teacher to be supportive are highly likely to report that their teacher the following year is also supportive (Schenke et al., 2018). This correlation shows the critical importance for teachers to build positive relationships with students.

Whole student advocates argue that the relationship between student and teacher is vital for academic success and the students' well-being. Academic success is a difficult construct to study because there are so many variables that can attribute to the success of a student. The relationship with a teacher can have a major impact on many of these variables improving or reducing the academic outcomes of a student depending on the quality of the relationship (Ansari, Hofkens, & Pianta, 2020; Dietrich, Zimmerman, & Hoffman, 2020; Spilt, Kooman, & Thijs, 2011). Student-perceived teacher support of

student independence did not relate to increase motivation or success for students in a 2017 study conducted by Lazarides and Raufelder. However, student-perceived positive teacher/student relationships showed an increase in motivation, greater effort, and persistence of the student (Lazarides & Raufelder, 2017). This study reinforces what so many educators already know, that the relationship built with students is critical to academic success.

Research also indicates that minority students tend to report feeling more supported by teachers of the same race rather than race-mismatched teachers. A study using the Education Longitudinal Study data from the NCES showed that race matching students and teachers lead to an increase in student reporting of teacher support among Black and Latinx students (Gershenson, Holt, & Papageorge, 2016). The study also found that non-Black teachers had significantly lower expectations of Black students than Black teachers did. It stands to reason that the same could be true for AI students. Many AI students grow up with unique experiences living in a sovereign nation on a reservation. Having a teacher that can share such a unique experience could help the teacher better serve AI students. However, it is possible that race may not play a significant factor in the support of AI students and race matching is not significant for AI students. Unfortunately, student perception of their teacher's support and the teacher's race/ethnicity were not disaggregated in my data. While it is safe to say that the preponderance of teachers in my study are White, because 80% of the teacher workforce is White, I am not able to directly address race matching or mismatching of AI students and their teacher. However, it is an important construct that is worth addressing.

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This is important for marginalized populations because teacher relationships can also improve students' well-being outside of the classroom. Students who report having a highly supportive teacher are also likely to report having higher academic enjoyment and lower academic helplessness (Sakiz, Pape, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2012). In addition, Sakiz, Pape, and Woolfolk Hoy found that students that reported having a high level of teacher support also reported having a higher sense of belonging. Having a higher sense of belonging is positively correlated to fewer psychopathology problems.

Teachers that are reported as not believing in their students are more likely to have students with less motivation, participation, and success, even if the perception of the students does not match the intention of the teacher. Students who perceive low levels of challenge, due to well-intentioned teachers attempting to make the curriculum more accessible, are less likely to engage in the learning (Strati, Schmidt, & Maier, 2017).

Race-mismatched teacher support can lead to unintended consequences without careful attention to bias. A study looking at same-race teachers and students conducted with Black students in North Carolina showed that teachers who are racially mismatched with their students are found to have lower academic expectations and increase behavior issues in class (Lindsay & Hart, 2017). Given the available research showing the importance of teacher support and the long lasting effects it can have, bias that leads to low expectations can doom a student. Teacher support can overcome these negative outcomes, but only through positive interactions and emotional supportive environments. Understanding the role race plays in student perceived teacher support is vital to

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improving educational outcomes given the increasing minority population in schools and the majority White teacher workforce.

Race matching has shown promise in building relationships with students and in increasing positive academic outcomes. A 2020 study looking at over 12,000 teacher pairs analyzing teacher-student race matching and classroom diversity showed that teachers tended to report feeling closer to students of the same race (Papageorge, Gershenson, & Min Kang, 2020).

Summary

This literature review was completed with AI students as the focus. Analyzing research conducted on AI students provides great insight into how to better serve AI students, but it doesn't explain if the support AI students experience is the same or different than their peers. Understanding if AI students experience support differently could inform teacher training programs and interventions relating to cultural identity development as it relates to teacher support.

When it comes to students reporting levels of teacher support we do not really know why one student reports a teacher as having a high level of support while another student in the same class will report the teacher as having a low level of support. We also do not fully know if students who report higher levels of teacher support are truly receiving higher levels of support. It is very possible that these students come from more supportive homes and therefore interpret their interaction with teachers quite differently than students who come from homes that are lacking the same level of support. Determining if there is a correlation between these two support constructs can lay the

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groundwork for future studies that attempt to disentangle the causal nature of these relationships.

After analyzing the available research, it is clear that we do not know if one type of support improves academic outcomes more than other types of support. Conducting research to find causal relationships would provide schools powerful and important information on improving education for all students. This would provide valuable knowledge for practitioners and policy makers to prioritize specific supports to maximize outcomes. It is also evident that we do not understand if students can truly differentiate between various types of support. Conducting research using statistical analysis such as pairwise or mutually independent analysis would give credibility to whether teacher supports are a single construct or multi-dimensional. Knowing this would specify if it is better to give supports in broad school-wide systems or if they are better given through deliberate and specific methods within the classroom.

Addressing the gaps in the literature, this exploratory study will look to understand the student perspective of teacher support. In doing so, it may inform decisions at a local level and guide future research in the importance of student perspective for educational best practices.

Theoretical Framework

Humanism is a theoretical framework within identity originating in psychology during the early 20th century. In an overview of his theory, Carl Rogers (2013) described identity as the verification of traits, values, and other identity constructs through a person's life. I theorize that AI students construct their identity as a result of this

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verification process that is influenced at least in part through their interactions with teachers. This study seeks to explore how different aspects of teacher support might relate to the humanistic process of identity development in AI students.

Everybody has numerous identities they can assume such as a mother, manager, student, husband, friend, Jewish, American Indian, athlete, artist, etc. Teachers impact identity through the interaction they have with their students. As teachers verify or challenge the students' self-perceived identity the student's identity becomes cemented or altered. In the absence of verification conflict can occur, which causes one to question their identity and how the world sees them (Stets & Serpe, 2013). The purpose of this study is to explore how teacher support is perceived by AI students, especially in the area of cultural identity given its potential importance in the developmental trajectory of AI students.

A visualization of the theoretical framework for this study can be seen in Figure 1. In the figure I present teacher support encompassing the four domains of support analyzed in this study: Academic Support, Social Support, Cultural Identity Development Support, and Family/Community Relationship Support. Teacher support is a broad term in which more specific supports fall under. I theorize that these four domains of teacher support might (or might not) cohere into a consistent construct of generalized teacher support. In turn, these dimensions of teacher support might influence AI students' identity development, either as independent or holistic constructs. Finally, in my model, students' identity development influences their outcomes.

There are clearly other factors that contribute both to identity development and outcomes which fall beyond the scope of this study. Additionally, I do not explore the link between identity development and student outcomes. Instead, I focus in this study on the relationship within the different dimensions of teacher support and between teacher support and identity development.

Figure 1

Theoretical Framework for Teacher Support of Students
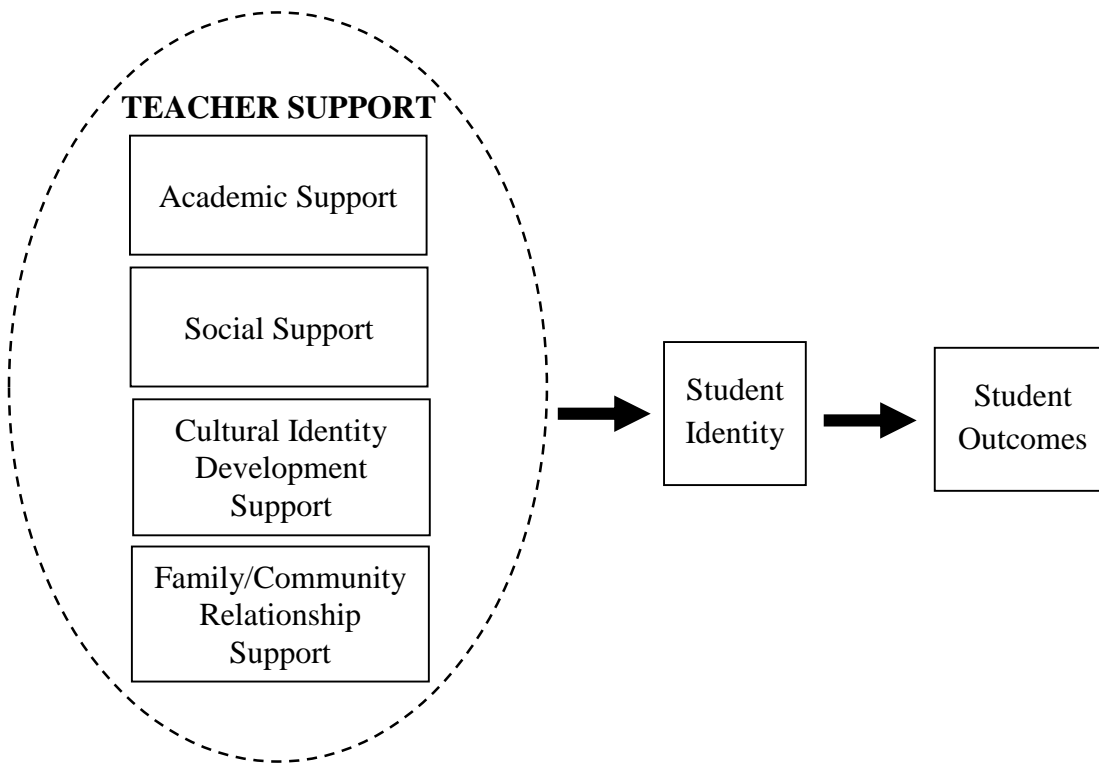
Given the gaps in the literature previously mentioned and the holistic approach of the theoretical framework this study will investigate student perspectives of various supports in humanistic areas such as the mind (academic support), social

(social support), family (family/community support), and self (cultural identity development support). Specifically, I will investigate the following questions.

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant difference between how AI and white students perceive the levels of teacher support in which they receive?

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant difference between student perception of academic support and the students' perception of the school having stronger family/community relationships?

RQ3: Is there a statistically significant difference in how students experience levels of support in the domains of academic support and cultural identity support?

This study seeks to explore if students interpret teacher support differently based on their ethnicity (RQ1). Further, the study will explore if students' perceptions are influenced by their family's relationship with the school (RQ2). The support provided by the teacher, good or bad, directly influences and verifies the students' identity. Given this influence, the study will explore if students perceive academic support differently than support for cultural identity development (RQ3). This will provide insight as to whether students can interpret different teacher supports independently or if students only perceive teacher support as a single construct.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Data Source

The data examined in this study was provided by a research team from the University of Oregon, Vincent et al. The survey was a parallel study to the National Indian Education Study (NIES), which is an add-on survey to the NAEP. While the NAEP is designed to assess knowledge and skills of all students across the nation, the NIES is designed to describe the condition of education for AI students. The data comes from the most recent administration of the NIES which was conducted in the Winter of the 2017-2018 school year. The parallel study used a convenience sample targeting schools in the Pacific Northwest that also took part of the NAEP. The team conducted a survey focused on AI student experiences and student perceptions in four specific domains: Academic Support, Social Support, Support for Cultural Identity Development, and Family/Community Relationships. The purpose of the study was to get a better understanding of what it means to create culturally responsive classrooms where Native students feel welcome, nurtured, and safe and thus, supported to learn (Vincent et al., 2018). The major finding that seems to have emerged from the study is the need to provide teachers of AI students with adequate training to contextualize the delivery of curriculum integrating Native Language and Culture in a manner that does not create stereotype threat or student distrust.

Sample

The extant data provided by the University of Oregon research team had several common and some unique features. The original data included no identifiable information for any of the participants. The data was collected in rural areas of the Pacific Northwest in school districts which have high AI populations. The sample was a convenient, non-representative sample of students. Some of the participating schools were on reservations while most were traditional public schools. See Table 3 for a description of the participants. In total 181 participants were included in the survey including 54 AI and 127 White students. Grades of the participants ranged from Grade 8 to Grade 12 with over 90% of the participants being in Grade 8 or 10. The male to female ratio was nearly 1:1. In total, 14 different tribal affiliations were reflected in the survey.

It is important to note that only American Indian and White students' data were included in this study. The participants of other demographics from the Vincent et al. (2018) study were not included because the purpose of this study is to gain insight and explore the experiences of AI students receiving teacher support and to compare it to students from traditionally centered racial/ethnic backgrounds. This study theorizes that while each student has unique experiences that there are also common needs and challenges common to many AI students. Therefore, knowing that the AI community faces different concerns and issues than other populations this study looks to examine their perspective in relation to their White peers which the public school system was originally designed to serve exclusively. All Black and

Latinx students were excluded from this study to focus solely on the American Indian experience.

Table 3

Demographics of Participants

Self-Reported Race	Number of Participants	Self-Reported Gender	Number of Participants	Self-Reported Grade	Number of Participants
American Indian or Alaska Native*	54	Male	23	8th	29
		Female	29	10th	24
		Other	1	12th	1
		Decline to Answer	1	N/A	N/A
White	127	Male	65	8th	45
		Female	58	10th	80
		Other	0	12th	0
		Decline to Answer	4	Decline to Answer	2

*Tribal affiliations include Potawatomi, Burns Paiute, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Sioux, Omaha, Shoshone, Colville, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation, Crow, Northern Cheyenne, Navajo, Oglala Sioux, and Assiniboine Sioux

Instrument and Measures

The measures used in this study originated from a University of Oregon (Vincent et al., 2018) survey. The four support constructs used to analyze teacher support were created by Vincent et al. through a focus group. The focus group

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consisted of three high school students and one college student, all 4 students were AI. The focus group participants were given a list of items from existing measures intended to assess (a) autonomy, (b) behavioral engagement, (c) emotional engagement, (d) academic learning, and (e) identity formation. All of the items came from the Classroom Life Scale (Johnson, Johnson, Buckman, & Richards, 1985), the Behavioral Engagement Scale (Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell, 1990) the Emotional Engagement Scale (Skinner et al., 1990), the Goal Orientation/Academic Press Scale (Midgley et al., 1998), the Learning Climate Questionnaire (Deci, Schwartz, Sheinman, & Ryan, 1981), the Autonomy Scale (Deci et al., 1981), the Ichishkiin Culture and Language as a Foundation of Wellness Survey (Underriner & Jacob, 2013), and the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney, 1992). After feedback from the focus group the four constructs (Academic Support, Social Support, Cultural Identity Development Support, and Family/Community Support) were created with the items that best corresponded to the specific constructs from the focus group.

Students' survey responses provided by the University of Oregon team were in raw (item-level) form, but provided no identifiable information. The survey included a total of 51 questions, each using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree". The full text of all survey items is available in Appendix D. I used a procedure to quantify the answers to each survey question. Below I summarize the individual questions into a construct-level measure. The constructs were not defined in the Vincent et al. study nor were validity or reliability measures reported. I define the constructs as follows:

Academic Support measured the perception of the student as they self-report having a teacher that supports them academically. This measure expressed if the teacher is positively supporting students to achieve positive academic outcomes. Survey questions asked questions targeting whether teachers believed in their students, taught cultural relevant items, and trusted the students. E.g. "My teachers believe that I can learn." or "My teachers allow me to figure things out my way."

Social Support measured the perception of the student as they self-report having a teacher that supports them socially. This measure expressed if the teacher is positively supporting students in conflict, being a responsible member of the school, learning more about their culture, etc. by asking questions targeting these concepts. E.g. "My teachers really care about me." or

"Other students are aware of my culture(s)."

Cultural Identity Development Support measured the perception of the student as they self-report having a teacher that supports their cultural identity development. This measure expressed if the teacher is positively supporting students culturally through including cultural relevant teaching, celebrating cultural traditions, incorporating traditional values in the class, etc. by asking questions targeting these concepts. E.g. "My teacher/s allow me to be proud of who I am." or "My teacher/s inspire me to learn more about who I am."

Family/Community Relationship Support measured the perception of the student as they self-report having a teacher that supports the family/community relationship with the school. This measure expressed if the teacher positively supports the family coming

in to the school, if the school is welcoming, if communication between the school and family is effective, etc. by asking questions targeting these concepts. E.g. "My parents/guardians/grandparents/family members feel welcome at my school." or "My teachers invite members of my cultural community into the classroom."

Data Analysis

First, the data was coded so that the respondents were separated into their identified racial subgroup. AI students were coded as group 1 and White students were coded as group 2. Black and Latinx students were eliminated from the data because the study's purpose is to explore the unique experience of AI students in school and their perspective of teacher support.

Next, each question was coded to the support level the student reportedly perceives. An answer of "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" was assigned a point value of +1. An answer of "Somewhat Agree", "Neither Agree nor Disagree", or "Somewhat Disagree" was assigned a point value of zero. Finally, if the answer was "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" a point value of -1 was given.

After each question was assigned a point value an average was taken for each of the four domains of the survey. If the average was greater than or equal to 0.50 the student was identified as having a supportive teacher in the given domain. If the average positioned between 0.49 and -0.49 the student was identified as being neutral, having neither a supportive nor unsupportive teacher. If the average was less than or equal to -0.50 the student was identified as having an unsupportive teacher in the given domain.

In my conceptualization I accept equal weight for each of the constructs. This done by taking the average of each construct separately even though each construct has a different number of items. It is beyond my methodology toolkit to identify which items correlate the best to each measure and then weight items accordingly so that each construct has a weighted equivalence of items.

RQ1. My first research question asks if there is a statistically significant difference between how AI and white students perceive the levels of teacher support in which they receive? The null hypothesis for RQ1 is that there is no statistically significant difference between the perceived support received among White students and AI students on average in the population. If the null hypothesis is rejected it indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between how White and AI students perceive support.

RQ2. The second research question asks if there a statistically significant difference between student perception of academic support and the students' perception of the school having stronger family/community relationships? The null hypothesis for RQ2 is that there is no statistically significant difference between academic support and family/community relationships on average in the population. If the null hypothesis is rejected it indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between student perception of teacher support and family/community relationship. This would signal that if the student perceives the school having a strong relationship with the family/community they are more likely to also perceive academic support as positive.

RQ3. The final research question asks if there is a statistically significant difference in how students experience levels of support in the domains of academic support and cultural identity support? The null hypothesis is that students perceive these supports the same and there is no statistically significant difference between academic support and cultural identity support on average in the population. If the null hypothesis is rejected it indicates that there is a statistically significant difference in how academic support and cultural identity support are perceived. Further, this would signal that students view supports as multi-dimensional and not as a single construct.

For all of the above hypothesis tests, I used an alpha threshold of .05. Once the averages of the domains were found for each respondent a simple chi square analysis was conducted for each of the domains comparing racial subgroups. In addition, a test of independence was conducted for Academic Support and Family/Community Relationships as well as Academic Support and Cultural Identity Development Support. A test of independence is conducted to determine if two or more variables are independent of each other. This is important in determining if students view support as a single construct or as a multi-dimensional construct.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The following sections present the results of the data analysis that was conducted for each research question. A series of chi-square analyses were conducted, using Microsoft Excel, to answer each of the research questions to provide perspective on how teacher support is perceived by White and AI students. Analytic results are reported for the results of each of the three research questions in sequence.

In order to ensure the constructs are not measuring the same concepts I ran a correlation test. The results can be found in Table 4. The constructs correlate, but imperfectly, indicating that the constructs are measuring different concepts.

Table 4

Correlation of Teacher Support Constructs

Construct	Correlation (*p*-value)	Correlation (*p*-value)	Correlation (*p*-value)	Correlation (*p*-value)
Academic Support	1			
Social Support	.625 (<.001)	1		
C. I. Dev. Support	.535 (<.001)	.664 (<.001)	1	
Fam./Comm. Support	.491 (<.001)	.549 (<.001)	.544 (<.001)	1
	Academic Support	Social Support	C. I. Dev. Support	Fam./Comm. Support

RQ1

        RQ 1 was designed to assess if AI students perceive teacher support differently than their white peers. To answer RQ 1, a chi square analyses was conducted comparing White and AI students' perceptions for each domain: Academic Support, Social Support, Cultural Identity Development Support, and Family/Community Relationships. Tables 5-8 display the descriptive statistics for each of the chi square tests for RQ 1.

        For Academic Support, the expected and observed values for students of both races/ethnicities were quite similar. This is particularly notable because the small sample size makes it very possible for the expected and observed frequencies to be different without implying a meaningful statistical difference. The largest difference for Academic Support was White students identifying their Academic Support level as Weak Support. The observed number of students was 6, when the actual expected frequency was 5.10 a difference of 0.9. Thus, even the largest observed difference was less than one student different from what was expected. The chi-square statistic for Academic Support is $X^2(2, N = 181) = .64$ ($p = .73$). The result of the chi square test resulted in a p-value greater than the value acceptable at the alpha threshold of $p = .05$. The result of the chi square test is a failure to reject the null hypothesis; there is no statistically significant difference between the perceived support received among White students and AI students on average in the population.

Table 5

Academic Support Perceived by Students Among Ethnicity

Frequency Expected Cell Chi Square	Weak Support	Neutral Support	Strong Support
AI	1 1.89 .42	29 28.97 .00	19 18.14 .04
White	6 5.10 .16	78 78.03 .00	48 48.86 .02

N = 181, *p* = .73

The expected and observed values for both races were quite similar. This is again notable because of the small sample size. The largest difference was in the Neutral Support level. The expected frequency was 35.46 for AI students and 95.54 for White students when in fact the observed was 36 for AI and 95 for White students, a difference of 0.54, respectively. The descriptive statistic for Social Support is $X^2(2, N = 181) = .04$ ($p = .98$). The result of the chi square test resulted in a *p*-value greater than the value acceptable at the alpha threshold of $p = .05$. The result of the chi square test is a failure to reject the null hypothesis; there is no statistically significant difference between the perceived support received among White students and AI students on average in the population.

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Table 6

Social Support Perceived by Students Among Ethnicity

Frequency Expected Cell Chi Square	Weak Support	Neutral Support	Strong Support
AI	1 1.08 .01	36 35.46 .01	12 12.45 .02
White	3 2.92 .00	95 95.54 .00	34 33.55 .01

$N = 181$, $p = .98$

The expected and observed values for both ethnicities had sizeable

differences. There were three areas which had differences of greater than 5. First, is

AI identifying as having Strong Support. The expected frequency was 17.31, but in

fact the observed value was 23, a difference of 5.69. Second, White students

identifying as having Neutral Support. The expected frequency was 82.51, but the

observed value was actually 88, a difference of 5.49. Finally, the largest difference

was in the Strong Support level for White students. The expected frequency was

45.94, in fact the observed value was 40, a difference of 5.94. The descriptive

statistic for Cultural Identity Development Support is $X^2(2, N = 181) = 3.97$ ($p = .14$).

The result of the chi square test resulted in a *p*-value greater than the value acceptable

at the alpha threshold of $p = .05$. The result of the chi square test is a failure to reject the null hypothesis; there is no statistically significant difference between the perceived support received among White students and AI students on average in the population.

Table 7

Cultural Identity Development Support Perceived by Students Among Ethnicity

Frequency Expected Cell Chi Square	Weak Support	Neutral Support	Strong Support
AI	0 1.08 1.08	26 30.86 .77	23 17.31 1.87
White	4 2.92 .40	88 82.51 .37	40 45.94 .77

$N = 181, p = .14$

The expected and observed values for Family/Community Support were quite similar for both ethnicities. The area which had the largest difference was the Weak Support domain. AI identifying as having Weak Support had an expected frequency of 3.25, while the expected White students identifying as having Weak Support was 8.75. In fact, the observed frequency for AI was 1 and for White the observed frequency was 11, a difference of 2.25, respectively. The descriptive statistic for

Family/Community Support is $X^2(2, N = 181) = 2.31$ ($p = .32$). The result of the chi

square test resulted in a p-value greater than the value acceptable at the alpha

threshold of $p = .05$. The result of the chi square test is a failure to reject the null

hypothesis; there is no statistically significant difference between the perceived

support received among White students and AI students on average in the population.

Table 8

Family/Community Support Perceived by Students Among Ethnicity

Frequency Expected Cell Chi Square	Weak Support	Neutral Support	Strong Support
AI	1 3.25 1.56	20 18.70 .09	28 27.07 .03
White	11 8.75 .58	49 50.32 .03	72 72.93 .01

$N = 181, p = .32$

Across all four domains of teacher support, I failed to reject the null

hypothesis that there is no statistically significant difference between the perceived

support received among White students and AI students on average in the population.

RQ2

      RQ 2 was designed to assess if students perceive teacher support for students independent of school support of Family/Community. To answer RQ 2, a chi square test of independence was conducted. The data was analyzed using an alpha threshold of .05. Table 9 displays the results of the chi square test of independence for RQ 2.

      The values for the expected and observed frequencies for the test of independence had some large differences. There were four areas which had differences of greater than 15 between the observed and expected frequencies. First, those that identified themselves as having Strong Academic Support and Neutral Family/Community Support had a difference of 16.69. The expected frequency was 26.69, but in fact the actual observed frequency was 10. Second, those identifying as having Strong Support in both Academic Support and Family/Community Support had an expected frequency of 37.74. The observed frequency was 59, a difference of 21.26. Third, those identifying as having Neutral Support in both Academic Support and Family/Community Support had an expected frequency of 40.61. The actual observed frequency was 59, a difference of 18.39. Finally, the area with the largest difference between observed and expected frequency was those identifying as having Neutral Support for Academic Support and Strong Support for Family/Community Support. The expected frequency was 57.43, but the actual observed frequency was 36, a difference of 21.43. The descriptive statistic for the test of independence of Academic Support and Family/Community Support is $X^2(4, N = 181) = 49.35$ ($p = <.0001$).

The result of the chi square test resulted in a *p*-value less than the threshold of *p* = .05 indicating that the differences between the observed outcome for RQ 2 and the expected outcome is statistically significant. The result of the chi square test is to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the students perceive academic support independently of family/community support, on average in the population.

Table 9

Test of Independence Between Academic Support and Family/Community Relationship Support

Frequency		Academic Support		
Expected Cell Chi Square		Weak Support	Neutral Support	Strong Support
Family/Community Support	Weak Support	2	10	0
		.46	6.96	4.57
		5.16	1.33	4.57
	Neutral Support	1	59	10
		2.71	40.61	26.69
		1.08	8.33	10.44
	Strong Support	4	36	59
		3.83	57.43	37.74
		.0075	8.00	11.98

N = 181, *p* = <.0001

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RQ3

      RQ 3 was designed to assess if students perceive Cultural Identity Development Support as being independent of Academic Support. To answer RQ 3, a chi square test of independence was conducted. The data was analyzed using an alpha threshold of .05. Table 10 displays the results for the chi square test of independence for RQ 3.

      Similar to RQ 2, the values for the expected and observed frequencies for the test of independence had some large differences. There were four areas which had differences of greater than 15 between the observed and expected frequencies. First, those that identified themselves as having Neutral Support in both Academic Support and Cultural Identity Development Support had a difference of 16.38. The expected frequency was 68.62, but the actual observed frequency was 85. Second, those identifying as having Neutral Support in Academic Support but Strong Support for Cultural Identity Development Support had an expected frequency of 36.99. The observed frequency was 19, a difference of 17.99. Third, those identifying as having Neutral Support in Cultural Identity Development Support and Strong Support in Academic Support had an expected frequency of 41.93. The actual observed frequency was 23, a difference of 18.93. Finally, the area with the largest difference between observed and expected frequency was those identifying as having Strong Support in both Academic Support and Cultural Identity Development Support. The expected frequency was 22.61, but the actual observed frequency was 43, a difference of 20.39.

The descriptive statistic for the test of independence of Academic Support and Cultural Identity Development Support is $X^2(4, N = 181) = 45.22$ ($p = <.0001$). The result of the chi square test resulted in a *p*-value less than the alpha threshold of $p = .05$. The result of the chi square test is to reject the null hypothesis and accept the hypothesis that AI students do perceive academic support distinctly separate from cultural identity support, on average in the population.

Table 10

Test of Independence Between Academic Support and Cultural Identity Development Support

Frequency		Academic Support		
Expected Cell Chi Square		Weak Support	Neutral Support	Strong Support
Cultural Identity Development Support	Weak Support	0 .15 .15	4 2.39 1.08	0 1.46 1.46
	Neutral Support	7 4.45 1.46	85 68.62 3.91	23 41.93 8.55
	Strong Support	0 2.40 2.40	19 36.99 8.74	43 22.61 18.39

$N = 181, p = <.0001$

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

In the next sections of this chapter the limitations and implications of the study are discussed. The limitations are laid out to provide a clear understanding of how the results should be considered. A summary provides a short discussion on the how the results are perceived by the author. The implications address what the results mean for practicing educators as well as policy makers. Finally, recommendations for future research concludes the study.

Limitations

In the following section the limitations of the study are presented. Several factors limit the conclusions one can draw from the results. The limitations are separated into two categories Internal Validity and External Validity. Despite the limitations of this study the results are promising, but must be replicated on a larger scale to be generalized to other populations or have a chance to determine causal relationships.

Internal Validity

Causality and Omitted Variable Bias. Due to the exploratory nature of the study no causal relationships should be interpreted or inferred. It is possible that an unobserved, confounding, variable interfered with being able to detect different outcomes. In fact, the results of RQ2 showed that students experience teachers' support of Family/Community Engagement is independently of teachers' supports for their academic outcomes. I am unable to establish any causality of these relationships. It could be that students' with more engaged families self-report higher levels of support for

academics and family engagement because of their family background rather than anything the school or teacher is doing. Additional funding, which schools that serve AI populations receive, could be one such variable that is not accounted for. Perhaps using additional funding to create smaller class sizes lead to the perception that the teacher is more supportive than they would be identified as in a larger class. Perhaps increased funding allows for additional training of teachers to mitigate bias leading to more equal supports being reported.

Survey Design and Administration. Validity and reliability measures could not be located for the support constructs in the extant data. Analyzing the constructs using a Cronbach's alpha test would have provided a look at the internal consistency of the individual constructs to ensure the items are truly assessing what they are intended to. Consequently, results must be interpreted cautiously.

The survey was a self-report measure on a 7-point Likert scale. Response bias is an established threat in many types of Likert scale measures. When given similar to exact measures, respondents' answers will vary, on average, on 79% of the responses (Kormos & Gifford, 2014). Some individuals are more prone to answer conservatively or liberally, resulting in more answers in the middle (conservative) or more answers in the extremes (liberal). Some respondents have been shown to answer how they believe the person(s) conducting the survey would like them to.

Data Analysis. Another validity concern is the treatment of ordinal scales in the measures as interval. The 7-point Likert scale, ranged from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree". The difference between "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" is not

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necessarily the same as "Agree" and "Neither Agree nor Disagree". However, the data analysis assumes the data is interval in nature, treating each answer as though the difference between it and another is the same. Likewise, the analysis treats each item on the survey as having the same importance and therefore, the same weight in the analysis. Some questions don't give as much information as others and treating them all the same risks the ability to see variations across the students. This threat could result in the understating or overstating of the perceptions of the teacher supports being explored.

Assigning value to the Likert scale the way I did may increase the chance of introducing response bias. By assigning a point value to "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" and a negative point value to "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" while assigning no value to "Somewhat Agree", "Somewhat Disagree", and "Neither Agree nor Disagree" can increase bias because I am taking responses that agreed or disagreed and made them neutral. This was done to try and limit response bias on the extremes, but consequently increases bias towards the conservative responses.

Sample. The study had a total sample size of 181, but only had 54 AI students represented. The small sample size of AI participants limits the statistical power needed to be able to conclude there is no relationship when in fact there is one or detect a relationship when there isn't one. The sample size may be too small to adequately determine relationships. Also, the sample is not random. It is a convenience sample and therefore may not represent the population of the rural Pacific Northwest students it intends.

Setting. Each of the schools represented in the study serve AI populations in rural areas in the Pacific Northwest. These particular areas have had a significant AI population for many generations. It is possible that due to their established presence the AI students feel more supported than AI populations in other areas, where there may not be a generational establishment. This would limit the ability of the results to be generalized to other regions. As mentioned above the sample size was small which also limits the generalizability of the study to other populations.

Summary

The main findings show promising results for educators and policy makers. The results give confidence that humanistic approaches are needed by schools in order to support all students. By explicitly and systematically creating support structures to address the whole student instead of focusing solely on academics the whole student is considered and supported. By including students in the discussion of supports further addresses students' identity and empowers them. This humanistic approach aligns with the outcomes of each research question in this study.

RQ1 indicates that there is not a statistically significant difference between how AI and White students experience support. This finding is the most surprising given the research on race mismatching and student outcomes. There are perhaps confounding variables that were not accounted for which contributed to this outcome. Further research should be conducted to verify and confirm this result, but it indicates that educators may be able to overcome race mismatching through purposeful and intentional focus of

students. A strong system of supports that addresses multiple areas and not just focusing on one area would seem to support more students and their needs. If this finding holds true through other research it would be great news for educators because support systems could be universal for students. A school would not have to develop various supports for every minority group in the school. This would make addressing multiple supports more feasible for schools.

The results of RQ2 indicated that students are able to distinguish between academic support and family/community support. This means that a teacher which may not be seen as supportive of the family/community can still be seen as supportive for the individual student. It stands to reason that if a teacher is seen as humanistic by being supportive in multiple support areas the student will be more likely to report them as being supportive and having a positive relationship, but that is beyond the scope of this study. The significance of these two constructs being independent of each other is that it indicates that schools and teachers must engage the family/community independent of the student if they wish to improve relationships with families and/or the community. Simply supporting students in a given area, such as academics, does not mean that the family or community will interpret that as support for them. If schools want to support families and the community, they must be deliberate in their supports for those independent entities through specific systems.

The results from RQ3 indicate that students do perceive academic support independently of cultural identity development support. This indicates that students are aware of supports to help them identify who they are as a person. These cultural identity

supports help verify skills and knowledge students have in addition to their cultural knowledge. This humanistic approach strengthens the students' identity. It is worth noting that the study did not explore whether the students perceived this as a positive or negative support. The finding reinforces that teachers play an important role in a student's development of identity. This responsibility should not be taken lightly as it is likely to impact a student long after they have left the teachers classroom. Understanding student perspectives could produce a more welcoming and supportive environment. Schools are not able to address all students' needs, but they could maximize the number of students they reach by understanding the student perspective.

Finally, the results of RQ2 and RQ3 provide evidence that teacher supports are a multi-dimensional construct and not a uni-dimensional construct. The ability of students to distinguish between supports further provides evidence that schools need to take a humanistic approach to the support structure they provide students. A multi-dimensional construct like support needs to be addressed in multiple ways. If not some of the support construct will not be available to students. It stands to reason that this could potentially cause a decrease in academic outcomes.

Recommendations for Policy

Given the results of this paper it is evident that more attention should be afforded to supports that are not strictly academic. It may seem odd that a school would focus on nonacademic support such as social, family, identity development, etc., but as this study indicates students are able to distinguish between them. To impact students and build

stronger relationships the literature supports schools providing social supports in addition to academic supports (Lundberg, 2014; Joyce & Early, 2014; Powers, 2006).

Policy makers need to ensure that support systems are implemented and address multiple types of supports. To do so, accountability systems might have explicit requirements for schools to identify strategies for student support. This may include research-based best practices to be implemented and included as part of state-approved school improvement plans. Currently, Oregon's template for the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) focuses entirely on academic outcomes. School's write their 3 goals and then under each goal they outline a plan to accomplish the goal, how the school will know if the plan is working, and who will be responsible for which parts of the plan. In order to impact student outcomes, I argue that the CIP should focus in large part on the students by targeting how schools will improve support systems and structures centered around them. By having schools present a support plan in their school improvement plan schools will be forced to think and plan for systems to provide multiple types of support for students. The perspective of schools must change and evolve to incorporate support for the whole student in order to reach a more diverse student population. Engaging students in school through relationships by providing various types of supports may keep more students attending and improve outcomes.

Funding is a vital component for this proposal. Bold supports that attempt to support students such as free tutors, cultural responsive teaching, summer programs, winter programs during Winter Break, after school programs, free breakfast and lunch for all students, access to showers or laundry, etc. all add costs to already tight school

budgets. With no additional funding resources, schools are forced to take from one area of support to provide for supports in other areas. To fully implement a quality system of support for students, increased resources must be directed towards schools. For example, to help serve students' mental health, partnerships with health care providers could streamline the process and provide much needed support for students without having to increase actual school funding. Policy makers could make policy to force health care providers to work more closely with schools. This would allow schools to address needs beyond their expertise and support students in and out of the classroom. For accountability, penalties could be written in the policy to ensure a good faith partnership for schools and health care providers.

Policy makers should also work on the improvement of teacher preparation programs. Through policy changes, teacher preparation programs could be held accountable for producing quality teaching candidates that have a thorough understanding of how to implement multiple types of support. Academic support cannot be the sole focus of teachers if they are going to reach students of diverse backgrounds. Students need to feel welcomed and safe. Having a well-trained workforce that understands how to support students in poverty, from diverse backgrounds, living with a disability, etc. would improve outcomes for all students. To do so, accountability systems might have explicit requirements for teacher preparation programs to identify strategies for how supports are addressed throughout their program. This may include research-based best practices in which a teacher would have to identify how they plan to implement various

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supports when they are in charge of a classroom as part of the teacher candidate's required practicum.

Recommendations for Practice

The results of this study should signal to teachers that focusing on academic support, as vital as it is, only scratches the surface of supporting students. Not only do students perceive various supports, but they internalize and determine how much a teacher cares about them by the supports they perceive. As educators struggle to produce desired academic outcomes there is evidence that focusing on the whole student instead of just the academics is the way to improve those outcomes (Schenke et al., 2018; Lundberg, 2014, Huffman 2013). Teachers need to help students explore their identity by incorporating Culturally Relevant Teaching (CRT) curriculum. Social supports such as cultural celebrations, honoring students' heritage, etc. makes student feel more welcomed and students tend to perform better. Forgetting about the student to obtain academic outcomes may actually alienate students as they may not perceive a supportive environment.

Recommendation for Future Research

The overall purpose of this study was to explore how AI students perceive teacher support. This concept is important for tribal communities and schools to understand in order to better serve AI students. Given the benefits of teacher support for AI students it is critical that we better understand how students perceive support so that we can improve teacher's ability to connect with students. For future research I recommend analyzing social supports and whether or not they are seen as independent of other supports or not.

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This particular relationship was not addressed in my study. A future study could investigate the different supports and complete an analysis that compares each support to each other to determine if they are all truly independent of each other or not. Additionally, conducting an analysis of the construct's internal reliabilty by using a test like Cronbach's alpha is a research project I would recommend in the future. This would help researchers looking to use the given measure in this study to know how consistent the items in each construct truly measure what the construct is attempting. This would be particularly important for the Family/Community Relationship Support construct given it has four items in the construct.

Another future research recommendation would be to expand on this exploration by completing an analysis of supports and the effect size each support has on the outcome for students. This particular project would be a great research study to determine which supports may have the largest effect on students. This could potentially be accomplished by conducting research that evaluates the effects of support systems. This research could help to build teachers' skills in different kinds of supports for AI students. The research could potentially be designed so that it would allow for causal comparisons of differences between supports. This type of research would indicate which supports have a direct relationship with school success. The outcome of a study like this would provide invaluable information for schools as they continue to search for new ways to improve and reach students.

Another recommendation for future research would be to conduct a descriptive analysis on how childhood trauma impacts support in school. Is trauma

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another barrier that prevents teachers from connecting with students or does it provide a desire for students to want to connect with that positive role model? Childhood trauma takes many forms from physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, death of parents/sibling, extreme poverty, and even the lack of a nuclear family. It is not reasonable to believe that all of these will have the same impact on students, but being more informed on trauma's impact on students' perception of support can provide better insight into improving the support system for all students.

APPENDIX A

KEY TERMS

Cultural Identity. For the purpose of this study, cultural identity is defined as the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which give us, as one entity a stable, unchanging, continuing frame of reference and meaning. Cultural identity encompasses the language, foods, values, meanings, customs and beliefs used to relate to the world (Tan, 2005).

Teacher Support. In this study, teacher support refers to the support provided by the teacher to the student in order to help the student persevere in a school setting.

Academic Support. Academic support refers to the support the teacher provides solely for learning and/or improving academic performance.

Social Support. For the purpose of the study, social support is defined as the supports provided by the teacher to assist students in peer to peer relationships and age appropriate behaviors.

Cultural Support. In this study, cultural support is defined as the support provided by the teacher to acknowledge and honor AI students' culture.

APPENDIX B

Table 1

Measures and Key Findings

Researcher	Measures	Key Findings
Huang & Stormshak	MEIM	Increasing levels of cultural identity are protective and may contribute to the prevention of problem behaviors and psychopathology in adolescents.
Huffman (2013)	Non-specific interview consisting of 25 questions	Schools can provide tremendous service by helping to preserve language and traditions. Students grounded in tribal culture have increased levels of academic success.
Joyce & Early	Extant Data: National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health (2005, 2009)	Teacher support resulted in fewer negative health symptoms (depression, anxiety, illness). Teacher support appears to be a protective barrier against depressive episodes in minority students.
Kim, Dar-Nimrod, & MacCann	BFI, Classroom Life Instrument, Performance self-efficacy, self-reported academic achievement	Teacher personality appears to be more important for student emotional-related outcomes than for academic outcomes. Teachers play an influential role in Performance Self-Efficacy (PSE) of students.
Košir & Tement	Teacher Acceptance, Classroom Life Measure, Student GPA	Teacher support and student achievement are causal loops that promote and undermine the performance of students' over time.
Lazarides & Raufelder	Non-specific survey	Student-perceived teacher support of autonomy did not relate to increased motivation or success. Student-perceived positive teacher relationships show an increase in motivation, greater effort, and persistence.
Lei, Cui, & Chiu	Meta-Analysis	Teacher support is an important mechanism of fostering Positive Academic Emotions (PAEs) and reducing Negative Academic Emotions (NAEs). Interestingly culture, age, and gender moderate the effects of teacher support.
Lundberg	National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)	School support for AIs was the strongest predictor of success. Social supports not academic were most effective; i.e. supporting students to maintain strong cultural identity, mentoring students in AI programs, supporting AI cultural beliefs.

Raufelder, Regner, & Wood	REMO, German Test Anxiety Inventory, Helplessness in School Scale	Strong physical and emotional reactions related to test anxiety are associated with helplessness in school. Teachers as positive motivators (TPM) increase students' test anxiety. Teacher behavior is an important determinant in students' emotional states.
Powers	Non-specific survey	Universal education practices do not overpower the effect of cultural identity. A strong sense of cultural identification was positively correlated to AI students' ability to complete school, their attendance, and participation at school.
Sakiz, Pape, & Woolfolk Hoy	Teacher Affective Support Subscale	Students who report high levels of teacher support also are strongly likely to also have a higher sense of belonging, higher academic enjoyment, and lower academic helplessness.
Schenke, Ruzek, Lam, Karabenick, & Eccles	Extant Data: Michigan Study of Adolescent and Life Transitions (MSALT) 1983-1984	Students who perceive their teacher as emotionally supportive are highly likely to report that their teacher the following year is also emotionally supportive.
Strati, Schmidt, & Maier	Non-specific survey	Students perceive low levels of challenge in science due to well-intentioned teachers attempting to make science more accessible are less likely to engage in the learning when adequate challenges are not provided.
Stumblingbear-Riddle & Romans	NACHSY, AIES, TECSES, SWLS, PSS-Fa, PSS-Fr	Cultural identity is the largest protective factor for urban AIs. Self-esteem is also positively correlated to the prediction of AI resilience.
Sykes	Transformative Autoethnography	Culture is a critical concept ignored in many classrooms. Educators should make concerted efforts to provide opportunities for minorities to engage in culturally relevant learning, thereby allowing them to extract their own meaning.

APPENDIX C

Table 2

Settings, Design, and Participants

Researcher	Setting	Design	Participants (#)
Huang & Stormshak	Urban	Longitudinal / Quantitative	Middle School (593)
Huffman (2013)	Rural	Qualitative	College (30)
Joyce & Early	Rural & Urban	Longitudinal / Quantitative	Middle & High School (9,503)
Kim, Dar-Nimrod, & MacCann	Rural & Urban	Quantitative	Middle & High School (2,082)
Košir & Tement	Urban	Quantitative	Elementary & Middle School (816)
Lazarides & Raufelder	Rural & Urban	Quantitative	High School (1,088)
Lei, Cui, & Chiu	Rural & Urban	Meta-analysis	Elementary, Middle, & High School & College (58,368)
Lundberg	Rural & Urban	Quantitative	College (647)
Raufelder, Regner, & Wood	Urban	Quantitative	Middle & High School (845)
Powers	Urban	Quantitative	High School (240)
Sakiz, Pape, & Woolfolk Hoy	Rural & Urban	Quantitative	Middle School (1,011)
Schenke, Ruzek, Lam, Karabenick, & Eccles	Rural & Urban	Longitudinal / Quantitative	Middle School (1,303)
Strati, Schmidt, & Maier	Urban	Quantitative	High School (223)
Stumblingbear-Riddle & Romans	Urban	Quantitative	High School (196)
Sykes	Rural	Qualitative	High School & College (1)

STUDENT SURVEY

Thank you for filling out this survey. We are interested in finding out how students from various cultural backgrounds perceive their classroom environments. To do that well, we need to have an accurate understanding of your experiences in school. To the extent you feel comfortable doing so, please respond to the following questions about you, your thoughts, and your experiences. You may skip any questions to which you do not feel comfortable responding. There are no right or wrong answers. All of your responses are anonymous.

First, we would like to know a bit about you:

What is your gender?

Male
Female

What grade are you in?

6th
7th
8th
9th
10th
11th
12th

How would you describe your racial/ethnic background?

Black
White
Latino/Hispanic
Asian
Pacific Islander
American Indian or Alaska Native
        Tribal affiliation _____

What is the name of the school you go to?
_____

Every student is a member of one or more cultural groups. We are interested in finding how you, as a member of a cultural group, perceive your classroom. Cultural groups are people who share the same language, customs, beliefs, and traditions. To help us do so, please rate your agreement with the following statements:

ACADEMIC SUPPOR IN THE CLASSROOM

As a student of _____ (Black, White, Latino/Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native) background, I feel that

1. My teachers believe that I can learn.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

2. My teachers allow me to figure things out my way.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

3. What I am learning makes me proud of my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

4. What I am learning helps me better understand my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

5. My teachers are knowledgeable about my cultural background.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

    a. What is the name of the teacher who is most knowledgeable about your culture(s)?

    _____

    ☐ None of my teachers know about my cultural background.

6. What I learn is relevant to my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

7. I feel comfortable speaking about my culture(s) in class.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

    a. What is the name of the teacher in whose classes you would feel most comfortable speaking about your culture(s)?

_____

    ☐ None of my teachers know about my cultural background.

8. My teachers usually explain things in a way I can understand.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

    a. What is the name of the teacher who best explains things in a way you can understand?

_____

9. If I don't know how to do something, I feel comfortable asking a teacher for help.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

    a. What is the name of the teacher who helps you the most?

_____

SOCIAL SUPPORT IN THE CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL

As a student of _____ (Black, White, Latino/Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native) background, I feel that

10. My teachers really care about me.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

  a. What is the name of the teacher who is most caring?

  _____

11. My teachers are aware of my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

12. My teachers respect my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

  a. What is the name of the teacher who is most respectful of you culture(s)?

  _____

  ☐ None of my teachers respects my culture(s).

13. Other students are aware of my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

14. Other students respect my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

15. At school, I am hesitant to talk about my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

16. I am comfortable letting people at school know about my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

17. I have a trusted adult in the school I can talk to if I feel discriminated against.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

18. I believe that my teacher applies discipline fairly.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

19. I can trust my teachers.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

    a. What is the name of the teacher you feel is most trustworthy?

    _____

    b. What is the name of a teacher with whom you could talk if you had a problem?

    _____

    ☐ There is no teacher in my school I could talk to if I had a problem.

20. I get harassed because of my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

21. Many students in my school share my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

22. In my school, there is at least one adult who shares my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

23. I identify as the same culture(s) as my teacher/s.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

24. My teacher/s participate in my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

25. Other students want me to come to class every day.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

26. My teacher inspires me to be _____.

CULTURAL IDENTITY FORMATION

27. Is English a native language for you? (A native language is a language one learns to speak from birth.)
    a. If English is not a native language for you, what is/are your native language(s)?

    _____

As a student of _____ (Black, White, Latino/Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native) background, I feel that

28. Knowing my native culture(s) is important to me. A native culture is the culture you were born into.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

29. Knowing my native language is important to me.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

30. Knowing my native culture makes me confident.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

31. Knowing my native language makes me confident.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

32. I know my native language(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

    a. My native language(s) is/are
_____.

33. I know my family history.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

34. What I am learning makes me proud of who I am.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

35. My teacher/s allow me to be proud of who I am.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

36. My teacher/s inspire me to learn more about who I am.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

37. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

38. I do not have much to be proud of.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

39. I am proud of my cultural identity.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

40. I am proud of my culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

41. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

42. On the whole, I am satisfied with my cultural identity.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

43. Class assignments encourage me to find out more about my cultural group, such as its

history, traditions, and customs.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

44. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own culture(s).

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

45. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own cultural group.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

46. I have a lot of pride in my cultural group.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

47. The one thing I wish my teacher knew about me is

_____.

FAMILY/COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

As a student of _____ (Black, White, Latino/Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native) background, I feel that

48. My parents/guardians/grandparents/family members feel welcome at my school.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

49. My parents/guardians/grandparents/family members feel comfortable talking with my teachers.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

50. My teachers invite members of my cultural community into the classroom.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

51. My teachers treat members of my cultural community with respect.

Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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