A Perspective of Navajo Adult Prisoners on Their Experiences: From School to Prison

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation discusses the intersection of schooling, justice systems, and educational achievements of American Indians. This dissertation is divided into three parts covering six sections; American Indians in the U.S. as a political and racial group, current trends in Indian education and economic conditions with a discussion on the role of epistemological and ontological clashes between Indian ways of thinking and western education practices. Six policy eras are discussed that have shaped Indian education followed by a discussion on how and in what ways the justice system and schooling intersect with the educational achievement of American Indian students.

A qualitative case study explored the experiences of six Navajo prisoners, ages 24-35, in the Winslow State Prison in Arizona. Open-ended interviews inquired about their K-12 education, family, community, and institutional experiences with discipline. Findings revealed negative experiences with schooling had powerful impacts on participants in contrast to family, community, and other institutions. All participants reported experiences in school contributed to interfacing with the justice system. Second, teachers and principals were identified as powerful forces contributing to participants' negative school experiences. Third, negative family impacts triggered participants' dependency on the school for support**.** Findings from this study, evidence suggests that schooling plays a pivotal role influencing a Navajo man's life chances.

This type of research focusing on Indigenous prison inmate voices is needed to understand the experiences of Navajo male offenders who are within the criminal justice system and to then make policy recommendations to support healing and rehabilitation. I

conclude by calling for a reimagining of schooling practices based on restorative justice that can mitigate negative disciplinary and violent schooling experiences and restore trust and success of American Indians in the education system.

Keywords: American Indian schooling, school to prison, federal boarding schools

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation was something that I thought I would never do and a reason that I put off the challenge a PhD program until I was “wise” as one of my elders would say. I spent the entirety of my career in the field of service to my people, the Diné, to achieve what our elders would say, “come home and help your people and meet us half way”. Our Diné are challenged in many ways, but also very resilient. I hope that my research will empower more young Diné men and women to understand the challenges that were created due to federal policies and the negative impact this has on our people.

There are many people who have contributed to my education starting with my mother Helen. My mother is my foundation, strength and a reason that I care for those who do not have the same privilege that I have. She provided the foundation through her Diné teachings and her strength not to give up when times were hard and there were many challenges raising nine children. To my beautiful and intelligent daughters, Wendy, Jessica and Deidre, you are my cheerleaders, supporting me as I took on the challenge of research and writing. Wendy, thank you for your insights and helping me to think about data from various perspectives. To my husband Jack, for your patience and encouragement to write about my life experiences, challenges and successes. To my sister Joan, thank you for cheering me on with your laughter and encouragement.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The foundation of cultural and intellectual violence exacted through education has led to modern day schooling practices that have deflated the confidence of Native peoples in education structures. Its legacy concurrently established and maintains practices and attitudes that led to the disproportionate labeling of Native children as naughty, disruptive, and special needs. The result is two-fold. First, this labeling interferes with Native student success and persistence since Native children are viewed as unteachable. Second, Native kids targeted as problematic, troublesome, or disruptive become tracked for disciplinary pathways that lead from school-to-prison. The impact of disproportionate school discipline can cause Native children to interface with the justice system more often than they interface with college systems. This research is guided by the following questions: 1) How and in what ways do male Navajo prisoners make sense of the connections between their home and schooling experiences and their engagement by prisons? 2) What are the most important factors that lead to the school-to-prison pipeline for Navajo men? 3) What approaches and interventions can be identified to reconsider discipline policies for Navajo males?

This dissertation is divided into three very distinct chapters; a journal article, a book chapter and a policy paper. In Chapter 1, I include my literature review and researcher positionality which is a relevant opening to Chapters 2, 3, and 4. In the journal article, which begins my Chapter 2, I discuss American Indians in the U.S. and discuss their unique status as both a political and racial group. Second, I provide an overview of current trends in Indian education and economic conditions. Third, I discuss the

foundation for understanding the history of American Indian education by presenting a discussion on the role of epistemological and ontological clashes between Indian ways of thinking and western education practices. This section explores reasons for how historic practices have formed a current system which does not work for the schooling and educational achievement of American Indian students. Fourth, I present information about six significant policy eras that have shaped Indian education. The fifth section connects the previous sections to offer a detailed discussion on how and in what ways the justice system and schooling intersect with the educational achievement of American Indian students. This is followed by my research study within the Winslow State Prison and where I provide a detailed discussion of my findings. I conclude by calling for a reimagining of schooling practices based on restorative justice that can mitigate negative disciplinary and violent schooling experiences and restore the trust and success of American Indians in education systems. I offer recommendations for positive intervention strategies for students who are targeted for school discipline and intervention services that are culturally based for individual who are incarcerated based on my study and the recommendations of the research participants.

In the third chapter, I further expand on the issue of school-discipline and how Indigenous children continue to face personal trauma from parents and school authorities who themselves are products of federal residential schools. These students are likely to experience ongoing personal trauma and are punished for the smallest of infractions like not paying attention in class. These students are not naughty because they are inherently deviant, they're the product of colonization and the economic experiences that they face

daily. I discuss students responding to discipline due to the colonization and suppressed economic conditions, which are realities in American Indian communities. I proposed a model to address the impacts of historical traumas, a return to cultural ways in understanding and supporting the student and the development of a Diné person across the life span. Rather than exposing them to further trauma through suspension and expulsion, I believe this model forefronts healthy responses and helps teachers and administrators see the student as a whole and not judge them for individual actions that occur in one moment and time.

In the fourth chapter, I present a policy paper that addresses the high incarceration on the Navajo Nation and the limited services that are available to individuals who are in detention. I proposed policy recommendations for incarcerated Navajos to receive culturally relevant services while they are detained as well as establish a plan of support for outreach when they are released. This proposal is intended to reduce Navajo rates of incarceration, recidivism and to promote improved social, wellbeing and healthy individuals.

In Chapter Five, I conclude by summarizing the three chapters and high light important historical policy eras, provide recommendations for asset based services to eliminate the school-to-prison pipeline of young Native students.

Researcher Positionality

My name is Asdzáá yíwózhi (Navajo given name), my mother is of the Tódichiìnii (Bitterwater) clan, my father is of the Tóahanií Near the Water) clan, my maternal grandfather is of the Tłízilłní (Manygoats) clan, and my paternal grandfather is

of the Kinłichii'nii (Kinlichini) clan. As a Navajo woman, my clans identify me as an individual and it connects me to many relations. I am, for example, a daughter, a sister, a parent, an aunt, and a grandmother. My clans connect me to people in many different environments including my work. My career has been dedicated to working with the Navajo people in various areas of human services, public safety and as a community leader. I have held a number of leadership positions within my community, as well at the larger Navajo Nation government. I served as a Commissioner with the Kayenta Township Commission for eight years, and this position is similar to that of a City Councilwomen. I currently serve on the Board of Trustees with Navajo Technical University (going on my sixth year) and on the Navajo Board of Education which is an elected position representing the Western Navajo Agency.

My research is at the intersection of criminal justice, education discipline policies, and understanding the experiences of Navajo prisoners who interfaced with both the criminal justice and educational systems. I am very interested in the stories of young Navajo males ages 24 to 35, because of my hypothesis that negative schooling experiences may have correlated with their entry into the criminal justice systems. My professional work inspired me towards this research, and my purpose was only deepened by my review of the literature, which provided that this type of study with a focus on Navajo males had not been done—that any Indigenous "master narratives" on school discipline and incarceration were nonexistent. Moreover, my interest in doing this study came as a concerned parent, as a member of my community, as a tribal leader and I currently hold a position where I might influence and make policy and legislative changes to support positive outcomes for our Navajo people.

Literature Review

According to Losen & Gillespie (2012), "there are three million children K-12 who are suspended from school every year" (p. 6). School discipline referral is used when children behave in a manner that is considered to be deviant in the education setting. Although definitions of deviance vary, referrals generally result in some form of discipline and punishment. Children may be referred to counselors or school administrators for minor infractions like missing homework, missing school, not paying attention, becoming disruptive, and talking back to the teachers who demand answers for the child's behavior or non-attention. Or children may receive referrals for major infractions such as starting a fight, bringing a weapon to school, or engaging in illicit or illegal activity on school grounds. The expectation of referrals is that a student will be counseled, sent home, and/or placed in in-school or out-of-school suspension. However, scholars who specialize in education justice have expressed concerns with such practices, as a suspension is the first indicator that a student may eventually drop out of school and enter the criminal justice system within two years of suspension (Losen & Gillespie, 2012).

Current literature on the effects of school discipline focuses almost exclusively on African American children who rank the highest in referrals for discipline and expulsion and who are most likely to enter the criminal justice system by the young age of seventeen (Brown, 2014; Cooper & Jordan, 2003; Heitzeg, 2009; Losen & Gillespie, 2012). There is limited research on school discipline rates for American Indians.[1] Of the

1.For this review, "American Indian" and "Native" youth are used interchangeably and refers to "a person who is a member of an Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act" (Locust, 1988, p. 315). American Indian Children are born to those individuals who meet the above definition.

available literature, none is disaggregated by state or tribal affiliation. Because of this limited literature it is unknown whether heightened experiences with school discipline contribute to school drop-out rates, alienation by the school system, and early interfacing with the criminal justice system (Brown, 2014).

Of the available literature focusing on American Indians, researchers have reported American Indian/Alaska Native students are more likely to score among the bottom of high stakes testing, more likely to receive referrals to school resource officers, and receive in-school suspension or expulsion for minor infractions (Brayboy, 2015; Brown, 2014; Losen & Gillespie, 2012; Nance, 2015). Such an education system disproportionately promotes negative and punitive outcomes for Native students, contributing to the creation of what some scholars now refer to as a school-to-prison pipeline (Brayboy, 2015; Brown, 2014). In a Town Hall meeting sponsored by Arizona State University (ASU) on the *State of Education and Justice for Native Youth*, researchers and legal practitioners presented data that showed Native youth are disproportionately targeted for school discipline referrals and entry into the criminal justice system (ASU Town Hall, 2015). American Indians in the state of Arizona are referred as many times as African American students while White students were less likely to be referred (Brown, 2014). In short, American Indian children appear to be funneled into the criminal justice system, from school-to-prison, at higher rates than they are funneled to college.

Scholars who study educational disparities have expressed concern over practices that provide no guarantees a student will receive services and support from the school when they return to school to allow them to catch up with their class. For instance,

schools in Arizona have adopted policies and practices that enforce excessive punitive school experiences (Brown, 2014), particularly for minority children, with little to no counseling or restorative services. According to Heitzeg (2009), the school-to-prison process often starts at an early school age and involves everything from punitive discipline based on school policies to heightened patrolling of young people within their communities. Some children as young as six years old have repeatedly been referred for internal discipline to the principal leading to in-school suspension, out of school suspensions, expulsions, and even school dropout (Brown, 2014). The result is that educational discipline policies become a mechanism through which students are pipelined into prison from the schools through "educational policies and discipline" (Brown, 2014). Zero tolerance policies, federal and state statutory mandatory reporting requirements to law enforcement, students' limited constitutional protections, high-stakes testing laws, the exclusionary mindset of some educators, and increased presence of law enforcement officers (resource officers) in schools further exacerbate this (Brown, 2014; Losen & Gillespie, 2012). Such policies have been found to contribute to high rates of referrals for discipline and expulsion (Nance, 2015).

School discipline can lead to alienation for American Indian students, which can contribute to their failure to succeed in school (Brown, 2014). Differences in in-school discipline by race also reveals school discipline contributes to minority youth becoming involved with the criminal justice system. There is a connection between frequency of referrals and severity of punishment of minority individuals (Brown, 2014; Cooper, & Jordan, 2003; Heitzeg, 2009; Losen & Gillespie, 2012). From the literature we know American Indians are second to Black Americans to be referred for school discipline.

They also rank third in prison populations (Brown, 2014; Cooper & Jordan, 2003; Freed & Smith, 2004; Losen, 2011; Losen & Gillespie, 2012). Approximately 63,082 Native Americans are in prison in the southwestern area of the U.S., including a large population of Navajos (Perry, 2015). Research is needed that not only addresses concerns facing Native populations but that centers the voices and perspectives of Native peoples.

Study Background and Research Questions

To date, there is limited research on the relationship between educational policy, discipline, and young Navajo offenders (Brown, 2014). This study explores how schooling, family environment, and community influence the discipline experiences of Navajo male offenders in a prison in the southwest. The link between education policy and a pipeline to prison is also explored as discipline in schools is believed to be a factor that leads individuals into the prison system (Curtis, 2014; Heitzeig, 2009; Winn & Behizadeh, 2011). The research questions driving this study are:

1. How and in what ways do male Navajo prisoners make sense of the connections between their home and schooling experiences and their engagement by prisons?
2. What are the most important factors that lead to the school-to-prison pipeline for Navajo men?
3. What approaches and interventions can be identified to reconsider discipline policies for Navajo males?

Results from this study highlight the disciplinary experiences of Navajo men and their recommendations for positive corrective behavior strategies for schools to employ.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of male Navajo offenders who have interfaced with both educational and justice systems in order to understand how social factors, particularly experiences with schooling, influence their experiences with the justice system. I also asked participants to identify in their own words to describe their experiences with school discipline and to identify positive outcomes or strategies that could lower the number of Navajo male students in the prison system. My examination of educational discipline and the ways in which school-based policies may contribute to research and literature on the school-to-prison pipeline allowed the researcher to explore multiple factors that influenced the experiences of individuals in the prison system (Freed & Smith, 2004).

I hope that my research findings and recommendations for intervention strategies for schools and rehabilitation services can be used by state and federal prisons, and the tribal Nations that serve incarcerated Native Americans, specifically Navajos. I also envisioned that my findings maybe used to inform and offer recommendations for what the Navajo Nation and other tribes facing increasing incarceration issues can do to intervene and eradicate the "school to prison pipeline." This study proposes changes and approaches to implementing educational policy and disciplinary practices that lead to reduction in recidivism and support the health and well-being of students. Thus, alternative forms of conflict resolution and problem solving, including Navajo traditional and cultural ways of family discipline that can be incorporated within the education system, which are presented in a later section.

My dissertation research on the educational experiences of incarcerated Navajo males provides evidence for understanding the phenomena of how school discipline policies contribute to a "pipeline" to prison for Navajo men. According to Swisher (1996), "what is missing [from research] is the passion from within and the authority to ask new and different questions based on histories and experiences as indigenous peoples… the voices that communicate intergenerational meaning" (p. 86 & 87).

This study centers on the voices of young Navajo men who are serving time in a State Prison. I took this approach to learn about the experiences these young men had with the policy on educational discipline. Such an approach is necessary if Indigenous peoples are to be the ones to define what they want from the educational system and determine what roles they will play in the lives of their children as well as how discipline will be carried out. Discipline for Indigenous students must be informed by Indigenous practices and driven by Indigenous peoples who must write the "master narratives" and "dispute that legacy of colonial intrusion, and in doing so, mystic sensibilities are rediscovered and reclaimed with tradition becoming more important in the American Indian Story" (Swisher, 1996, p. 331).

Research Design- Methodology

Because this research is focused on the experiences of Navajo males and asks "why and how" questions (as opposed to "how many, how often, or how much") a qualitative methodology is utilized. This study is also aligned with phenomenological research whereby a researcher explores a population sharing a common experience—in this case, the incarceration of Navajo males. In general, qualitative data-gathering

involves collecting information that is not necessarily quantifiable in numerical form (although certain qualitative data can be depicted in numbers), and includes structured and unstructured interviews, participant and researcher journaling, use of open-ended questionnaires, structured and unstructured observations, and focus groups (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000; Creswell, 2013).

Qualitative research methods allow for participants to make meaning of their experiences by generating data through the use of open-ended questions (Bergold & Stefan, 2012; Creswell, 2013). This allows the participant to talk, express themselves and tell their stories in their own words. According to Brayboy and Deyhle (2000), this helps the researcher develop a sense of the person's understanding of the problem situation. In addition, when working with Indigenous populations who have been historically exploited by research, the role of the participant is more than a research subject, but is a collaborator in the research which becomes especially crucial and part of decolonizing research (Smith, 1999). More specifically, research on educational discipline has found the decision to discipline is exclusively made by the person in authority (teachers, school administrators and criminal justice providers). As a result, "exertion of power over students" (Brown, 2014, p. 35) does not include perspectives from the students, their family and the problems are not based on the participant's interpretation based on how they defined the problem space. The participant views of the problem and experiences are almost always excluded in almost all current research and findings do not assess the situation holistically (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000).

Currently, research offers no Indigenous perspectives regarding the incarceration of Navajo males and any possible linkages with their educational experiences.

Furthermore, utilizing a qualitative methodology speaks to what Cook-Lynn (2008) described as the "master narrative and to eradicate the white man's version of who we are as a Native people … the colonial intrusion in how they see the problem" (p. 331). In order to counter the "master narrative," this phenomenological study sought to include participant stories from their own perspectives about their experiences with education, what impacts discipline policies have had on them, and how they became involved with the criminal justice. Such an approach therefore allows the researcher to provide what Kaomea (2009) refers to as "an counter story" (p. 115). A counter story pushes back against the master story, destabilizing it, and replacing it with research that offers a "new narrative" (Cook-Lynn, 2008, p. 331) and one that reflects participant views and reorients the Indigenous voice (Kaomea, 2009).

As Indigenous researchers, there is a need to develop experts to write about the "different ways of examining experiences and theoretical frames through which to view the experience...the ways of knowing are vital to our self-determination" (Brayboy, 2006, p. 436). In other words, we need to write our "master narratives" (Cook-Lynn, 2008, p. 331) about problem spaces and to define what appear to be problems in our communities through our Indigenous lenses. In my research and based on the testimonies of participants, I began to see clearly the problem spaces and problems—honing in on the relationship between justice, education, and Indigenous self-determination is critical and central considerations in my research. Furthermore, my semi-formal interviews with the prison population allowed me to approach research by "peeling back" the layers of issues, including why individuals are in prison, when they first interfaced with the criminal justice system, what experiences they had in school and what their experiences were with

education discipline. I approached this study by peeling back from prison by way of the education system, to determine how much of the theory of "education a pipeline to prison" applies to young Navajo prisoners.

Chapter 2: Understanding the Stories of Incarcerated Navajo Men

In this chapter, I open with the process of my study of the Navajo men. I believe the stories have shared are windows to their experiences and I do my best to represent their experiences.

Sample

I selected Navajo males, ages 24-35, as the focus of this study. This age group was selected, as they constitute the third generation onward; meaning, the grandparents of these participants attended residential boarding schools, and their parents who are second generation may have felt the effects of their parents having attended these schools. The impacts of boarding schools on American Indian populations are clearly documented in the literature (Bombay et al., 2014; Lomawaima, 1995; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006). In addition to the ages of participants, I selected inmates at the Winslow State Prison. This particular prison was selected due to its close proximity to the Navajo Nation and the fact that it serves approximately 15,000 Native Americans, including Navajo. I also hoped that due to the large population of Native inmates that my chances of getting a good sample to study were high.

The topic of education discipline as a pipeline to prison relied "on participant observation and reflexive interviews for data collection," which "provided the best possible picture through the interpretation of what occurred in interactions between the participants" (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000, p. 164). Brayboy & Deyhle (2000) also described "fieldwork as a qualitative research that is grounded in building and keeping

relationships" (p. 163). As a researcher, I embraced this way of thinking about my participants and the research in terms of trust and relationship-building.

Recruitment

In order to conduct this study, I began by going to the Arizona Department of Corrections (ADOC) website and downloaded their research policy and protocol. I read the policies and procedures and learned that I needed approval from an Institutional Review Board (IRB). I called the Winslow Prison, introduced myself, and explained that I was a doctoral student at Arizona State University, School of Social Transformation and that my research interest was in examining the school-to-prison pipeline connections. I wanted to explore and learn how school discipline policies have impacted Navajo male prisoners while they were in school. I explained that my research would include individual and group interviews of ten Navajo male prisoners in the age range between 24 and 35 and that I was requesting permission to do research in the Winslow Prison. I explained that this prison is the closest to the Navajo Nation and had one of the highest Navajo prison population in the state. I was instructed to write a correspondence (email or letter) explaining the research and my request in detail. The Winslow Prison did not have an IRB and being that the institution is located off the Navajo reservation, the prison warden stated that the institution where I was working on my educational goals was "appropriate." I explained that I had submitted my application for research to the Arizona State University's IRB and was waiting for approval. I received my approval from Arizona State University, IRB on June 8, 2017.

I received research and site access approval from the Arizona State Prison in late June 2017 through a formal letter signed by the Budget & Research Director (*see* Appendix A). In this letter, I was presented information on who my contact person would be at the Winslow Prison. I called my contact person and asked for guidance on the process I needed to undertake in order to do the research (e.g. did they have a written or formal procedure for researcher and did I need a background clearance?). I was told that I needed a background clearance, which I obtained, and there was no formal research procedure. I explained why I had selected this topic and what I wanted to do with the research outcome. The contact was very excited about the research and explained that there were five major classification of prisoners located on the campus of the Winslow State Prison. I would be getting my research participants from the minimum-security dorms. I made an appointment to meet with them and their staff the first part of July 2017 to get a feel of the locations where I would be doing the individual interviews and focus groups. I wanted to see the environment and to ensure that the locations being assigned would allow for privacy and allow the participants to be free to respond to questions.

I made a request to provide a small traditional meal during my initial focus group with the participants as part of welcoming the group as research participants and to acknowledge the Diné traditional ways. I did this to follow Diné protocol and to acknowledge the individuals who would be providing some very important information for my research. When seeking knowledge from another Diné, a meal is prepared by the researcher and is shared with the research participants during the exchange of information. The Diné teachings and exchange of knowledge is most effective when food is ingested at the same time information is exchanged. This also serves, as an

introduction by clan, to establish clan relations and to develop an environment that would allow participants to understand the purpose of the study and provide input they may feel is necessary for their participation. Navajo tradition calls for blue corn mush which is made of blue corn, a staple of every traditional meal shared during Diné traditional gatherings. This is similar to other Indigenous protocols used in research, like the Cree teachings described by Kovach (2010) where tobacco is used as an offering to the elder and/or as part of a ceremony.

The Diné tradition of teaching is set in motion first with a meal followed by story telling to establish a positive environment for the participants. My grandfather's teachings was that when traditional teachings happen, food is used to ingest the elder's teachings are passed on through stories. The elder will start off each lessone first by telling a story, what Kovach referred to as her "prologue" (2010). Theses stories are intended to carry meaningful lessons that the listener must be fully in the moment in order to grasp the point of the story. These stories are thought-provoking and will require the individual to think about the meaning of the stories, which often uses anologies. Some elders do not allow students to ask questions, and the idea is that "you listen and learn." Questionning the elder will give the impression that the student has not been paying attention and/or or disrespectful and may have to wait until the next time to obtain clarification from the elder.

Despite that my request to do a traditional meal with the with the participants was denied three time due to the Arizona State Prison's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), I did follow the Diné traditional protocols I was taught.

To identify and recruit participants, the Prison did agree to the following procedures:

1) The Warden would place flyers in 11 dorms asking for volunteers to participate in research on "education and discipline."

2) The flyer would inform interested inmates to either write a letter to the dorm counselor or contact the dorm counselor to participate.

3) The Counselor of each of the 11 dorms was to assist the researcher by posting advertisements and talking with participants interested in participating in the research. During the pre-screening, the dorm counselor read a prepared script developed by the researcher to determine if the potential participant was sincere in his interest to participate in the research study.

4) If the prisoner remained interested, he was placed on a list provided to the researcher.

5) At this stage, the researcher agreed to:

a) Inform the inmate of what the research was about including the research questions, which is guiding the study.

b) Giving the inmate an opportunity to think about the research and decide if he was willing to talk about his experiences in school relating to school discipline.

c) Give the inmate an example of the type of interview questions to be asked.

d) Prove the counselor with a pre-screening script that would be read by counselor and the researcher could help explain the research if needed and the role of the inmate as volunteer participants.

e) Meet with each volunteer participant to explain the ASU IRB Consent form; the inmate can decide if they will participate.

d) Asked the participants to sign the consent form at this time.

e) Inform the participants that their participation was voluntary and the Arizona Department of Corrections did not allow researchers to compensate prisoners for participating in research.

A total of six Navajo adult males were selected (out of seven) who were willing to participate in this study. Individuals were considered for participation if they met the following criteria: they attended school on the Navajo reservation, were under 35, willing to discuss their school experiences, and willing to participate in this study without compensation. I had originally asked to have ten participants; I was only able to obtain six participants and was allowed to seek volunteers from the minimum-security dorms.

Data collection methods and interview protocol

This study utilized individual semi-formal interviews and focus group interviews. The interviews focused primarily on school discipline policies from schools located on and surrounding the Navajo Nation. I used a "narrative approach" in my interviews that included interviewing participants in a way that allowed time and space for participants to tell their story in large uninterrupted blocks (Creswell, 2013). While the narrative approach was designed to elicit life stories, individual interviews and focus groups were guided by a series of questions that sought to explore the social, educational and community experiences of Navajo males related to discipline and incarceration, as well as their own suggestions for interventions and improving the educational systems for

Navajo people. For example, participants were asked narrative questions, like "Can you tell me about your experiences in school?" and "What would be your suggestion to improve the educational system?" More pointed questions included those like, "At what age did you first become involved with the criminal justice system?" or "How was the discipline different at home compared to that at school? (for full question set, see Appendix B).

Questions guided me toward examining the process schools used to refer students for disciplinary measures. Since I was interested in understanding how discipline is escalated or compounded and whether there are clear, consistent policies for punishment, and if there are any measures in place to de-escalate the behavior to prevent future incidences, it was important to ask a series of more pointed questions in addition to the ones eliciting narratives. It was also important to ask these questions that facilitated deep understanding of the root of the problem, including factors driven by white society (Swisher, 1996). In order to understand other environmental factors that contributed to incarceration, the interview questions included questions about family and community. Examples of these questions include: "Tell me about what life was like after you went home from school?", and "Can you describe to me what discipline was like at home and how this was different to discipline at school?"

Individuals spent approximately five hours total in two focus group sessions and a maximum of 1.5 hours in individual interviews participating in this study for a total of 6.5 hours per participant. All interviews were audio recorded, and all participants provided consent to be recorded. Each participant was informed that their confidentiality was the most significant priority for the researcher. No real names were used with

numbers being assigned to each participant which were later used to assess the data and information collected from the individual interviews and focus groups. The participant stated their numbers during the focus group before speaking to differentiate and credit the comments made by the participants. Further, all recordings were destroyed upon completion of the study. I also made it explicit that, if at any time, the participant decided to discuss information of a personal nature and did not want to be recorded, the audio recorder would be turned off and no notes would be taken. During the member check (a follow up group session to review the codes and themes, a Deputy Warden wanted to sit in on the group session) one of the participants refused to allow the Deputy to sit in on the group session. The Deputy Warden agreed to leave as long as she sat in the room right next door.

All recordings were transcribed and used to assess data and information provided by the prisoners. It should be noted that responses were provided in both Navajo and English, which I readily welcomed as a fluent speaker of the Navajo language. Upon initial interaction with participants where they had an opportunity to read their interview transcriptions, review the themes and provide changes and/or additional information if they chose to do so. In the member checking sessions, there were no changes made by the participants.

Data Analysis

Transcriptions were analyzed using the constant comparison analysis method associated with and known as coding. This analysis involves "systematic coding and extracting of information from the transcripts rather than looking for confirmation of your

initial ideas" (Rubin and Rubin, 2005, p. 202). Furthermore, "the process of labeling allows the researcher to break down raw data and reconstitute them into patterns, themes, concepts, and propositions" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 207). Beginning with open coding, I read through the interview transcripts, line by line, and marked what seems to make cultural or theoretical sense. This process is repetitive, requiring the researcher to read and reread the data and codes, to give more thought to how and why the codes cohere as a group (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

> Analysis proceeds in several stages that often overlap. The first stage is recognition, in which you find the concepts, themes, events, and topical idea important to your research problem; themes are summary statements and explanations of what is going on; events are occurrences that have taken place (a public meeting, a battle in the letters-to-the-editors columns); and topical markers are names of places, people, organizations pets, etc… After you find, refine, elaborate, and integrate your concepts and themes, you begin to code them, that is, figure out a brief label to designate each and then mark in the interview text where the concepts, themes, events or topics are found" (Rubin and Rubin, 2005, p. 207).

In this process, I was able to locate patterns where similar codes were clustered together, and the "interrelationships" between them were considered to construct "higher levels analytic meanings for assertion, proposition, hypothesis, and/or theory development" (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014, p. 73). This information was then used to write up findings from the research, with the goal of placing the findings in context with existing theoretical discussions in the research field about the research topic.

My initial read of the transcripts generated 135 recurrent terms, issues, or points raised by the participants which I worked to narrow carefully into usable codes and then deduce interrelationships that might or might not speak to any idea that schools somehow contribute to participant incarceration. The software ATLAS.ti. was useful in assisting

me to organize these points by organizing them according to clusters that focused on responses about positive and negative experiences felt by the participants from school, family, community and other institutions. I then clustered codes according to effect on participants, attitude of participants, and recommendations of participants. I attempted to draw a direct relationship between the cause and effect codes to understand the impact from the school, family, community, and other institutional description by participants that would contribute to a participant's path to incarceration.

Limitations

In sum, I believe this study was incredibly revealing. However, I would be remiss to not point out that the study sample was limited to the State of Arizona with a relatively small number of participants within the 25,000 Native Americans who are in the State Prison system and another 35,600 who enter the detention system within the Navajo reservation. Also, the study was limited to an age group, which I deliberately selected, based on their place in the generational line of Navajo peoples—these are current generation of fathers of young children. However, this study will require a larger sample to fully understand the experiences of a larger majority of Navajos, including those of different ages, and other Native peoples within the criminal justice system.

Findings

My research reveals that school had memorable impact on the participants than family, community, or other institutions. Based on the results in Table 1, there were many unique findings that described the mixed combination of family and school dynamics that shaped the participants' memory of both influences. However, in order to

stay within this framework of this study, I will discuss the themes that were most prevalent and palpable to the study of "school to prison".

Table 1: Comparative Influences Upon Participants

Effects, Attitudes & Recommendations (Effects)	Codes Indicating Negative Impact (Action & Perception)	Codes Indicating Positive Impact (Action & Perception)
Frequency (Counts)		
School	31	16
Family	16	9
Community	2	0
Other Institutions	0	0

Table 1. Shows the number of codes, divided by negative and positive impact, as related to each factor explored in this study.

Impact was measured by interactions that influenced either the behaviors (actions) or perceptions of the participant. Negative impact is defined as comments where individuals received negative reinforcement (e.g. statements from adults like "you're going to end up in jail," "you're going to end up dead," or interactions where adults avoided interacting with the participant or answering their questions while conveying a sense they are not worth the investment). Such comments convey a sense of low expectations, low or non-existent support, diminished life expectancy, and/or low perceptions of self-value. In the school setting, this manifested as teachers choosing to interact with high achieving students or students who were perceived as leaders while excluding or ignoring those who are not perceived to possess these qualities. These

comments were reported as impacting feelings of self-confidence and self-efficacy for participants.

Positive impact is defined as comments that convey positive messages about an individual's personal capacity (e.g. "you're very good at history" or adults who spent time showing the participant how to solve a problem). In the school setting this manifested as a teacher spending time with the participant, slowly and individually teaching them how to solve a problem, explaining the process, and celebrating their newly developed problem-solving skills. In the home this manifested as parents bringing home books and sitting down to read with the participant. Feeling like adults were investing in the participant's future, abilities, and interests were important. Such comments and behaviors conveyed a sense of positive expectations, affirmation, and high self-value and led participants to experience enhanced perceptions of self-efficacy, self-confidence, self-worth and feeling included and accepted.

Perhaps the most significant finding is that school generated the most codes with the majority of codes associated with negative impact (n = 31). This is almost twice the rate of codes indicating positive impact for school (n = 16). Participants indicated that family was the second highest factor influencing their perceptions of self and outcomes. Sixteen codes were generated indicating negative impact, almost twice the rate of those indicating positive impact (n = 9). Participants reported experiencing physical or verbal abuse from parents, guardians, or other relatives for perceived imperfections or transgressions and recalled the harsh tones used by family members. These statements appeared to have long-lasting impact on the participants as many reported feeling like they had nowhere to go, nowhere to turn to.

Although community generated two negative codes and zero positive codes, it is important to remember that all participants live(d) in rural areas. Due to lack of transportation, parents working, or absent parents, they remained isolated once they returned from school. Although some participated in sports, their community participation was limited due to lack of access to transportation or social relationships that would have enabled invitations to larger community events. Lastly, other than being placed in a juvenile facility, the participants did not indicate any other institutions that significantly impacted their behaviors and perceptions.

The powerful impact of schools.

Across all interviews, most participants expressed a strong negative influence from the school environment that affected their perceptions of self, opportunities, and the future. It is important to point out that this study showed the impact of schools on all participants appears to supersede other influences like family, community, and other institutions. Participants' central point in their lives was the school where they spent the majority of their time. All except one had absent parents, parents who were abusive, and in one case one participant lived with friends because he was homeless. Although some participants shared positive experiences or events at home, they appeared to be more impacted by negative ones like exposure to gang activity in their community. Further, participants viewed school as a compulsory expectation and not as a place where they typically felt nurtured, supported, or safe. They reported feeling forced to attend and reported the most negative interactions involving discipline and punishment in this setting. This was especially evident in all participants' perception of school as mandatory

and a permanent fixture of their lives. And if family and community informed the participants that school was critical to their future, the participants felt trapped, helpless, and had no control and did not have a choice.

> I mean, I guess it [school] was just one of those things. Like my older brothers did it, my older sister did it, so it was just one of those things where "Okay, I have to do it too" kind of thing. But when I say I had to do it, again, it was just one of the things that like, I guess, everybody goes -- everybody does -- everybody goes through, so (Participant 1, age 25).

> Early on, it was just because it -- I knew that it was mandatory, you know? But as I became a little older, I think it was engrained in me to -- to develop a thirst for knowledge so that I could succeed in life. My -- my mother and father were really big on, you know, your education is important. And this is going to be your, you know, your stepping stone into whatever you want to do, wherever you want to go, you know? You really won't go far in life without an education. And so, that was -- that was, I think, a big part of it (Participant 3, age 27).

> No, it was just -- it was just, at the time I just felt like it was something I just needed to do. Like I knew I just had to get my diploma (Participant 6, age 28).

The school was reported as the most powerful factor in their lives compared to family, community, and other institutions. It was the most prominent and central aspect in their lives and could have created the best possible environments to influence the future of these students but didn't. Although participants expressed a desire for schools to provide referral services to behavioral health organizations to assess students when behavioral problems were evident, they hypothesized the absence of referral services could be a limitation with funding, discrimination, racism and/or lack of cultural competence, as well as lack of training and lack of individual administrative interest and perceived value in the student. Instead, schools played a crucial role in shaping the future

for the participants by making them feel devalued as students and as if their opinions or success were not important.

> Ok there's something wrong with this kid here. That might be the lack of testing. That might be the lack of –certified personnel to identify those issues. That might be a lack of funding. And being able to hire these resources; time you know. Motivation of the members of the staff. The root of a lot of these problems I think comes from the home, too. Maybe social services, you know, could have been in place for some of these students to recognize things. Maybe something's going on at home (Participant 6, age 28).

> The child's opinion didn't even hold no weight. It wasn't even like—they already assumed that you were lying. They didn't –they didn't they assumed that you didn't know what truth meant. You know. I now think as I look back at it, I just think –they didn't believe me. Like I come from a well bred family (Participant 3, age 27).

When considering the debates of the school to prison pipeline, it's imperative to examine all influences on the participants' life that shape their chances and opportunities for a good future. Students must be honored in what they have to say as part of input into their education and be respected for who they are.

Teachers and principals were identified as powerful negative forces.

Influential individuals in the school environment included principals, teachers, dorm aides, peers, friends, girlfriends, coaches, bus drivers, resource officers, and school counselors. Out of these individuals, teachers and principals were reported as having the greatest influence for school discipline. School teachers and principals recommended students for disciplinary measures for misbehavior in school without offering remediation, counseling, or personal outreach. Behaviors for which they were referred to administrators included not paying attention to teachers and school leaders, missing

homework, and appearing not to pay attention in class. Although, the analysis indicated that fighting was among the highest reasons for disciplinary measures taken in school, a participant expressed that rarely do teachers and principals seek out explanations for the cause of their fighting, drug use, or lack of attention. Teachers and principals rarely recommended the participant to a therapist or counselor to factor in other challenges impacting the participant. Situations like poor home environments, absent parents, bullying, and emotional issues were contributing factors in the lives of these participants.

There were some exceptions that participants shared where they had positive experiences with their teachers and coaches. The participants felt that had they received this positive experience from most or all their teachers they believe they would have had a much better outcome.

> See, that's the thing. That's where my—the key—two key teachers played a role in where in where in that that made a profound impact on my, you know, on my development. You know, there was a teacher coming from Phoenix […]. She—she went out of her way to put me into some advanced courses…And now, I'm not just interested in history. I like psychology. I like sociology (Participant 3, age 27).

Another participant was excited to share that he was very happy and excited to be learning when he received help and felt that he was supported by his teacher. He was also very aware of which students received the most attention and which teachers focused on the more advanced and talented students to meet school requirements.

> One of them actually, you know, would sit there and talk to me about it, you know and help me out, help me get—solve problems, help me do this and that. And yeah, there were—one teacher—he was pretty supportive. But my other, other classes, you know, they—they were mostly helping out the kids that were trying to get their honor rolls, attendance, and stuff like that—honor rolls and stuff like that (Participant 4, age 32).

The following participant was observant in the methods used by the teachers which were effective. He thrived when teachers encouraged him, took the time to provide necessary guidance, and provided a lot of the positive reinforcement.

> A lot of the—one of the things I remember hearing the most was "You've got so much potential. This and that, so like my English teachers, in high school right? I didn't like math because my math teacher was—I didn't like his style—his methodology. I don't think he cared too much whether or not I succeeded in that course. I would have like it if he had took the time and –and showed me how to attack these problems. But he wasn't one to come back on the lesson, once that lesson was done. We were—we were moving forward, you know? (Participant 6, age 28).

These experiences shaped how the participants viewed themselves and their ability to compete in the school environment. Out of the six interviews, there were 21 identified negative actions taken by the school on the participants. These included in school suspensions, out of school suspensions, being reprimanded by the school principal, negative peer pressure, sexual abuse by a classmate, uncaring teachers, humiliation by being handcuffed and detained at school, intimidation by resource and police officers, verbal abuse by teachers, bullying by peers, removal from sports due to grades, and many other negative experiences. In addition, the participants identified 10 negative perceptions of their school environment. These experiences were negative and memorable.

> [T]here was no -- there was no -- there was no counseling or no sit down and "Let's have this talk, like, what's going on at home?" Or nothing was just -- was called -- the Navajo Police Department (PD) and Navajo PD came and picked me up, and my -- that was my experience of going into Kayenta Jail, my first time. They handcuffed me and they handcuffed me like this, behind the -- to the bench. And you know, I got handcuffed out of school. And I ended up in -- I didn't -- I didn't like, I didn't cry or nothing. I was just sitting there like, "How long are they going to keep me like this?" You know? And finally, they like six o'clock in the evening,

> one of the officers took me up and drove me all the way to Shonto Junction. (Participant 4, age 32)

This was an example of a participant's powerful experience of the confusion and humiliation of a police officer physically removing him off school premises. The relationship between school and incarceration were deeply intertwined from this young Navajo man's perception. Other participants shared examples in which the school also permitted humiliating and aggressive forms of discipline from dorm aides.

> Dorm aides used to […] beat some of those kids…And some of these things I couldn't really talk about, you know? I couldn't go home and say that…it was bad, man. And you get out and because I don't know, I think my parents knew (Participant 6, age 28).

> We were just, we were all naked. Because we didn't do something. And then, we all got down and into the showers. We were all naked, little kids, teenagers…a group. They opened the windows, it's was cold. And that was the punishment! (Participant 5, age 34).

> So the kids…a lot of them were taught, so they were disciplined not knowing, not know what they'd done wrong and we'd have to explain to them, tell them. Or, we all get into trouble because we didn't know… The child's opinion didn't even hold weight. It wasn't even like—they already assumed that you were lying. They assumed that you didn't know what truth meant (Participant 3, age 27).

The participants' suggested their experiences with racism, stress, and traumas led to their inability to find positive ways to cope. Carter et al., (2017) describes stress "as the appraisal (by the person) of an event as positive, unwanted, negative, and/or taxing, that requires one to adapt or cope in some way. Trauma is a severe form of stress that overwhelms a person's ability to cope. Traumatic stress is a form of stress resulting from emotional pain, as opposed to a life threatening event or series of events. In addition to these definitions researchers have found life-event trauma for civilians and veterans and found that people of color experience higher rates of post traumatic syndrome disorder

(PTSD) (compared with their white counterparts when exposed to a variety of potentially stressful life events" (p. 31). A participant in this study shared a nonphysical but verbally expressive statement that shaped his identity at his school site.

> If there was anything with school, ties with being here in prison…It goes, I think it goes a lot to what the teachers have said to me. There [were] multiple teachers that told me that I was going to be in prison. Or I was going to be dead. Those words -- it's like, even in our culture and even in the biblical context, your tongue is a sharp, two-edged sword. When you say something like that, when you say something full of malice like that, full of -- it's not good. You say something like that, to, especially a child whose naïve who's like "Whoa, I might, I may end up in prison!" you know? That speaks volumes to that child. That -- that -- that should never have been said. You know? There was another way to say things but it shouldn't have been, "You're going to be dead or you're going to be in prison" (Participant 3, age 27).

Researcher: How old were you when you heard those words, first heard of them?

> Third grade, probably. You know, third grade, and I heard this all the way into high school. I even remember the Dean of Students that told me this, you know? I remember the Dean of Students telling me this, "You're going to end up in prison." Almost is, I don't know, it's like "Dang." You know? And it's like a curse, really. If you think about it. You shouldn't be talking to people like that. You know? Teachers should not be talking to students like that. They should they should know better as an adult. They should never have been--I should never have heard those words, because it kind of like developed into, "Maybe I'm meant for that. Maybe I'm -- maybe --maybe my place in society is in prison." But now that I'm here, I'm like, "Oh man, I can't wait to just go home." You know? (Participant 3, 27).

The participant shows how this labeling and perception of him carried throughout his whole life. As he recanted this memory, he sighed and looked away from the group as he shared this story. It was very apparent that this was painful. He shared that looking back into his past he believed that these statements repeated to him over and over again from different individuals has shaped his entire educational career and potentially his adult life.

Rarely do teachers or principals ask students about their lives outside of the classroom. One participant stated that teachers and principals never asked questions that were important to them. For example:

> Why are they disenchanted or why is there a lack of interest? Does this kid not want to read? And is he lashing out because of it? Is that kid angry because he is behind, and maybe the other kids are making fun of him? Or does he not want to be in school because he lacks the stylish clothes?" He further stated "I had a cousin who did not finish school and one of the reasons he had a lot of disciplinary problems and got into fights was because he could not read. And that would make anybody angry" (Participant 6, age 28).

The participant believed that if the school teachers took more time to understand students who were falling behind, instead focus was on students who were excelling in the classroom things could turn out differently. In his observation students withdrew and refused to accept classroom assignments and were eventually disciplined for not producing work in the classroom. In addition to this, another participant remembered not being able to get help from his parents because they didn't understand the work they were doing. Instead he was severely reprimanded when he received poor grades and when he started to miss school, which led to his eventual detention in a reservation juvenile detention center. His lack of parent engagement escalated when he was sent to a juvenile correction center.

> So, then at school, same thing. But once you get those cuffs, handcuffed up on you, you're like this--get drove off to juvi, it's a mix of it—it registers in you about this look of like…they're going to release me anyway. So the juvi center says "you can go home whenever your parents come to pick you up. But my parents were one of the parents that like, You know, let him learn his lesson. So you spend 30 days in there and you're like, "I want classes…you get fed 3 times a day, you're bored and you start reading. But then—you adapt to it (Participant 3, age 27).

The participant recounts in detail show he was treated by school officials that led to his incarceration into a juvenile detention facility. His incarceration was supported and reinforced by his parents with their statements and actions. Leaving him in the juvenile center for a period of time was described by the student as a time when he adapted to being in a juvenile detention center. It appears that the relationship among the three major influences: schools, juvenile detention, and family facilitated and reinforced the participant's sense of adaptation to incarceration. Overall, the impact of teachers and principals in setting the path for the participants' played a key role in shaping the pipeline of delivery to prison.

Negative family impacts triggered dependency on the school for support.

Negative family environment was identified by participants' as influencing their perceptions of school and future. The indicators of negative family environment included absent father, abusive father, lack of financial support, absent mother, abusive home, no available family to help with homework, siblings abusive to participant, and lack of cultural teachings in the home. Although cultural teachings were lacking in the schools, which were important to some of the participants, some participants reported feeling it was more important that this was taught by parents and family.

The awareness of these negative experiences were more visible for the participant when they saw how other families treated their children and recalled how lack of advocacy led them to interface with the justice system faster than their peers. For example, one participant contrasts his family to another family.

> It's just like whenever I'd get in trouble when I and even if I didn't start it, or anything, they didn't care because the other kids, the ones that I got in

> trouble with were protected, and their parents to come and help them. Help them talk by talking to the principal about why he did this. I didn't have my parents. I had nobody, so the first thing they did was send me to juvenile. They didn't give me a chance to explain myself. Even if they did, they didn't believe me. They just thought of me, 'Oh, he's a troublemaker. He doesn't have now where to go. He's basically staying at our dorms, and his parents don't even want to come away and talk on his behalf. Might as well just send him away, if he's just going to keep getting in trouble' (Participant 2, age 32).

In this reflection, the participant's family situation created his dependency on the school for his survival. Unfortunately, the school was not invested in protecting him. Instead, school officials chose to push him away on a track that presented further trauma and abuse. He was funneled into an institution that serves as the first step to living a life in detention and social isolation. The lack of family support also increased his awareness of the rejection by two powerful institutions in his life—family and school. The neglect by his family shaped the school's perception of the student as not being a valued individual and could punish him as they pleased, believing that he had no one to advocate for him and nowhere else to go anyway. In situations involving non-Native staff, this could be attributed to a form of racism that is discussed in Scheurich & Young (2017) "where covert racism occurs when a decision is made to take action by giving reason that society will find palatable" (p.5). Thus, sending him away because there was no one to take care of him, and because he was consistently getting into trouble, seems an appropriate and beneficial response for the school that no longer has to spend resources on a "troubled and unwanted" student.

In addition, at least four of the participants described being physically abused at home; one participant described this as "discipline at home." The abuses described were

violent and included being beaten, hit with a closed fist, kicked, whipped with a braided horsewhip and a belt. One participant stated:

> I was always whipped. I remember he [my father] used to try to whip me when I was in the 8th grade, and I just took it away from him, and I said to him, 'You ain't whipping me anymore. Not like that.' He looked at me and said 'alright.' My dad was by no means a good father…he didn't teach me how to swing an ax. He didn't teach me how to swing a hammer. He didn't teach me nothing (Participant 3, age 27).

Here the participant learned to use the same level of force of his abusive father to stop his father from hitting him. By using force and violence against his father, the participant internalized a hard lesson – to be heard requires violence. These types of lessons gained from the home environment carried into the school life. Fighting was a common aspect of the all the participants' experiences in school, which was a major source of their encounter with school discipline. They commonly discussed how they were caught for fighting with their peers. At the same time, the participants were not taught to verbally express their emotions, and instead, they resorted to violence, which was taught and reinforced at home.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to understand how school discipline contributes to a "pipeline" to prison for Navajo men. The link between education policy and a pipeline to prison has led to ideas that discipline in schools is a factor that leads individuals into the prison system (Curtis, 2014; Heitzeig, 2009; Winn & Behizadeh, 2011).

My research found that there appear to be a number of contributing factors compounding home and school experiences that impacted the life decisions of young Navajo males, which include the effects of school-driven trauma and low teacher and

administrative expectations and negative educator attitudes. What does a generation of abuse and punishment mean for students who have parents and grandparents who themselves are the products and descendants of these school legacies of abuse? In addition, what does this cycle mean culturally for Navajo peoples. For example, there are natural systems in place that were used by Native peoples to address discipline issues that were passed down historically which include customs for discipline and include asset-based approaches toward resolutions.

Effects of historic and school-driven trauma

The events shared by participants in this study suggest abuse and trauma sustained through school experiences and at the hands of school teachers, administrators, and dorm aides. In some incidences, the participants observed other students being physically abused and felt that these peers did not even understand why they were being punished. One participant stated, "their [peers'] English wasn't that great..."(Participant 5, age 34).

The majority of the participants also reported that fighting was among the primary reasons for discipline in school. It would appear that the "power over them by authority" is reflective of institutionalized racism, reflecting the power of those who administrate Navajo schools and even more historically, the European systems upon which schooling is even based. This confusion of power and realization of powerlessness caused participants' anger, as they did not always understand what was happening within the school system. Combined with family dynamics, this is a set-up for student failure. One participant described his developmental years:

> No love. I don't remember my dad saying "I love you" when I was a kid… I had bad experiences. Coming from a big family, you just get hand me

> downs you know. Kids making fun of you because you were sunburn from herding sheep. You have to defend yourself. (Participant 3, age 27).

Another participant recalled observing students being abused yet could not tell his parents.

> I wasn't really committed at school, you know? But I did see it. And that alone was kind of like, terrifying to me. Yeah, I could see students getting hit. I saw dorm aides doing, doing that. Dorm aides use to do that; dorm aides used to beat some of those kids. And I didn't think that was—that was you know. And some of those things, I couldn't really talk about, you know. I couldn't talk—couldn't go home and say that… it was bad man. And you get out and because I don't know. I think my parents knew. I mean they went to boarding school…I don't know if it was the same thing. I'm not sure, you know, it was just something that you go through. Maybe that's what I thought. But I did see discipline at school and there wasn't really a—it wasn't really that great, you know. Seeing other kids you know, get beat like that. Okay, you saw discipline at home for a reason and that was okay. That was toward learning something. But at school, you could get—what happened—did you understand why it might happen. Yeah, some of those kids weren't good students. They were smacked for something that that they didn't really know…(Participant 6, age 28).

The abuses felt by participants were ignored by family as the participant describes above. He stated, "I think my parents knew. *I mean they went to boarding school..."(my emphasis),* which lends to the idea that family members are still dealing with historical trauma. Mohatt et al., (2014) discussed trauma narrative as a "representation and interplay between personal stories and culture, are cultural constructions of trauma. Cultural narratives of trauma may be especially relevant to health, perhaps more so than the actual occurrence of an event, because they frame the psychosocial, political-economic, and social-ecological context within which that event is experienced" (p. 130). The school and home experiences of participants are clearly in line with Mohatt et al.,'s (2014) discussion on trauma narratives.

As a social worker on the Navajo reservation, Navajo parents who wanted help in placing their children in federal boarding schools to learn discipline and good behavior often contacted me. At the risk of sounding critical and opinionated, I would often ask, "As a parent, why would you want to place your child in a dorm where your child won't have the day-to-day contact they need with you?" The response was overwhelmingly, "Because they don't listen to me. I can't control them. The boarding school will teach them discipline and they will be made to listen!" My second question to parents was then, "What does your child want?" The answer most frequently shared was, "I don't know, he/she doesn't listen to me, they don't want to go to school. I can't control him/her." The result of these conversations left me conflicted. It is a real tragedy when we have been conditioned as Native peoples to believe that controlling our children and placing them in controlled environments operated by non-Indigenous peoples using non-Indigenous teachings and disciplinary practices is best for them.

According to Reyhner and Eder (2004), "a persistent problem of [Bureau of Indian Affairs] BIA schools was discipline and almost all schools had locked rooms or isolated buildings that were used as jails" (p. 209). The enduring effects of colonization, family separation, and severe physical and emotional punishment endured in education settings is part of historical trauma that appears to have become normalized by Native families. Navajo parents sometimes make requests to have their children placed in boarding schools "to learn good behavior, the boarding school will teach them discipline and made to listen!" The message parents have internalized is that it is okay for a Navajo student to be exposed to strict discipline and punished as needed. This is okay because this has been ongoing since the 1700s when the first Christian organizations came to

Indian country and said, “This is good for you.” How many generations of Native families have been exposed to separation and abuse and have come to believe it is okay?

Unfortunately, the presence of punishment and control as a means to discipline Native children is not limited to the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), tribal, or the federal boarding school systems. Public school policies also promote practices that disproportionately target Native children, raising the likelihood that they will interface with school resource officers or representatives of the justice system rather than college scouts.

Effects of low teacher and administrative expectations.

Critical to my discussion here is also the role of the school educators in student lives. Deyhle & Swisher (1997) non-Indian administrators on the Navajo reservation “identified the following causes for Navajo students’ school failure:”

> Lack of self-esteem, inadequate homes, inadequate preparation for school, lack of parenting skills, poor communication between home and school, poor school attendance, limited vocabulary and language development, limited cultural enrichment opportunities, too academic curriculum, poor attitude and motivation, and fetal alcohol syndrome”(p.127).

What these administrators failed to note is the epistemological and physically violent history of colonization that has resulted in historic trauma shared among Indian peoples that may manifest in an overall wariness toward education structures (Brave Heart, 1995; Walters et al., 2011). Brave Heart puts this succinctly when she said, “historical trauma is the collective and compounding emotional and psychic wounding over time, which is, multiple-generational and is not limited to [one’s individual] life span” (1995, p. 6). Moreover, this colonial history may also contribute to a lack of information for parents

and communities about how best to prepare Native children to succeed in educations structures that were developed without consideration to foster Indigenous culture and personal individual development.

Not only have colonial and punitive school systems marginalized and ostracized Indian knowledges and heritage from education settings, the attitude of administrators and teachers leads to decisions that promote "institutional racism" by using discipline policies that are foreign to Indigenous students. Institutional racism "exists when institutions or organizations, including educational ones, have standard operating procedures (unintended or intended) that hurt members of one or more races in relations to members of the dominant race" (Scheurich & Young, 2017, p. 5). Non-Native school and dorm personnel selecting and choosing which students will be disciplined and which ones will not be disciplined are evidence of "covert racism." Covert racism is "consciously punishing individuals without broadcasting their intentions; instead, they veil them or provide reasons that society will find more palatable" (p. 5). This was clearly stated by participants 2 and 3 who felt they were "singled out and disciplined although they had no involvement in the act, and, moreover, no one defended them when they were disciplined.

But discipline also included harmful messages to students:

> I actually had a teacher that told me that 'Why are you even in school? Why are you in school? You don't want to learn. You don't want to be here. Why don't you just take your GED and then we'll, you know…I'll pay for it" "I'll pay for it," he says… "I mean it… Yeah this is not for you. Why don't you just go somewhere else, you know. You're wasting your time everybody's time." And I was like. "Uhhh" …I said "Maybe I will." I don't know. And then he was like, "You should just do that. Just take your

> GED and move on, because you don't –you're just wasting everybody's time, listening to this." (Participant 5, age 34).

This type of behavior within an educational setting could elevate drop-out rates and drive students out (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Faircloth & Tippeconnic, 2010). For example, Deyhle & Swisher (1997) found that "Navajo and Oglala Sioux students residing on reservations and those living in urban areas felt 'pushed out' of schools and mistreated by teachers and administrators, and in turn, they rejected the schools' academic officers dull and unconnected to their lives" (p. 129 & 130). Similarly, the institutional tone of the school and individual behavior of teachers was very prominent in this study. As the participants stated (my emphasis), *"There was multiple teachers that told me that I was going to be in prison. Or I was going to be dead," and. "Okay you saw discipline at home for a reason and that was okay. That was toward learning something. But at school…did you understand why it might happened? Yeah, some of those kids weren't good students. They were smacked for something that that they didn't really know what for…Their English wasn't that great."* These participants ended up dropping out of school because they felt unwanted and pushed out.

Historically, labels like the ones used by administrators in Dehyle & Swisher's (1997) study have been used to classify Indian people as academically and/or culturally lazy, disadvantaged, intellectually inferior, and to place Native peoples at a lower level of society compared to White society or other racial groups. The classification of Indigenous peoples by non-Indian people as intellectually and emotionally underdeveloped, culturally deficient, and prone to substance abuse creates and sustains a racist environment in the education system that frames Indian children as deviant and

limits the expectations and opportunities available to them. The resulting context creates challenges in schooling and the educational achievement of American Indian students. However, research over the past 30 years has begun to highlight this racist colonial framing and promote asset-based approaches to schooling that are not framed on deficit ways of thinking (Hernández, 2017).

Asset-based approaches.

My research questions also included a need to explore approaches and interventions identified by participants in reconsidering discipline policies for Navajo males. The recommendations include teaching Navajo (Diné) cultural and traditional practices to allow students to understand where they come from, who their relatives are, and what it means to be Diné. The participants believed that that they were never provided the foundation in learning about their culture and traditions at home and extending this into the school space, culture and traditions were definitely not used to discipline them in school.

As troublesome and disturbing as the experiences shared about institutional racism and school push out, participants were able to focus on positive ideas for change. The final question guiding this study asked: What do Navajo males who have interfaced with the justice system believe could be done to improve justice and/or educational systems or outcomes for Navajo males? What approaches and interventions can be identified to reconsider discipline policies for Navajo males? The recommendations from the men in this study include teaching Navajo (Diné) cultural and traditional practices to

allow students to understand where they come from, who their relatives are and what it means to be Diné.

The participants believed that being culturally connected and having a strong cultural identity could serve as a foundation for self-confidence and resilience. They reported never being provided the foundation in learning about their culture and traditions and not having traditional principles, practices, or knowledges used to discipline them in school or at home. In their current detention facility, they reported participating in a weekly the Sweat Lodge Ceremony (SLC) led by Navajo elders who are in the system. They are learning to speak their language, learning the stories that tie them to their clan, and what it means to be Diné. The participants suggested what they were learning while participating in the SLC might have led them to make different choices if they had received these teachings in their developmental years. They suggest including these types of teachings with current inmates in every institution that houses Navajos. According to the participants, there is a need for re-learning and re-teaching starting with the basic teachings with the birth of the child.

Navajo (Dine') philosophy which is based on the clan system value Ke' might serve as a way to counter the disparate treatment of youth in schools. Ke' roughly translated in concept to English means, "we are all related by clan" and through this system teaches cultural values of respect and harmony with one another and all living things. Children are highly valued and they are considered to be highly spiritual and to have many children is to be wealthy (Aronlith, 1994).

The philosophy is that Navajo children are sacred beings and molding of a newborn baby starts at birth with the construction of the cradle board which the infant

will spend in its first year. The construction starts with a perfectly flat cottonwood that is shaped and measured precisely by an uncle or grandfather with prayers for a strong healthy baby and one who will live a healthy long and prosperous life. "With the crafting of the cradleboard, Indian parents were considering the mental development of their unborn child" (Swisher, 1996, p. 86). The cradleboard is designed in a way to allow the new baby to be stood up and to always be a part of the family's social interaction, allowing the baby to observe the goings-on and be a part of everything. This is the beginnings of moral development with a goal to foster "good thoughts and respect" for self and others leading to taking responsibility for self and others. These are philosophies that are explicitly at odds with the notion of punishment in schools and other popular discipline strategies that are implemented by western schooling which contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline. However, I offer the Ké alternative, which begins with birth and the cradleboard and takes Navajo males on a different journey—away from *cradleboard-to-prison.*

Asset-based approaches for Indian education based on Ke' include incorporating heritage language and culture in the classroom, Indigenous Knowledges, and/or place-based education into curriculum. Brayboy (2006) found in that "inclusion of Native languages and culture in schools are indicators of academic success for Native students" (p. 437). In other words, rather than excluding the culture, language, history, knowledges, and practices of Indian communities – research shows Indian children do better when these things are included. It is important to note that these trends in "culturally-relevant" education have been ongoing in schooling research and prompted earlier by other scholars as well, including Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995), whose work

focused on culturally relevant schooling (CRS) in her work with African American students and teachers.

Ladson-Billings found that "culturally relevant teachers utilize students' culture as a vehicle for learning which includes involvement of parents in the classroom and encouraging students to use their home language in the classroom" (p. 161). Examples of CRS can differ by community. In the Southwest, for example, American Indians educate their children with survival skills, farming techniques, caring for domestic animals and respecting the land which is necessary for a good harvest and raising livestock to be consumed by the family (Benally, 1994). Participants in my study reflected on this as a family teaching, related to positive discipline, and as a way to develop endurance for hard work.

> The whole community was affiliated with roping and cattle and rodeo. And he was—especially his kids…my dad used to tell us 'you guys, after school take care of the livestock. He used to tell us that. So, the bus driver used to drop us off—life before he went home, he used to drop us about a mile from where we lived, and we walked the rest of the way. And then we took care of the cows and the horses and the stuff over there. And then once everything was done, and then my father would pick us up about 5 pm. (Participant 5, age 34).

It is important to know that these trends are "culturally-relevant" education have been ongoing in schooling research and prompted earlier by other scholars as well, including in the Southwest, for Navajos educate their children with survival skills, farming techniques, caring for domestic animals and respecting the land which is necessary for a good harvest and raising livestock to be consumed by the family (Abraham et al., 1984; Benally, 1994). This Diné traditional knowledge not only leads to better education attainment for Indian children because it validates their heritage identity

and ancestral beliefs, traditions, customs, practices and knowledges. It also equips them to be able to survive in the environment and feed their families in the future (Abraham et al., 1984; Barnhardt, 2008; Benally, 1994; Brayboy et al., 2012; Kawagley, 1995; Sumida Huaman, 2014).

To be clear, Indian scholars are not arguing that education in Western school structures is unnecessary or without value, nor are they claiming that Indian children cannot do well in those structures. Instead, as Brayboy (2006) explained by quoting an Indian student who was reflecting on what Indian education meant for him, "We have to make sure that our people know how to read and write, and they have someone in front of them who understands what it means to be Indian" (p. 426). This is a powerful illustration by an Indian student who received an education that combined both perspectives of schooling from his Native culture and western society. This type of education is necessary to support Native people to engage and be successful in their communities and to be competitive in western society (Brayboy, 2006). Further, this student's testimony asserts that American Indians should play an active role in schooling. Historically this has not been the practice due to educational policies and curriculum that were strictly from Western perspectives of [Christian] religion and value systems of what education should and must be. This one-way perspective has disillusioned Native youth and led to one of the highest dropout rates, with an average of 35% (Faircloth & Tippeconnic, 2010).

Complicating current policy is the historical trajectory of the delivery of schooling as little more than an effort to strip Indigenous peoples of their knowledge, cultures, collective social identity, and individuality. Deyhle and Swisher (1997), found that Indian students reported that "school curriculum, perceived as not connected to students' life

goals, was an important reason or poor performance and leaving school" (p. 131). The goal to "eradicate Indianness" (Brayboy, 2006, p. 437) replaced by Western values has led to modern day schooling practices that have deflated the confidence of Native peoples in education and influenced administrative and teacher attitudes that disproportionately target Native children for discipline and sustains a school-to-prison pipeline.

Generations of abuse and punishment.

One of the participants in my study stated that he was punished and never given an opportunity to speak for himself. He believed that the school administrator was going to do with him whatever it was they wanted and had no one to come to his defense, not even his parents. "*I had nobody, so the first thing they did was send me to juvenile. They didn't give me a chance to explain myself. Even if they did, they didn't believe me. They just thought of me, 'Oh, he's a trouble maker. He doesn't have nowhere to go," and, "I remember the Dean of Students telling me this, "You're going to end up in prison…And it's like a curse, really. If you think about it."*

The treatment received by my study participants while in school could be viewed as a direct reflection of what began during the policy era between 1870-1928 in the U. S., which is known as the assimilation period where there was a strong push for Indian people to send their children to school as a form of "saving the child and killing the Indian" (Deloria, 1969, 1974; Lomawaima, 1999, 2000; Reyhner & Eder, 2004). In 1879, Richard Pratt who coined this phrase developed the first Indian School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania based on a military style regime which established a curriculum to use education as a vehicle to prepare and train Indian students for skilled labor (Lomawaima,

1999; Pratt, 1964; Reyhner & Eder 2004). Students were forced to speak English and could not practice anything that was "Indian" (Deloria, 1969; Locust, 1988; Lomawaima, 1993, 1999; Pratt, 1964; Tuck & Yang, 2012).

Indian children were severely punished if they were caught speaking their Native languages or wanting to keep anything that resembled their Indianness (Locust, 1988; Lomawaima, 1999; Tuck & Yang, 2012). This was a period when Indian children were given Christian names, their hair was cut, and they were issued uniforms in the likeness of Western attire, and where contact with family was limited to once a year (Lomawaima, 1993, 1999). If Indian families refused to sign their children for school, their rations and other government annuities were withheld (Lomawaima, 1993, 2000; Reyhner & Eder, 2004).

Generations of abuse and punishment due to life in federal Indian boarding schools and at the hands of school officials has led to consequences of lost of parenting. My study participants described that their parents had attended federal boarding schools and in a couple of cases parents were encouraged to send their children to these schools after they were expelled from local schools. The experiences of these participants from the different environments is explained in the web of causation as discussed by Krieger (1994) as "multiple causation" in a metaphor as "the web" to explain illness/sickness (p. 887). Leslie Marmon Silko (1977) in her book "Ceremony" uses a similar web to skillfully weave Tayo, a Laguna veteran's life experiences to draw attention to his traumatized mind, body and soul.

Systems and customs for discipline.

The Navajo people have systems and customs for punishment and discipline by the family and by the community without relying on the Western criminal justice system. Piechowskis' (2011) dissertation *Classroom – A Comparison of Navajo Elementary Students, Perception of Their Classroom Environment* presents two very powerful messages.

> The first message is despite the lack of support from family, school, and community, caring classroom teachers can create a classroom environment that supports resiliency. The second message is school systems are losing the battle to protect and support the caring teachers who are providing the havens of support for the high-risk students (p. 1).

This statement echoes that the teacher has the power to create an environment to help students deal with the adversities outside of education. Piechowski uses "resiliency theory" to identify protective and risk factors related to social and physical attributes of a child including. "Caring relationships with others, family support, family engagement with schooling and the school environment can foster academic achievement for children" (p.2). Piechowski (2011) argued that the correlation between school environment and achievement has reciprocal effect on students (as cited Christner, Mennuti, and Whitaker 2009):

> A number of children and adolescents enter school each day struggling with emotional, behavioral and family problems that affect their learning as well as the learning of others. This has a reciprocal effect, in that the students internalize their academic difficulties, which further exacerbates some of the emotional and behavioral problems they face (p.3).

My participants in this study believed that their schools did not create an environment to help students who were behind in school. Instead teachers and

administrators used punishment, like suspensions, without assessing the underlying issues this created an unfavorable environment for students. One participant reported that he was sexually molested when he was in the sixth grade and because he "kept to himself and buried himself in sports." He believes that his bad choices possibly were related to this.

> I have had time to kind of think about stuff like this and stuff like that. But if I can pinpoint it back, I guess it would have to start when I was in the sixth grade, I was sexually molested…At the time I didn't really think a great deal about it, but as I got older, I kind of—I don't know, I just kept to myself with stuff like that and then buried myself in sports…once I started college I kind of started drinking and using drugs and then just kind of went from there. And then that turned into addiction and it just kind of went downhill from there and making wrong choices because I was under the influence of drugs and alcohol, it kind of led me to be here (Participant 1, age 25).

Another participant describes whether his punishment was an appropriate punishment when instead more questions could have been asked about why students were ditching and how that could be addressed.

> The ISS (in school suspension) in elementary school and mid-school, I don't think that that was sufficient or appropriate punishment. I think that there should have been more focus on why are these kids ditching? And I think there should have been something else in place to curb it. And what's the root of that? You know. Why—why are they disenchanted or why is there a lack of interest? Does this kid not want to read? And is he lashing out because of it? Is that kid angry because he's behind, and maybe the other kids are making fun of him? Or does he not want to be in that class because of the lack of, of stylish clothes that he has? Or, you know, there's got to be something behind it. I had a cousin who did not finish school and one of the reasons that he had a lot of disciplinary problems or maybe got into fights was because he could not read. You know. And that that would make most anybody angry (Participant 6, age 28).

As Indigenous researchers, there is a need to develop experts to write about the "different ways of examining experiences and theoretical frames through which to view the experience...the ways of knowing are vital to our self-determination" (Brayboy, 2006, p. 436). We need to write our own "master narrative" (Cook-Lynn, 2008, p. 331) about the problem space and define what appears to be problems in our communities through our Indigenous lens. In this call, the relationship between justice, education, and Indigenous self-determination is critical and a central framework of this research. Not only have colonial and punitive school systems marginalized or ostracized Indian knowledges and heritage from education settings, the attitude of administrators and teachers promote "institutional racism" by using discipline policies that are foreign to Indigenous students. Institutional racism "exists when institutions or organizations, including educational ones, have standard operating procedures (unintended or intended) that hurt members of one or more races in relations to members of the dominant race" (Scheurich & Young, 1997, p. 5).

Conclusion

According to Lomawaima (1993), the school policies of education during the federal boarding school era were about control and authority and to transform the American Indian children into a "new kind of Indian through the moral, spiritual, and physical training (p. 230). She further argued that as part of education, American Indian children had to learn and be able to repeat the following message as part of and to show their educational success. *"I believe that intelligent obedience is necessary to leadership.*

Therefore, I will have respect for authority" (my emphasis, p. 230). It would appear that very little has changed since that time.

In contemporary studies of education, Freed and Smith's (2004) "purely inductive method" (p. 20) found two common themes from essays of the American Indian children: "1) that culturally relevant curriculum is important to the American Indian children 2) to maintain their connection to their communities and feel wanted and needed" (p. 29). These are the same want and need that was discussed by my study participants. Additionally, my participants may not know this, but in their descriptions of what they hope for, they highlighted one of Brayboy's (2006) theories in tribal critical race theory: "Tribal philosophies, beliefs, customs, traditions, and visions for the future are central to understanding the lived realities of Indigenous peoples, but they also illustrate the differences and adaptability among individuals and groups" (p. 429).

The task of providing culturally relevant curriculum and to ensure that Native children maintain their connection to their communities is the responsibility of the tribes, the federal governments, the schools, Native families, and individuals. In particular, the Navajo Nation must address the high number of incarceration of its peoples and find alternative means over putting their people in lock down facilities including and not limited to, conflict resolution and problem solving using Navajo traditional and cultural ways of family discipline. Other considerations for future policies must also include alternatives to the harsh punishments in school and altogether less or no exclusionary approaches to support and improve behavioral and academic outcomes in schools for Nation children. Schools could eliminate suspension as a means of punishment and to encourage more supervision of children and harmful policies.

Additionally, institutional racism must be addressed. For American Indian students, the historic impacts of federal educational policies, practices, and treatment is federal boarding schools starting in the late 1800's laid the foundation of their education. The Bureau of Indian Affairs' (BIA) federal boarding schools were structured much like the military with daily activities that were structured and monitored (Lomawaima, 1993). The federal government used the classroom to teach respect, religion, obedience, and manual labor with a goal to transform the Indian child (Locust, 1988). The BIA educational system was not made to honor race and cultural diversity and Indian children did not have access to public schools and were forced to attend military style education programs (Roessel, 1963).

Research suggests education discipline policies contribute to the individual's likelihood of becoming integrated into the criminal justice (detention/prison) system. Educational policies were developed early in the colonization of education and were intended to control minority groups and to assimilate them into the dominate society (Lomawaima, 1999). The effects of this colonial and assimilatory thinking is seen today in disproportionate rates of discipline referral for Native students. Although Indian tribes have been given some authority under the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, "the authority given to tribes are limited and controlled by school policies, curricula, teacher training, hiring practices, funding mandates and standardized testing" (Lomawaima, 1999, p. 2).

Currently the educational system punishes children who misbehave (definition varies by teacher interpretation and school administration) in school (Brown, 2014). These misbehaviors could involve things like "talking back to a teacher, missing homework, not paying attention in class, breaking things, drugs, threatening, bullying,

harassment, property damage, and in some cases, possession of items or substances that looked like guns or drugs" (Brown, 2014, p. 30). Such punitive responses that offer little recourse for asset-based or rehabilitative and supportive alternatives based on Indigenous values, beliefs, and practices contribute to what some have termed and "school-to-prison pipeline." This theory suggests schools discipline students of color at higher rates and with harsher punishments than their white peers. This is believed to eventually lead students of color to enter into the juvenile justice system and later into prison (Brown, 2014).

The enduring effects of colonization, family separation, and severe physical and emotional punishment endured in education settings is part of historical trauma that appears to have become normalized by Native families. I stated earlier that Navajo parents sometimes make requests to have their children placed in boarding schools "to learn good behavior, the boarding school will teach them discipline and made to listen! The message these parents have internalized and normalized that it is okay for a Navajo student to be exposed to strict discipline and punished as needed. How many generations of Native families have been exposed to separation and abuse and have come to believe it is okay? Unfortunately, the presence of punishment and control as a means to discipline Native children is not limited to the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), tribally controlled schools and federal boarding schools. Public school policies also promote practices that disproportionately target Native children, raising the likelihood that they will interface with school resource officers or representatives of the justice system rather than college scouts.

Lastly, schools need to revisit how they assess and support students who exhibit behavioral problems and ones who are falling behind in school to determine intervention strategies. Educators, counselors, and principals must talk to the students who are having problems. Third, asset-based approaches for Indian education based on Ke' including incorporating heritage language and culture in the classroom, Indigenous Knowledges, and/or place-based education into curriculum may help reduce isolation and pain experienced by Native students in school. As one participant put it, *"I think they should start teaching like our traditional, our traditions more our language more; I can't speak Navajo. Like I know the basics, how to say hello. I can't even introduce myself in Navajo. I just know my four clans, that's why I just—say yeah. I know them in order, I just can't say it, like the full introduction"* (Participant 2, age 32). There is so much research that is necessary focusing on the experiences of "school-to-prison resulting from discipline policies and those who were parents by individuals whose discipline experiences are largely learned from federal and residential boarding schools.

Chapter 3: Historical traumas, perpetuated by federal policies and events impact the experiences of schooling and discipline for Indigenous children

This chapter examines how and in what ways the justice system and schooling and educational policies intersect with the educational achievement of American Indian students. In this discussion, I present a vision for school behavioral discipline that prioritizes the Indigenous child and their well-being. I begin by presenting a summary of how historical traumas, perpetuated by federal policies and historical events, dramatically impact the experiences of schooling and discipline for Indigenous children in the U.S. This cycle of federally-driven trauma can exacerbate the current vulnerable conditions of Native children who are at higher risk of experiencing personal traumas including domestic violence, physical/sexual assault, higher rates of suicidality, and substance abuse. In turn, the effects of all these risks may manifest in lateral acts of violence. However, I should be clear that although I mention trauma, my research is not a study on trauma or speculation on the impacts of trauma. However, understanding the social and educational contexts of Indigenous children, specifically Diné youth, requires understanding and examining notions of historical trauma that results in an educational legacy that concurrently establishes and maintains practices and attitudes that lead to the disproportionate labeling of Native children as naughty, disruptive, or special needs. The result of this labeling is two-fold: First, it interferes with Native student success and persistence since Native children are viewed as unteachable, and second, Native children are targeted as problematic, troublesome, or disruptive and become tracked for disciplinary pathways that lead from school-to-prison.

I address this issue by delving into six areas. The first situates American Indians in the U.S. and discusses their unique status as both a political and racial group. Second, I provide an overview of current trends in Indian education, economic conditions, and a discussion on historic and individual trauma. Third, and in order to understand why current trends look the way they do, I discuss the foundation for understanding the history of American Indian education by presenting a discussion on six distinct education policy eras and the role of epistemological and ontological clashes between Indian ways of thinking about discipline and education and western education practices. This section explores reasons for how historic practices have formed a current system which does not work for the schooling and educational achievement of American Indian students. Fourth, I present a discussion on the case study that informs this research, the Navajo Nation, and how a focus on Western discipline practices deviate from traditional models of conflict resolution which prioritizes community-based peacemaking practices rather than in school suspension, detention, expulsion and, at worst, jailing. Fifth, I connect the previous sections to offer a detailed discussion, informed by my mother's traditional cultural teachings, on how traditional Diné models of child development and discipline can inform a holistic approach to schooling that prioritizes the students well-being and disrupts policies that contribute to decisions that maintain a school-to-prison pipeline for Native children. Finally, I conclude by calling for a return to the Diné traditional epistemology and pedagogies that support positive dispute resolutions through peacemaking.

Historical trauma in the words of the research participants

> I just never really knew my father, he was an alcoholic and abusive during my growing up year, when I was younger. And then my mom was always gone. Not really there, because of my dad, an alcoholic. And he used to beat me. My mom used to beat me. And they both abandoned me, since I was like in the 8th grade, and they dropped me off on my grandma, and she was like 93 years old. So she couldn't even really take care of me. But after they abandoned me, I just went off and I was with my auntie. She didn't want anything to do with me—she enrolled me into Flag High [residential dorm]…Then they [parents] still beat me. Just because I guess, it was the thing to do. I didn't know. I was young. I didn't know what I did wrong. I listened…still I got abused. And the next thing you know, one day I just get abandoned. Just got left. And after that, everything else just sort of played out differently. I didn't –care about anything. I—yeah, I did like sports because it had violence in it. You know, the hard hit from the football and the wrestling…It was fun. I liked the violence in it. At school they didn't give me a chance to explain, listen to me. They just thought of me, "Oh he is a trouble maker. He doesn't have anywhere to go… Might as well just send him away [to juvenile detention] if he's just going to keep getting in trouble…so I just got used to it. Said, "All right, take the blame. Go ahead blame me…So, I might as well be that person that was pushing myself to be this person, that they think I am…I got used to the beating too" (Participant 4, age 32).

Mohatt et al., (2014) defines a trauma narrative as a representation and interplay between personal stories and culture which inform a cultural construction of trauma. "Cultural narratives of trauma may be especially relevant to health, perhaps more so than the actual occurrence of an event, because they frame the psychological, political-economic, and social-ecological context within which that event is experienced" (p.130). The man in the opening vignette offers his recollection of events that caused him to be overwhelmed with stressful moments that were beyond his control starting when he was in the 8th grade. He eventually stopped trying to understand what was happening to him, accepting the labels, and accepted the label of being abandoned, unwanted, and having low worth. He explains that he finally gave up trying to explain himself to authorities. He

was typecast and became a self-fulfilling prophecy and did what authorities said he would do by making bad choices and believes his environment pushed him into his current imprisonment.

To understand the traumatic experiences of American Indians and Alaskan Natives, it is critical to understand the historical events created by the federal policies that have dramatically altered the lives of Indigenous people (Bigfoot & Schmidt, 2010). "Once self reliant and self-sufficient the American Indians were forcibly removed from their homeland, isolated and deprived of their basic rights as Indigenous peoples resulting in social, economic and spiritual deprivation" (p. 848). American Indians are vulnerable with significant levels of trauma experiences yet services are lacking and children are more likely to be funneled into the criminal justice system and inpatient facilities.

Carter et al. (2017) defined a number of terms that are important, which help provide an understanding of trauma experiences. Stress, defined "as the appraisal (by the person) of an event as unwanted, negative, and/or taxing, that requires one to adapt or copy in some way" can be perpetuated by the experience of trauma (Carter et al., 2017, p. 31). Trauma is a severe from of stress that overwhelms a person's ability to cope. Traumatic stress is a form of stress resulting from emotional pain, as opposed to a life threatening event or series of events. In addition to these definitions researchers have found that people of color experience higher rates of post-traumatic syndrome (PTS) compared with their white counterparts when exposed to a variety of potentially stressful life events. The criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders indicates traumatic events associated with PTSD revolve can include "exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual

violence…by directly experiencing, or witnessing, (the) traumatic event" (5th ed.; DSM-5, American Psychiatric, 2013, p. 31).

The historical traumas experienced by American Indians as the result of violent federal policies has been ongoing, and always present, making historical trauma seem a normal part of life and shaping the lives of future generations (Evans-Campbell, 2008). Compared to experiences with other racial ethnic groups, their experiences of traumatic events are not limited to one event. The ongoing exposure to traumatic events results in Native American families and their children being exposed to high levels of substance abuse, high rates of suicide, domestic violence, and trouble forming and maintaining relationships (Elias, Mignone, Hall, Hong, Hart & Sareen, 2012). These are the effects of colonization, which was intended to destroy American Indian families through federal policies intended to assimilate Indigenous people into the dominant society (Brayboy, 2005).

The cycle of trauma was set in motion with federal residential schools; residential schools operated by Christian organizations and foster homes (Elias et. al., 2012). Supported by federal policies, Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their homes and sent to boarding schools intended to destroy their way of life by Christianizing, civilizing and re-socializing these children (Lomawaima, 1999; 2000). The personal traumas of children were described in research and included being stripped of their traditional names and given Christian names; hair, which holds deeply spiritual and cultural meaning, was cut short; and children were punished (disciplined) when they spoke their language or attempted to practice their cultural ways and knowledges (Brayboy, 2005; Deloria, 1969; Lomawaima, 1993; 1999). In some situations,

Indigenous children spent as much as five years and more away from home before returning to visit family (Pratt, 1964). “This resulted in loss of culture, family bonding, life skills and parenting, self-respect and the respect for others. The parents and grandparents lost their role as providers, nurtures, teachers, and family decision-makers” (Elias et. al., 2012, p. 1561). This cycle has repeated for over four generations passing on the effects of historical trauma onto each new generation (Evans-Campbell, 2008).

Children who have experienced personal trauma are likely to experience domestic violence, physical/sexual assault and violence, commit suicide, experience substance abuse and commit violent acts against another person (BigFoot & Schmidt, 2010). Duran (2006) argued that unless the victim is able to understand the dynamics of the abuse and find meaning in the situation, the individual will repeat the abuse on someone or something else. These same children live in rural environments where unemployment rates are at 65% or higher (Faircloth & Tippeconnic, 2010). A suppressed economic condition prevents families of these children from accessing support services resulting in children coming to school with and often carrying their burdens into the classrooms.

Due to this context, a teacher may represent an “authority with the capacity to create a safe haven and caring and nurturing environment for the children despite limited support from family and other systems within the life of the child. By creating a safe and caring environment the school can foster academic achievement for children” (Piechowski, 2011, p. 2). Children and adolescents come to school struggling with emotional, behavioral and family problems that affect their learning as well as the learning of others. Unfortunately, the present schooling system isn’t set up to understand the emotional, historical, and social context Native children are facing and punish them

for minor infractions like missing homework, missing school, not paying attention, becoming disruptive, and talking back to the teachers who demand answers for the child's behavior or non-attention. Students may also receive referrals for major infractions such fighting, bringing a weapon to school, or engaging in illicit or illegal activity on school grounds. When children and adolescents are punished for trivial things like coming to school without their homework or lack of energy because they haven't eaten or slept, they internalize these with academic difficulties, which further aggravates some of the emotional and behavioral problems. These students are not naughty because they are inherently deviant, they're the product of colonization and the economic experiences that they face daily. The students are responding to discipline due to the colonization and suppressed economic conditions, which are realities in American Indian communities.

Return to Diné cultural ways.

In order to address the impacts of historical traumas, my research supports the assertion that we (stakeholders in the well-being of Native children) need to return to cultural ways in understanding and supporting the child and the development of a Diné person across the life span. Rather than exposing them to further trauma through suspension and expulsion, I present a model that forefronts healthy responses and helps teachers and administrators see the child as a whole and not just judges them for individual actions that occur in one moment. The child must be seen holistically by understanding their context of behavior, not for a simple infraction at a particular day and time. The problem with Western intervention is that it does not respond to the child

holistically and does not present discipline practices intended to restore their well-being. When working with Native children and youth, we need to prioritize the child holistically to provide interventions that involve family and community and those that are primed to achieve positive outcomes without resorting to the criminal justice system.

Brown (2014) found that children as young as six years old were referred for school discipline which led to in-school suspension, out of school suspensions, expulsions, and leading up to school dropout. According to Losen & Gillespie (2012), "there are three million children K-12 who are suspended from school every year" (p. 6). School discipline referral is used when children behave in a manner that is considered to be deviant in the education setting. Although definitions of deviance vary, referrals generally result in some form of discipline or punishment. Children may be referred to counselors or school administrators. The expectation of referrals is that a student will be counseled, sent home, and/or placed in in-school or out-of-school suspension. However, scholars who specialize in educational justice have expressed concerns with such practices as a suspension is the first indicator that a student may eventually drop out of school and enter the criminal justice system within two years of suspension (Losen & Gillespie, 2012).

Therefore in order to disrupt an emerging school-to-prison pipeline it is imperative to explore healthier discipline options that do not prioritize decisions that push children to interface with representatives of the justice system before they receive counseling for the various traumas they may be experiencing. This process is a two-tiered system and may involve making changes to the education system and additional education about cultural expectations and discipline for children. School teachers and

administrators need to be trained and/or educated on the basic foundation of Diné philosophy that sees the child as a whole, recognizes the social and economic context facing Native children and how that impacts the opportunities of the everyday living situation of the child. Western discipline models rely on in-school-suspensions or out-of-school-suspensions and generally ignore or see Native well-being as irrelevant, preferring instead to penalize the child. This is one of the area that my research participants emphasized, "There is more to the child than the one infraction." Questions like what is happening at home, does the child understand why they are being punished, is there an assessment needed to understand why there are discipline and behavioral problems need to be prioritized before disciplinary measures are exacted.

How epistemological and ontological violence shapes the history of the Diné

The Diné peoples have been responding to a distinct crisis of survival throughout our contemporary history, starting with the arrival of European colonists in the New World. European colonialism and its impacts on Indigenous peoples here is marked by distinct policy eras. Here, I discuss six such policy eras loaded with European power and control with the colonizer's goal to assimilate Indigenous peoples and make them subordinate citizens to the European White culture and specifically through education, that is the school system as we know it today. In linking my arguments regarding building well-being for Native and specifically Diné children and students in relation to schooling, it is necessary to delve into these six policy eras because they have been instrumental in shaping Indian education today, including the school-to-prison pipeline for Diné people. Ultimately, these policy eras have been detrimental with regard to how

and in what ways the justice system and schooling intersect to foster an education system that has disrupted the lives of American Indian/Diné students.

The first and second policy eras were the treaty periods and the Removal Act, which overlapped. These policies were "a way to legitimize land acquisition" by a White society that saw vast land to be developed. Working under a belief in the Norman Yoke, associated with the Doctrine of Discovery and Rights of Conquest, as well as a belief in Manifest Destiny (which refers to the belief of a person's "god-given" duty to develop any "unused" or "undeveloped" land), the federal government used these Christian beliefs to wage war with the intention to lay claim to land. When war was not waged, policy was used to displace Native inhabitants from the areas they resided and set boundaries for reservations (Adams, 1988). Native people were then expected to develop as self-sustaining and self-sufficient contributing members of society in their new reservation communities (Adams, 1988; Deloria, 1969, 1974; Hernández, 2017; Lomawaima, 1999, 2000). The effects of these eras disrupted Native families, removing them from their spiritual and personal relationships to their ancestral homelands, and ushered in deep spiritual traumas for those that survived the displacement. The result separated Indigenous peoples from the philosophies and practices that allowed Native families to rear their children with the beliefs and customs necessary for them to understand their place within the family and within the community.

The third policy era occurred between 1871-1928. This era is known as the Assimilation period and is characterized by a strong push for Indian people to send their children to western schools as a form of "saving the child and killing the Indian" (Deloria, 1969, 1974; Lomawaima, 1999, 2000; Reyhner & Eder, 2004). In 1879, Colonel

Richard S. Pratt developed the first Indian School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania based on a military style regime that established a curriculum for using education to prepare and train Indian students for skilled labor (Lomawaima, 1999; Pratt, 1964; Reyhner & Eder 2004). Students were forced to speak English and could not practice anything that was "Indian" (Deloria, 1969; Locust, 1988; Lomawaima, 1993, 1999; Pratt, 1964; Tuck & Yang, 2012). This marks the beginning of punitive school practices against Native children – children who grew to develop additional trauma and learned discipline practices that were then passed down to their children. Indian children during this era were severely punished by school personnel if they were caught speaking their Native languages or wanting to keep anything that resembled their Indianness (Locust, 1988; Lomawaima, 1999; Tuck & Yang, 2012). This was a period when Indian children were given Christian names, their hair was shorn, and they were issued uniforms in the likeness of Western attire, and where contact with family was severely diminished (Lomawaima, 1993, 1999). If Indian families refused to sign their children for school, their rations were cut, livestock were destroyed, corn fields were burnt, and other government annuities were withheld (Lomawaima, 1993, 2000; Reyhner & Eder, 2004).

The fourth era of Indian policy was largely influenced by the Merriam Report of 1928 which found that "Indian Education was ineffective" (Merriam, 1928), and President Roosevelt's New Deal promising self-government and a renewed commitment from the federal government to get out of the so-called Indian business and return authority to tribal communities (Lomawaima, 2000; Tuck & Yang, 2012). In short, this era suggested the responsibility of schooling would be returned to tribes. The Merriam Report revealed there was a "lack of correlation between the curriculum of the Indian

schools and the realities of reservation life…the care of Indian children in boarding schools was found shockingly inadequate…elementary age children did not belong in boarding schools" (Reyhner & Eder, 2004, p. 208). The report emphasized that children as laborers and "a persistent problem of BIA schools was discipline and almost all schools had locked rooms or isolated buildings that were used as jails" (Reyhner & Eder, 2004, p. 209). The report brought to light social and economic issues across Indian country already known but now officially validated by the U.S. government. Although the control of schools was returned to some local Indian communities, those who inherited control of schooling had been educated in Western schools so the practices of that style of schooling was replicated. Moreover, tribes were offered grants to run their schools but there were stringent policies attached to those grants that controlled the processes and ways in which they were to be operated. This allowed the federal government to establish a "big brother" type of oversight and maintain the status quo previously established in schooling through stringent policies that tribes were forced to follow.

In the 1950s, the U.S. embarked on the fifth era, the federal Termination era, dismantling any recognition of tribes as distinct tribal entities in the U.S. despite historic treaty arrangements and terminated 100 trust relationships. This era transferred the federal government's control and oversight of Indian lands and transferred Indian education to state powers. This policy was also connected with federal relocation efforts which accelerated the migration of American Indians off reservations to urban centers throughout the U.S. under the auspices of offering federal support for job training, establishment of model communities, and a vision of white middle-class lifestyles

(Lomawaima, 1999; Tuck & Yang, 2012). The goal was assimilation disguised with the enticement of benefits to participate in the national economy similar to the Whitestream/mainstream society (Hernández, 2017; Lomawaima, 1993, 1999, 2000). This era allowed the federal government to continue their policy of training Native peoples to become laborers. Education was not focused on promoting Indigenous knowledges and education practices and, rather, promoted assimilation and a cheap labor pool.

The sixth policy era was characterized by a move toward Self-Determination and promoting tribal control over their institutions in 1975. This policy was prompted by the Civil Rights movement, and the Nixon administration that declared Indian self-determination "would empower a tribe or a group of tribes or any other Indian community to take over the control or operations of federally funded programs…whenever the tribal council or comparable community governing group decided to do so" (Castile, 2006, p. 15). Important to the purposes of this discussion on the relationship of policy to education which included federally-funded schools on Indian reservations and brought hope of change and moving forward though it was short-lived as government officials ultimately continue operations for the majority of schools attended by Indian children.

Also important to note is that throughout these eras, removal of Indian children from their homes to be placed in federal residential schools remained a practice until the mid 1970's, when the self-determination period and tribal contract schools appeared to bring in a new wave in Indian education (Rehyner & Eder, 2004). Sadly, federal officials remained involved in school curriculum development and administration of tribally

controlled schools through funding policy mandates that were riddled with power and control.

Resulting policies did not take into account the epistemological, ontological, and axiological perspectives of a people who were believed to be savages, heathens, and untamed lurking in the woods of the new America (Brayboy, 2006; Deloria, 1974; Lomawaima, 1999; Pratt, 1964; Reyhner & Eder, 2004). Epistemology refers to "ways of knowing or how peoples come to know the things they do," ontology to how we engage in the world [how people 'be'], and axiology to how people value and particular types of value systems" (Brayboy, et al. 2012, p. 423). Education policies intended to "Kill the Indian, and save the Man" (Pratt, 1964) date back to the U.S. military wars against Indian peoples where the emphasis on killing (i.e. Indian ancestral ideals and ways of living, dressing, worshipping, eating, and educating) was associated with militaristic action against the savages. The alternative was to Christianize the heathens and tame the Indians (i.e. assimilate) for obedience. The focus on assimilation and obedience was to establish a cheap labor pool of Indigenous children through vocational/technical training that ensured their contribution to the U.S. economy (Adams,1988; Deloria, 1969, 1974; Hernández, 2017; Lomawaima, 1999).

Brayboy (2005) presents tenets that provide important context for understanding the history of Native schooling, including how and why colonial education is dangerous and how historic practices have formed the current education system which does not work for the schooling and educational achievement of American Indian students. These "tenets assert that colonization is endemic, that federal government and educational policies towards Indigenous peoples are inextricable from assimilation goals" (p. 429-

430). In terms of education, these tenets, demonstrate the separation from and destruction of Native epistemologies and ontologies—where tribal communities and traditional stories are replaced with Western ideals of individuality and a particular type of achievement and success (Brayboy, 2005; Deloria, 1974; Lomawaima, 1999) linked with the "importance of American thought: Protestantism, capitalism, and republicanism" (Adams, 1988, p. 4).

According to Lomawaima (1993), the school policies were about power and authority and the transformation of American Indian children into a "new kind of Indian through moral, spiritual, and physical training" (p. 230). As part of their graduation students were forced to learn this mantra: *"I believe that intelligent obedience is necessary to leadership. Therefore, I will have respect for authority"* (Lomawaima, 1993, p. 230). In addition to stripping Native students of their identities, Western discipline and values failed to align with Indigenous ways of thinking about justice and discipline. For example, the Navajo have their own system of education (knowing) and discipline by the family and the community. For example, the family and community members through the clan relationship system are vested with the authority to counsel and influence youth in times of trouble and need (Aronlith, 1994; Benally, 1994). Navajo people have historically relied on elder members of the community to provide counseling and teaching though stories which often include consequences for misbehavior and admonishments (Stachoski, et al, 2003).

Generations of abuse and punishment due to life in federal Indian boarding schools and at the hands of school officials has led to the loss of parenting. A number of the participants in my study described that their parents and grandparents had attended

federal boarding schools and their parents encouraged them to attend these same schools after they were expelled from local schools. The participants expressed that their experiences were no different from that of their parents who attended these federal boarding schools with discipline being punitive and demeaning leading to their continued trauma.

Traditional Healing in Diné Communities: Implications for Education

Traditional healing exists in many Indigenous communities and around the world and consists of using ancient forms of healing that have evolved over thousands of years in our communities (Brave Heart, 1999; Brave Heart-Yellowhorse, 2000, 2003). Many people still consult healers in their communities as well as Western providers. Lack of understanding of the Native epistemological root metaphor (ways of being in the world, including psychological and spiritual worlds) continues to hinder our intervention. Historical narcissism (the belief that one's own system of thinking must be used to validate other cultural belief systems) continues to be an issue in the relationship between the Diné and those who hold power in the academic world. This may sound harsh or abrasive, but the Diné people are expected to fully understand the world of the colonizer simply because the colonizer says so. The intention behind the model I am presenting is to provide a bridge between Western and Traditional Native healing and in this manner bring healing to the historical and continued personal traumas that our Native children have suffered at some point in their lives.

Personally speaking, this model is reflective of my own identity as a Diné woman and my upbringing. I am especially grateful for the stories my mother, a traditional Diné

woman, told us as we were growing up. My mother raised nine children as a single parent used storytelling as a means to pass on our cultural values, traditions, and history. It was later in life that I understood that she used these stories as our epistemology inherited from her mother and her ancestors. As young children, we believed these "stories" were intended to entertain us. We did not realize that through the intergenerational transmission storytelling our mother was teaching us our cultural ethics and rules of behavior and discipline. Today, as a Diné woman, I look back and understand the concepts of these stories and their intended purposes and teachings. I hear many versions from relatives and others. Thus, in this chapter I use the centrality of Navajo pedagogy based on storytelling to reflect on how our cultural epistemology and pedagogy can be applied to the education discipline and used to respond against the growing detrimental school-to-prison pipeline. Her stories highlight key differences in how discipline is understood and practiced between western and Navajo contexts.

These oral traditions uphold the belief that these teachings provide important information about our life ways and a means to keep the "Naayéé" at bay. Naayéé means anything that gets in the way of living a holistic life and the Diné life teachings offer methods for healing when overcome by the Naayéé. The Diné believe that living a life in harmony with nature and all living things requires adherence to the spiritual and social principles recommended by the spiritual beings that reside in each of the four sacred mountains. In order to live a life of harmony, an individual must understand and practice Ké (understanding kinship and solidarity), K'ei (knowing the clanship system and using this to establish collaborative efforts), and Hozho (live in balance with all living things). These are the first doctrines of life as a Diné. There are some basic principals that my

mother taught us, which I discuss in the following order: the Diné origin story, the four cardinal directions of life, children as sacred beings, and the Diné well being. In figure 1 below, my four clans are presented in order starting with the east where my maternal clan is housed. This is followed by my paternal clan is represented to the south, my maternal grandfather's clan to the west and then my paternal grandfather's clan. These are the base clans that identify me as a woman and there are other clans that are related to these clans, which is discussion for another time.

Diné Origin Story.

The "origin story" of the Diné is significant to understand why the Diné must behave in a certain prescribed manner and to prevent chaos from happening or returning. "Hajíínéí Bahané" is the origin story of the Diné entering the world we live in today from the underworld. Our ancestors left behind the chaotic conditions created by individuals who refused to follow the spiritual principles creating "Naayéé." Our entry into this world places us in the fifth world. The four sacred mountains located in the four cardinal directions serve as our protectors and our homeland.

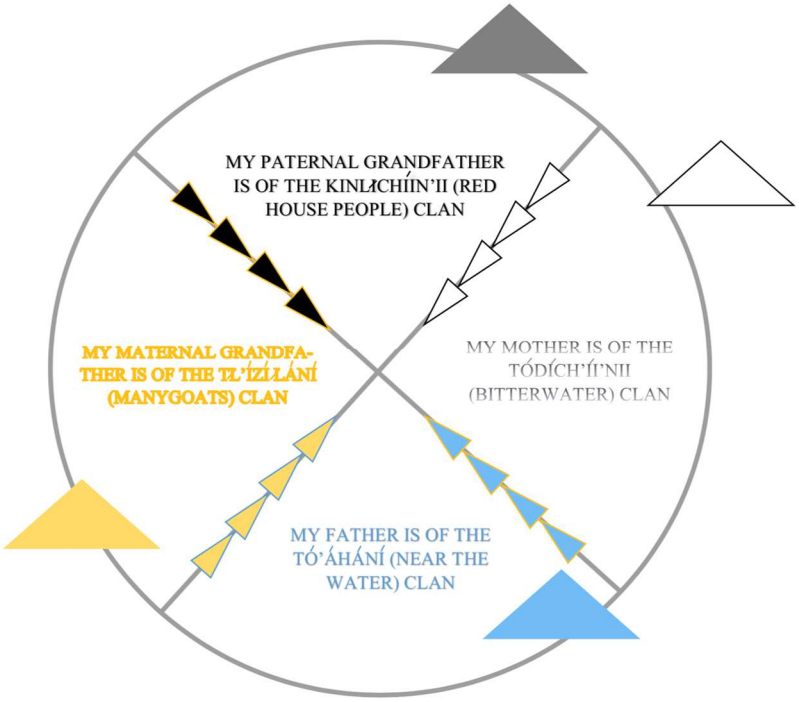

Figure 1: The four cardinal directions illustrating my four clans.

They protect the Diné. We were given the earth, the water, and fire to live with and to share with all living things. Our cultural teachings are tied to our survival as the five-fingered beings and to respect all other living things that live here on earth. These pedagogies and epistemologies are evident through animal stories, ceremonies, and often as analogies to teach children at different stages of development. These teaching are exhaustive and acquiring them is a lifelong learning process. Some stories and approaches deal with discipline and hold application for how they may be used as an approach to the current system of discipline. The first teaching is the use of the four cardinal directions as a teaching model.

Every aspect of teaching from the Diné pedagogy is represented in fours. Each Diné has four clans, which are used to establish relations with tribal members. This is our

way of establishing what we call Ké. Ké is used to establish relationships through cooperation and working relations among the people. This teaching has been explored by Indigenous and Diné researchers who have found that ké, roughly translated to English as "we are all related by clan," allows children to feel grounded to their culture and community (Benally, 1994; Brayboy, 2005, 2006; Yazzie, 2002). The argument is made then that this concept allows them to do better in school because they are grounded. They know who they are, where they are from, where they belong, understand their connection to family, and relationships which permits them to feel less isolated from their community (including the school community). Through this system, we learn the cultural values of respect and harmony with one another and all living things, which promotes an internal self-discipline, and accountability. This allows children to value themselves and respect others. Ké relations are used to assign certain family roles based on clan relationships and can be assigned by community leaders. Uncles and grandparents are tasked as disciplinarians and are tasked to counsel the youth on the value of life, discipline, behavior and respect for others.

The four sacred mountains are located to the east (Mt. Blanca), to the south (Mr. Taylor), to the west (San Francisco Peaks) and to the north (Mt. Hesperus) to establish the cardinal directions. The four cardinal directions are recognized by the color scheme of white, turquoise, yellow, and black. These are colors represented in each of the sacred mountains and are also the home of a spiritual protector who can be called upon through songs and chants. Each direction represents a particular element. The east represents light. South is water. West is air. North is the element of dust and dirt. The cardinal directions are used to teach the foundation of Diné life, culture, and values starting at

birth and ending when our body is returned to earth. This pedagogy is used to teach the different stages of life, stages of planning, the seasons, it is used for ceremonies for healing, recovery, for strength and endurance, guidance and protection. In figure 2 the four cardinal directions is illustrated with the four sacred mountains and colors that represent each direction.

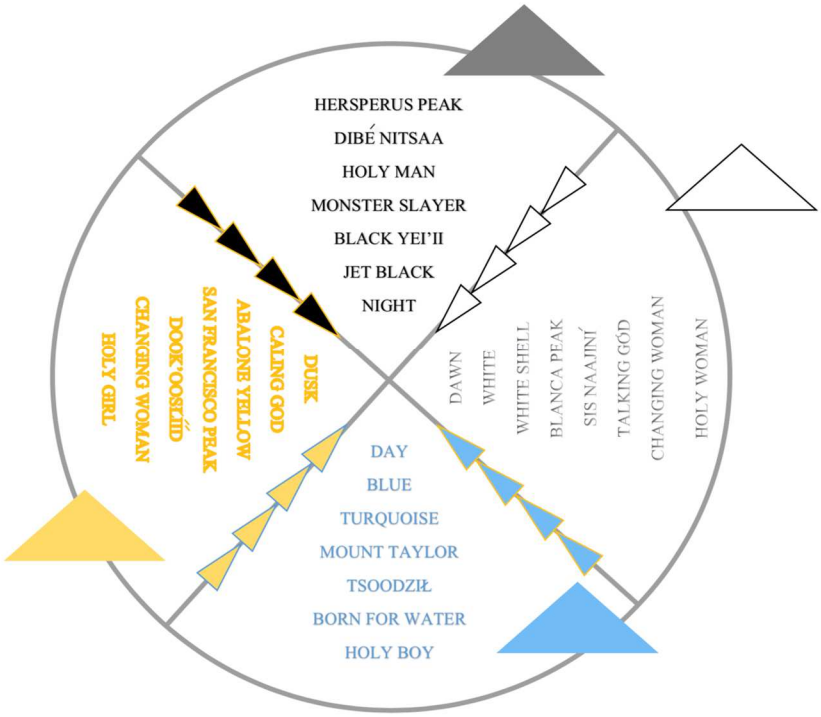

Figure 2: The four sacred mountains with the colors and the spiritual elements.

Diné children are sacred beings.

The Diné believe children are sacred beings. The molding of a newborn baby starts at birth with the construction of the cradleboard in which the infant will spend its first year. The construction starts with a perfectly flat cottonwood that is shaped and measured precisely by an uncle or grandfather with prayers for a strong healthy baby and one who will live a healthy long and prosperous life. "With the crafting of the

cradleboard, Indian parents were considering the mental development of their unborn child" (Swisher, p. 86). The cradleboard is designed in a way that allows the new baby to be stood up and to always be part of the family's social interaction, allowing the baby to observe the goings-on and be a part of everything. This is the beginnings of moral development with a goal to foster "good thoughts and respect" for self and others through observation and is believed to lead young people to take responsibility for self and others.

In traditional Navajo society, children are taught duties, responsibilities, and mutual obligations that arise from the elaborate K'ei systems starting at an age that is appropriate to the teaching. This teaching relies on the four cardinal directions, which define order and direction for every aspect of life in the Diné culture. This concept is like a road map providing stability and used to teach human development from birth to old age. It is used to teach objectives that provide a road map to live a life in harmony using the Diné foundational elements: Nitsáhákees (thinking/'birth), Nahat'á (planning/young adulthood), Iiná (life/middle age) and Siihasin (security/old age). Nitsáhákees is represented to the east, Nahat'á is represented to the south, Iiná is represented in the north and old age. These pedagogies are illustrated in figure 3 below.

The figures used were the same in design and coloring, but changes are made based on the objectives that are to be taught i.e., the four cardinal directions, the colors represented in each direction, the placement of the four sacred mountains and the individuals clan to teach the basic foundation of Diné cultural teachings. A good understanding of these foundations are necessary for Diné people to value who they are, where they come from and who the extension of their family through the clans systems.

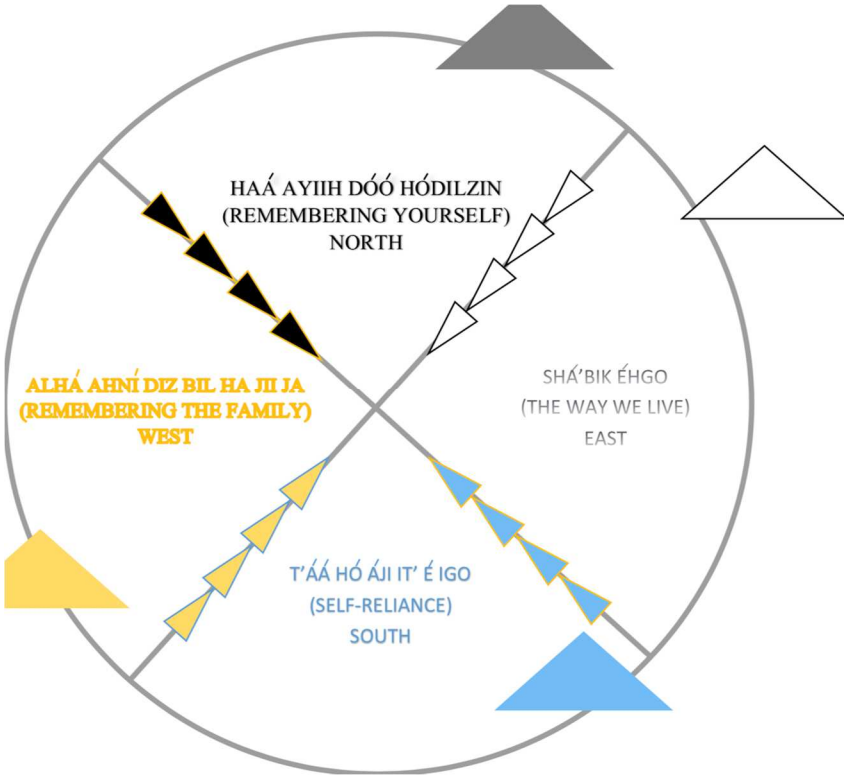

Figure 3: Objectives of living in harmony.

These philosophies are explicitly at odds with the notion of punishment in schools and other popular discipline strategies that are implemented by western schooling which contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline. I later explain how and why they are at odds shortly and I argue that when an imbalance, or chaos, is experienced, in order to correct it or promote healing and a return to well-being, the perspective of a young person must be heard and the continuous relationship between members of the community and the physical environment need to be recognized and honored.

Diné concepts of well-being.

The Diné concepts of well being and healing illness are connected with family (alhá ahnī diz bil ha jíí já) and knowing your relatives (hágah ba jííl né). When these relationships are disrupted or disoriented, particularly within the immediate family,

distress and illness develops. When individuals say they have no relatives, it is essentially saying "I am not well." With an admission of not being well, a healing ceremony ensues with relatives making the arrangements for the individual. Participation by relatives is an important part of the ceremony to support the individual and allow them to make connections with the past and bring them back to the present with songs and prayers. The Diné ceremony has many parts that include parts of the Hajíiné Bahané, the creation story and the journey of the Diné to this world. The journey is undertaken through songs to take the individual back into the past, down to the underworld, and back cleansed and returned into the Hogan on the corn pollen path. To have a ceremony like this is comparable to being born again.

In my research, I found that that participants who had a in depth understanding of their culture, wanted to return to their communities to share their experiences yet wondered if they would be given an opportunity to do so. One participant stated,

> I want to go back to my community and talk to the youth who are getting into trouble and not being serious with their schooling. I want them to know what prison life is like, I don't want them to end up here. I want them to listen to their family. I want them to learn as much as they can about their culture and use it. I am still learning through the spiritual support in the Sweat Lodge, smudging and praying helps me understand and remember what I was taught growing up (Participant 6, age 28).

The participants stated that, just being able to talk about their experiences in school, coming to prison and being able to sit with someone from their people was a healing experience. According to one participant,

> I used to lie outside the teepee when the family hosted a ceremony. I would listen to my family and relatives talking to the patient, I appreciate their teachings during these ceremonies. I think about this often and this give me strength emotionally and this helps me to overcome challenges here in prison. Even though, my parents were not always there for me, I remember their teachings (Participant 1, age 25).

However, accessibility is a serious issue. Another participant stated that

> They [the prison administration] don't provide us anything here, we just sit around. *It's up to us if we want to survive*. It's up to us to do something and the only thing we have is the Sweat Lodge Ceremonies. *Even that does not happen often. It's where we are learning and keeping the faith*. [my emphasis] (Participant 1, age, 25)

My participants are finding ways to survive in an environment that is harsh and unfriendly and relatedly, they have returned to the pedagogies and epistemologies of the Diné people to overcome the challenges of prison life. Moreover, they believe that the impact of federal educational policies and practices have prepared them for prison where they are continuing to feel the abusive treatment by individuals who are in authority.

They were intrigued and happy to participate in research where they were given an opportunity to talk. One participant stated, "I feel good just being able to talk about things that I have been holding in for a long time. I can't talk to the guards or even the dorm counselors. I don't trust them." The participants suggested providing services including access to traditional teachings and ceremonies such as Sweat Lodge Ceremonies and want to see Diné teachings align with Western education so children can learn traditional knowledges while they are in school. They believe this may help our Diné children feel more grounded, know themselves, and be less inclined to harm others or act out in the same ways. They recommended that if teachers cannot provide these teachings then, as often as possible, someone from their tribe should come talk to them.

While traditional teachings are important, so, too, is it important to teach how these knowledges have helped the Diné survive historic traumas and atrocities. The Diné have survived many traumatic historical events with the most traumatic destruction of families when they were rounded up and marched over 350 miles to Bosque Redondo, New Mexico in the spring of 1864 (Roessel, 1980). Many families were killed and those who survived were separated and taken from their homeland in northern Arizona, New Mexico, and parts of Utah and Colorado. Their incarceration at Bosque Redondo was under a military regime under the harshest of conditions with very little food rations and shelter from the environments. They relied on cultural ceremonies, prayers, and teachings of resiliency to survive the brutal imprisonment where more than half of the Diné lost their lives. One researcher describes the incredible strength and resiliency of the Diné,

> The character of a nation is determined and revealed not by its successes and its triumphs but rather by its adversities and its disasters. It is in periods of tragedy and desolations and hopelessness that the true nature of a people is discovered. Few Nations in the world have endured such hard ships, as have the Navajo. Yet, instead of being broken, crushed and bitter by this concentration camp experience, the Navajos grew stronger and their roots went deeper. This increased strength of the Navajo in the face of such tribulation can be attributed mostly, perhaps entirely, to Navajo religion and to the faith that Navajo people had in their Holy People (Roessel, 1980, p. 20).

The Navajo people historically have faced punitive injustices, which they have been able to counter with their strong beliefs and customs to overcome the Naayéé and to move beyond it as a Nation. The story of the Monster Slayers (Naayéé Neezghani) and his twin brother Born-for-the Water (To Bajish Chini), who were sent to see their father, the Sun to obtain weapons to kill the Monsters that had colonized their homeland, illustrate this. In their journey, the Twins had to overcome a number of obstacles (Naayéé placed by

their father) to test their strength and endurance as they traveled to get to their destination. Their survival was dependent on their mental strength and self-reliance as well as incanting protection songs and offering prayers to overcome each obstacle (Naayéé). The Sun challenged the Twins, which they overcame. The lesson from father Sun was that "children must face their problems by learning from the teachings of their mentors*"* (Romaine Bitsuie, Presentation, January 29, 2018). As a Nation, the Diné had to overcome periods of injustice and to overcome these challenges we have relied on the Diné pedagogy to survive. As the Diné people struggle with the injustices and challenges they have made changes to survive the European colonist and later the policies of the federal government that were detrimental only to return to their pedagogies and epistemology.

Peacemaking: Diné self-governance and conflict resolution

The Navajo Nation judicial system started working on a return to traditional ways that focused on traditional pedagogies and epistemologies more than 35 years ago by integrating the traditional Navajo justice concepts into the western styled judicial system. Hózhóójí naat' áanii translates to Peace Chiefs (Yazzie, 2003). The Navajo people, prior to the inception of the Western-style judicial methods, "governed themselves and resolved disputes in their own way…by talking things out" (Yazzie, 2003, Orientation to Judicial Committee). Starting in the late 1950's, the Navajo Nation Council created the Navajo Court system similar to Western style courts. This changed the traditional process of bringing together the offender, victim, and relatives to have an open discussion with the offender on infraction with a Naat' áanii coordinating the meeting (Navajo Judicial

Branch Website, no date). This is not mediation, but a similar practice where the goal of the gathering is to get the offender to talk with the victim and family from the heart to expresses his regrets and to resolve the issue at hand. When the Navajo courts system learned that the Western style courts were not effective, the Navajo tribal court judges decided to return to the traditional ways of dispute resolutions, peace making (Yazzie, 2003).

Austin (2007) articulated the Navajo peace making model and the process below. He identifies who can participant, who coordinates the meeting, participant roles in dispute resolution and how a settlement is reached and that the agreement is final.

> The traditional system of resolving disputes lives on today as illustrated by the [Navajo] Peacemaking Program…Peacemaking is premised upon participation by all those affected, including victims. Furthermore, consensus of all of the participants is critical to resolution of the dispute, concern or issue. With full participation (*t'aa ałtso alhiła'iijee'go*) and consensus, a resolution is reached with all participants giving their sacred word (*hazaad jidisingo*) that they will abide by the decision. The resolution (guided by *Diné be beenahaz' aanii*), in turn, is the basis for restoring harmony (*bee hozho nahodoodleeł*). *Hozho* is established if all who participated are committed to the agreement from which the parties can proceed to live in harmony again. Finality is established when all participants agree that all of the concerns or issues have been comprehensively resolved in the agreement (*na ninaheezlaago bee t' aa łahji ałgha' deet'a)*(p. 95).

Austin (2007) describes the peace-making model in a three-part process.

> The foregoing discussions on hozho leads to the conclusion that traditional Navajo problem-solving is generally a pragmatic three-stage process: hoxo (harmony), hochxo (disharmony), hozho (harmony restored). This general model becomes a Navajo ceremony model when this pattern is followed: Things begin in a state of hozho; negative forces called nayeé ("monsters") disrupt the hozho conditions resulting in hochxo (disharmony); and ceremony is used to restore things and beings (including people) to hozho. The ceremonial practitioner uses esoteric knowledge –prayers, songs, sacred words, sacred practice, and sacred

> materials—during the ceremony to neutralize or extirpate negative forces (nayeé) and restore things and beings to hozho" (p. 92).

The Indigenous peoples used this type of intervention for dispute resolutions and to promote healing long before European conquest (Zions, 2002). This is a non-invasive form of conflict resolution and contrary to the Western Judicial system. Only recently did recognition for this traditional mode of relational problem solving earn recognition under "alternative" models of family conferencing. As part of Indian education, the problem-solving model described could be taught to students to foster positive growth for students. Instead students are introduced to western punitive models of intervention at a young age, which perpetuates harm for Navajo children and sustain damaging practices such as a school-to-prison pipeline.

The school-to-prison pipeline is a process in which Native students are introduced to the criminal justice system by punishing them for minor infractions like missing homework, missing school, not paying attention, being disruptive, and talking back to the teachers who demand answers for student behavior and/or non-attention (Castillo, 2014; Losen, 2011; Losen, et al, 2013; Losen & Gillespie, 2012). According to Brown (2014), this is the process through which American Indian children are funneled into the criminal justice system (i.e. from school to prison). Heitzeg additionally maintains that this process often starts at an early school age (i.e. not at high school) and involves punitive discipline based on school policies to heighten policing of young people in their communities.

I am not arguing that education in Western school structures is unnecessary or without value. However, I am a proponent of the belief that Western education must

include the language and culture of Indian children. Brayboy (2006) explains when quoting an Indian student who was reflecting on what Indian education meant for him, "We have to make sure that our people know how to read and write, and they have someone in front of them who understands what it means to be Indian" (p. 426). Part of Indian education must include perspectives of learning, schooling, and discipline, from Native culture not just Western society. Furthermore, school administrators must understand and make "cultural problem solving" resources available to teachers over the current punitive policies like Zero Tolerance and other school discipline policies that promote outcomes that transition you from school-to-prison.

This type of education is necessary to support Native people to engage and be successful in their communities and to be competitive in western society (Brayboy, 2006). Further, American Indians should play an active role in schooling. Historically this has not been the practice due to educational policies and curriculum that were strictly from Western perspectives of [Christian] religion and value systems of what education should and must be. This one-way perspective has disillusioned Native youth and led to one of the highest dropout rates, with an average of 35% (Faircloth & Tippeconnic, 2010).

Navajo men's experiences: From school to prison: With colonization came incarceration.

Before I launch into describing how my findings have informed the arguments I am making today regarding advocacy for Native well-being intervention models and clear acknowledgement by educational stakeholders and policymakers regarding the Native/Diné school-to-prison pipeline, I need to establish the creation of incarceration

and its impact on Native peoples. Incarceration was a foreign concept to Native Americans prior to the 1700's and the arrival of the European Christians in the New World. Europeans came looking for land and resources to increase their wealth and along with it came the need to punish individuals who got in the way. With efforts to control Indigenous peoples by assimilation into the European society and culture came the need to group peoples to form structures like war Chiefs, warriors, laws and tribal governments based on European-style social order. In order to maintain social order, Europeans set up jails to house "deviants" or "undesirables" including many Indigenous people (Hernández, 2017).

Traditional Native Americans did not rely on incarceration to punish social offenders prior to the arrival of the Europeans. Captain William Pratt played an important role during this period by cultivating a western militaristic pedagogy centered on the philosophy that obedience was key to assimilation. Pratt (1964) was aware that the U.S. Congress wanted to "fix the Indian problem" by civilizing and assimilating Native peoples, which would assist white families to lay claim to Indian occupied lands. This expectation motivated him to lobby Congress for the opportunity to design a boarding school system. He used his military background, prior work with American Indian prisoners, and later, his work with the Hampton Institute, to establish curriculum and pedagogy that enforced obedience and harsh punishment to create a pool of cheap labor and assimilation into white society (Johnson, 2007; Johnston, 2016; Pratt, 1964; Reyhner & Eder, 2004; Reyhner, et al, 2009; Tuck & Yang, 2012).

To maintain order and control Pratt implemented strategies such as a student peer court to enforce rules and initiate harsh discipline on students who disobeyed (Pratt,

1964). All federal boarding schools were designed after Carlisle and the Hampton Institute, based on Pratt's pedagogy, and presented lasting impacts on American Indian children, families, and communities (Deloria, 1969; Lomawaima, 1999; Merriam et al, 1928; Pratt, 1964; Rehyner & Eder, 2004; Reyhner, et al, 2009). According to Reyhner and Eder (2004), "a persistent problem of [Bureau of Indian Affairs] BIA schools was discipline and almost all schools had locked rooms or isolated buildings that were used as jails" (p. 209). The concept and policy of jailing people have remained with Indigenous peoples and, with the help of the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Office of Justice Services, this practice continues as Indigenous people use western concepts of punishment gained from European colonists to detain its citizens in jails, detention facilities, and in some cases, may even use the Bureau of Prisons when these facilities are not available on the homeland.

Indigenous people were left out when important policies were made affecting them. For example, the United States evolved its Indian affairs policy on what to do with Indians once they were confined to reservations in the late nineteenth century. Throughout history, starting with the arrival of the Europeans in the United States (new world), the desires, self-determination interests and sovereign rights of Native peoples have not been at the forefront of U.S. federal American Indian policy. Brayboy (2005) succinctly explains this as "Government policies and educational policies toward Indigenous peoples are intimately linked around the problematic goal of assimilation and tribal philosophies, beliefs, customs, traditions, and visions for the future are central to understanding the lived realities of Indigenous peoples, but they also illustrate the differences and adaptability among individuals and groups" (2005, p. 429).

Speaking back to the master narrative

In 2017 I undertook a study to examine the educational experiences of incarcerated Navajo males. The men described how school discipline policies contributed to a "pipeline" to prison for them. Because this research is focused on the experiences of Navajo males and asks "why and how" questions (as opposed to "how many, how often, or how much") a qualitative methodology was utilized. Since research on educational discipline has found that decisions to discipline are exclusively made by individuals in authority positions (teachers, school administrators and criminal justice providers), it was important to "hear" the voices of those who have been immediately impacted by those decisions. As a result of "exertion of power over students" (Brown, 2014, p. 35) the participant's interpretation based on how they defined the problem space is never considered. The participant views of the problem and experiences are excluded in almost all current research and findings do not assess the situation holistically (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000). The purpose of my study was to resituate the voices and perspectives of Navajo men in order to understand their experiences with discipline and conflict resolution and the recommendations they have for improving outcomes for Navajo youth.

Currently, research offers no Indigenous perspectives regarding the incarceration of Navajo males and any possible linkages with their educational experiences. The qualitative methodology allowed participants to displace the "master narrative and to eradicate the white man's version of who we are as a Native people … the colonial intrusion in how they see the problem" (Cook-Lynn, 2008, p. 331). In order to counter the "master narrative, this phenomenological study included participant stories from their perspectives about their experiences with education, what impacts discipline policies

have had on them, and how they became involved with the criminal justice. Such an approach allowed for what Kaomea (2009) refers to as a "counter story" (p. 115). A counter story pushes back against the master story, destabilizing it, and replacing it with research that offers a "new narrative" (Cook-Lynn, 2008, p. 331) and one that reflects participant views and reorients the Indigenous voice (Kaomea, 2009).

As Indigenous researchers, there is a demand to develop experts to write about the "different ways of examining experiences and theoretical frames through which to view the experience...the ways of knowing are vital to our self-determination" (Brayboy, 2005, p. 436). In other words, we need to write our "master narratives" (Cook-Lynn, 2008, p. 331) about problem spaces and to define the problems in Native communities through our Indigenous lenses. In my research and based on the testimonies of participants, I saw clearly the problem spaces and problems—zeroing in the relationship between justice, education, and Indigenous self-determination were critical and central considerations in my research. Semi-formal interviews with the prison population allowed me to approach research by "peeling back" the layers of issues, including why individuals are in prison, when they first interfaced with the criminal justice system, what experiences they had in school and what their experiences were with education discipline.

This research revealed that school had the most unforgettable impact on participants, moreso--than family, community, or other institutions. Table 2 below shows the comparative influences upon participants from school and family dynamics that shaped the participants' memory of both negative and positive influences.

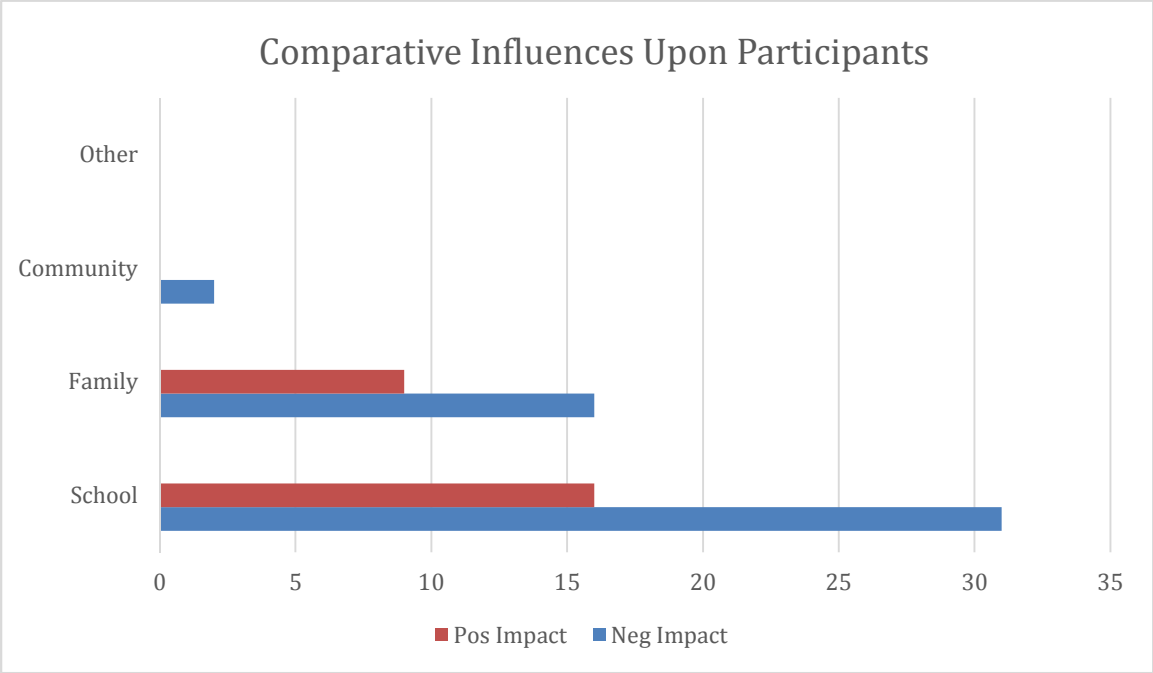

Figure 4: Codes of positive and negative impact

Across all interviews, participants expressed a strong negative effect stemming from the school environment, which impacted their views of self, life chances, and the future. The impact of school on all participants appeared to supersede other effects like family, community, and other institutions. The school was the pivotal point in the lives of the participants, where they spent the majority of their time. Parents abandoned one participant, some had parents were abusive, and in one case the participant lived with friends for a period of time because he was homeless. Although some participants shared positive experiences or events at home, they were more impacted by negative ones like exposure to gang activity in their community and fighting. Further, participants viewed school as an essential place to go and not as a place where they felt nurtured, supported,

or safe. They reported feeling forced to attend and reported the most negative interactions involving discipline and punishment in this environment.

Principals, teachers, dorm aides, resource officers, and school counselors were influential in the lives of the participants. Out of these individuals, teachers and principals were reported as being key players in referring for school discipline. School teachers recommended students for disciplinary measures for misbehavior in school without offering remediation, counseling, or personal outreach. Behaviors for which they were referred to administrators included not paying attention to teachers and school leaders, missing homework, and appearing not to pay attention in class. Although, the analysis indicated that fighting was among the highest reasons for disciplinary measures taken in school, a participant expressed that rarely do teachers and principals seek out explanations for the cause of their fighting, drug use, or lack of attention. Teachers and principals rarely recommended the participant to a therapist or counselor to factor in other challenges impacting the participant. Situations like poor home environments, absent parents, bullying, and emotional issues were contributing factors in the lives of these participants.

There were some exceptions that participants shared where they had positive experiences with their teachers and coaches. The participants felt that had they received this positive experience from most or all their teachers they believe they would have had a much better outcome.

> Because if they would have done a lot of things differently, like actually tried with me, and make me learn things and you know, push me to get my education all through. I could have finished. I would have finished school and then a lot better than the way the route I went, you know? Prison…(Participant 4, age 32).

The following participant was observant in the methods used by the teacher, which were effective. He thrived when teachers encouraged him, took the time to provide necessary guidance, and provided a lot of the positive reinforcement.

> Like, they could actually take their time like a mother [comparing a teacher and his mother] or a father should have done. You know actually take the time to sit down and talk to, sit there, you help me learn. Help me, teach me different ways to enjoy what you learn…Like the teachers here [in prison], they're different, you know? She actually comes and asks me…"You learning this? You learning that?" I said "Oh, not really," then she'll come over and she'll be "All right, we'll do it this way, How about we do it from the book? It's a lot easier (Participant 4, age 32).

The indicators of negative family environment included absent father, abusive father, lack of financial support, absent mother, abusive home, no available family to help with homework, siblings abusive to participant, and lack of cultural teachings in the home. Although cultural teachings were lacking in the schools, which were important to some of the participants, some participants reported feeling it was more important that this was taught by parents and family.

The awareness of these negative experiences were more visible for the participant when they saw how other families treated their children and recalled how lack of advocacy led them to interface with the justice system faster than their peers. For example, one participant contrasts his family to another family.

> It's just like whenever I'd get in trouble when I and even if I didn't start it, or anything, they didn't care because the other kids, the ones that I got in trouble with were protected, and their parents to come and help them. Help them talk by talking to the principal about why he did this. I didn't have my parents. I had nobody, so the first thing they did was send me to juvenile. They didn't give me a chance to explain myself. Even if they did, they didn't believe me. They just thought of me, 'Oh, he's a trouble maker. He doesn't have nowhere to go. He's basically staying at our dorms, and his parents don't even want to come away and talk on his

> behalf. Might as well just send him away, if he's just going to keep getting in trouble' (Participant 2, age 26).

In this reflection, the participant's family situation created his dependency on the school for his survival, explaining that his parents did not teach him about his Diné language and culture. "I can't speak my language and I know only my first clan". The participant speculated that, had he learned his Diné language and cultural ways, he would have found his support system (Ké) from within his four clans and he would not have developed a dependency on the school for his well-being. Unfortunately, the school was not invested in protecting him. Instead, school officials chose to push him away on a track that presented further trauma and abuse. He was funneled into an institution that serves as the first step to living a life in detention and social isolation.

Proposing a new model for discipline, dispute resolution, and the promotion of well-being

For many American Indians, the epistemological and ontological structures guiding education is around the preparation of individuals to live in a holistic environment with hòzhò (in harmony) with all things; animate and inanimate objects (Eastman, 1991; John, 2015). Education and learning is a lifetime process. It is about life today and what will come as a result of how you conduct yourself among all living things here on earth. These teachings are taught through stories, colors of the earth, land markers and patient observation of character and behavior (personal communication, Lomawaima, January 28, 2017).

The Navajo (Diné) philosophy of teaching is a systematic style of age readiness, seasonal changes, teachings are tied to location markers and events (Aronlith, 1994;

Benally, 1994; Eastman 1991; John, 2015; Lomawaima, January 28, 2017 lecture). Individuals who are chosen to teach these young minds are chosen based on their skills and ability to work with young people and understand that the Indian child is fragile and developing. It is understood that "the instructor is powerful and unbiased (Aronlith, 1994; Benally, 1994; personal communication, Lomawaima, January 14, 2017). It is important to ensure that those who we delegate to teach and educate our children be free of bias and to consider inclusion of culture and language as part of the overall curriculum.

The participants in this study expressed desire to live with Sááh Náághághái béé ehhôzgö, to heal and to live in harmony and reflected on this as a family teaching, related to positive discipline, and as a way to develop endurance for hard work.

> They [participant talking about his family] know I made a mistake. So they don't really hold it against me. All they tell me is, "All you can do is learn from it now". I wasn't just hurting myself. I let them down, so that's what kind of keeps me going. Because when I lost my job on the railroad, my grandma and grandpa—they were both disappointed so that got me. And they bring up the fact that I need to think about my son. He is reaching an age where he is noticing, I'm gone and he's always asking for me. I get a lot of support from coming from my family. They're not treating me like a failure. I'm going to get my job back. If not, other jobs…(Participant 2, age 32).

Another participant reflected on his observation at the prison on respect for other living things. "*They don't know well enough to leave them alone. They go and kill them. This is similar to the colonization has done to the Native people as part of power and control. Having power over others and destroying what they do not understand where the Native people were taught to have respect for all living things."* (Emphasis added by author).

The participants also expressed desire to contribute to their communities by teaching the value of Diné culture, teachings, respect and pedagogies to give them a

better chance at overcoming the "Monster" or "Nayéé" in their lives. Participant 3, age 27 used the analogy of an ant colony that works as a team respecting one another to get the work done. To destroy them because they are annoying is not a reason to step on them and destroy them. Children need to learn early in life to respect life no matter how different that life is from our own. These are some concepts that could taught and used through the peace making process.

Rather than incarcerating youth, Navajo peacemaking (Hózhóji Naat'aah) could be used as an intervention model starting with the schools where students are disciplined for minor infractions. Often this is the first stop before they are referred to local justice systems that are punitive and are eventually pipelined into a detention or adult jail. I have argued that the Diné have endured some of the most traumatic experiences of federal policies, education policies and incarceration. Each time they have returned to their traditional ways of resolving disputes and come out in a better situation than if they are funneled through the Western methods of justice or injustice. The Navajo peacemaking model is described in the following way.

> Traditional Diné peacemaking begins in a place of chaos, *hóóchxǫ'/ anáhóót'i',* whether within an individual or with others. The Diné are not good with face-to-face interventions. However, such interventions are vital in order to dispel *hóóchxǫ'/ anáhóót'i'.* The peacemaker are chosen by their communities because of their skills and knowledge to provide the foundation for individuals and groups to confront *hóóchxǫ'/ anáhóót'i'* and move them toward a harmonious way of life. Through the life value engagement, the peacemaker provides an environment for individuals to find their cultural identity, their clan relationships and kinship system to engage and find pride by understanding their cultural foundation. *Hóóchxǫ'/ anáhóót'i'* can block and overwhelm the individuals identity, *k'é*, which attaches the five figured beings together in shared values.
>
> Through this life value engagement, the Peacemaker educates, persuades, and coaxes the individual or group toward a readiness to open up, listen,

> share, and make decisions as a single unit through *k'é*. When *Hóóchxǫ'/ anáhóót'i'* is confronted, people learn that they have a choice to leave behind and *hózhó is realized.* Through stories and teachings, the Peacemaker dispenses knowledge, *naat'áánii, in* order to guide the whole toward a cathartic understanding of *hózhó* that opens that door to transformation and healing. The resolution of damaged feelings is the core is the core of peacemaking, *hózhóji naat'aah!* (Navajo Nation Peacemaking program description, website).

The goal of the peace making in traditional terms is the "slay the monsters". Earlier in this chapter, I introduced the story of the Monster Slayers (Naayéé Neezghani) and his twin brother Born-for-the Water (To Bajish Chini), who journeyed to obtain weapons to kill the Monsters that had colonized their homeland. In their journey, the Twins had to overcome a number of obstacles (Naayéé placed by their father) to get to their destination. Their survival was dependent on their mental strength and self-reliance as well as protection songs and offering prayers to overcome each obstacle (Naayéé). The idea of peace making is to "slay the monsters". These are the same concepts and ideas used to address disharmony among family and community members to restore hózho in the family.

The involvement of family members and students at the earliest age possible to address any behavior issues that start to surface to prevent long standing problems with students and to eliminate referrals for school discipline to prevent entry into the criminal justice systems. Honoring parents and family members is rooted in the process of peace making using the Navajo traditional foundations which considers the student as a whole person rather then the infraction at any given point and time. The objectives of my mother's teachings were that "wholeness" and the "holistic" approach to life through her

stories of a life of hózhó. Living in a life of hózhó is living in a web of relationships with other people in a peaceful way.

These concepts are very similar to the teachings use in the Navajo traditional peace making process. The center of peace making is problem solving. Each aspect of a given problem requires careful examination of the problem in order to reach a conclusion. Decisions are not made in hast and decisions are not made based on a set of prescribed principles. The victims, or subjects of the adjudication, have an opportunity to participate in the outcome of a situation with their needs and feelings being considered, and thus they do not go away feeling ignored and empty handed. Part of the peace making process includes prayers and cultural teachings are expressed to bring people back to community solidarity by conveying the positive forces of hózhóóji (to bring to a perfect state). The idea is on doing things in a "good way" and to avoid haskeeji naat'aah (the bad or evil way of speaking).

Some practitioners describe this process as a ceremony because of the act of praying, smudging and counseling that are basic part of the peace making process. Individuals maybe referred for other ceremonies to address specific issues like personal trauma to bring the individual back into the state of balance and harmony. The individuals participating in the peace making process and the issues to be resolved are addressed holistically which include referrals to medicine men and woman specializing in a particular area to provide the necessary healing and return to a hózhò. This is similar to Western medicine where doctors specialize in specific areas of physical and mental health.

Conclusion

In this chapter I presented a summary of Diné traditional teachings that my mother employed to help us understand the basic foundation of Navajo pedagogy to provide a strong foundation for us. The peacemaking model incorporates these teachings of Ké through the clan systems to establish relationships, roles and responsibilities, respect for the Diné teaching to promote harmony and well-being.

Embedded in these oral traditions are moral, ethics, roles and responsibilities in order to live a holistic life without the chaos and to keep the Naayéé at bay. I discussed a number of basic principals of Navajo philosophy and how they are used to teach individuals around cultural practices which are taught starting with young children and lasting into adulthood. The Diné philosophy in respect for children is very different from western society and therefore at odds with the manner in which they are disciplined which contribute to the school-to-prison.

I discussed incarceration as foreign concept to Native Americans until the arrival of the Europeans and in quest for resources, they developed policies that were detrimental to Native people and nearly destroyed their ways of knowing and life ways through federal residential boarding schools and later incarceration to clear the way for them to access the natural resources on Native lands. I briefly discussed these federal policies which were intended to assimilate Native people by targeting the children through federal assimilation policies which led to generations of abuse and punishment which was a detriment leading and finally a return to their traditional ways.

The Diné (Navajo) have survived many traumatic historical events which led to massacre of their people, they were imprisoned and faced punitive injustices which they have been able to counter by going back to traditional teachings and methods of dispute resolution. I discussed the return to the traditional ways of addressing issues by integrating Navajo justice concepts with western approaches to the judicial system. This is the Navajo peace making and I provide a description of this process and how it works as part of the Navajo justice system and how it is used as a means of healing. I conclude with the idea of teaching the basic Diné philosophies along with western education and the possibility of using peace making as an intervention model over punitive punishments that foster school-to-prison.

In my research and interviews with prisoners in the Winslow prison, I have learned that there is a need for methods of treating Native people for many life challenges. I hope that I can influence the practice of educators who are searching for a different ways of intervening with students who maybe lacking the support necessary to achieve in their educational goals. I offer recommendations to look at the child from a holistic approach and through the lens of his/her community and by looking at and seeing the truth in more than one way. Historical trauma is relatively new in Indian Country, the concept of intergenerational trauma and its effects on present-day Native people are gaining attention by academics, health providers and community members (Brave Heart, 1999; Brave Heart-Yellowhorse, 2000, 2003).

Chapter 4: Outreach and support services for Incarcerated Individuals

The following policy proposal presents recommendations for ways to improve outreach and support services for currently incarcerated Navajos to receive culturally relevant outreach services while they are detained as well as establish a plan of support services for when they are released. This proposal is intended to reduce Navajo rates of incarceration, recidivism and to promote social, wellbeing and health services for this population.

Research on educational discipline and the ways in which school-based policies may contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline is necessary to better understand the personal and educational experiences of individuals in the prison system – especially American Indians (Freed & Smith, 2004). Approximately 63,082 Native Americans are in prison in the southwestern area of the U.S., including a large population of Navajos (Perry, 2015). The purpose of my qualitative case study—which informs the policy recommendations I outline here—was to understand the experiences of adult Navajo men incarcerated, ages 24-35, in the Winslow State Prison. Open-ended interviews resulted in data regarding K-12 education, family, community and institutional experiences with discipline. Six men were interviewed in a prison system located in Winslow, Arizona, which houses 1,500 individuals in its facility with about 20% of them who are Native Americans (B. Larson, personal communication, July 5, 2017).

Findings based on the interviews show that first, schools had a powerful impact on the participants in contrast to family, community, and other institutions. Secondly, teachers and principals were identified as powerful forces that contributed to the participants' negative school experiences. Third, negative family impacts triggered the

participants' dependency on the school for support**.** Although there were additional findings from this study, the evidence does support that the school plays a pivotal role influencing a Navajo man's perceptions of life chances. This research is needed to understand the experiences of Navajo male offenders who are within the criminal justice system and policy recommendations were made to the Navajo Nation and other federal and state prions housing Navajo prisoners to support healing and rehabilitation as these individuals return to their communities.

The Navajo Nation has seen an increase in arrests and incarceration in the past five years housing 35,607 adult individuals and 1,466 juveniles in 2017. These individuals are arrested for misdemeanors crimes and substance abuse related offenses. Approximately 95% of those arrested and booked into the Navajo detention facilities are for public intoxication and/or other substances usually not identified until hours later. The majority of individuals who are arrested are released back to their communities within eight hours of their arrest without substance abuse assessments and/or intervention services. More than 50% of these individuals are repeat offenders and will be back in jail within 30 days of their last arrest.

According to the Navajo Nation Chief of Police, two-thirds of the total calls for services (approximately 250,000 per year) are for public intoxication and one-third of these calls are serious cases in which the Navajo Police should be focusing and making a priority. Instead, Navajo Police Officers are focused on individuals with public intoxication (P. Francisco, personal communication, January 9, 2018).

The Navajo Probation Office handles over 2,500 cases per year with nice out of ten clients being affected by alcohol. "We see the same people coming through for the

same offenses, they've gone to treatment and have relapsed. They get back into the system for either public intoxication and go through arraignment and the court system over and over" (H. Mason, Senior Probation Officer, personal communication, January 2, 2018).

In an interview with the Corrections Captain with the Navajo Corrections Department revealed that they served 27,500 adults and 400 juveniles last year through the Navajo detention system. This year this has increased to 35,607 for adults and 55% for juveniles at 1,406 (M. Desiderio, personal communication on January 2, 2018).

Many of these individuals are non-violent offenders and should undergo treatment as an alternative to criminal prosecution. Similar to the State of Arizona Felony Pretrial Intervention Program, a policy change must be made to make available cultural and Western interventions services for offenders who admit to their guilt, agree to make full restitution to any victims, and enroll in a program to treat substance abuse and other behavioral or health issues. Our justice systems should be "*about corrections and a second chance to Navajo individuals who want to get back on their feet and start a new life"(author emphasis).*

Policy Recommendations Summary

- Funding for intervention services within correctional facilities across the Navajo Nation;
- To provide Navajo traditional intervention and inpatient programs;
- Peer support programs like Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT) coupled with traditional intervention.

Introduction

Inmates are generally perceived as deviants of society with limited rehabilitation to resolve their bad behavior (Wilson, 1987). It is only through punishment and imprisonment that have become the most powerful tools in addressing criminal behavior. However, society as a whole must recognize the social and structural factors contributing to the perpetual cultural cycle of deviance. For example, the 1960s ushered in an era of research that argued, the concept of poverty are passed from one generation to the next (Lewis, 1965). This debate brought to light an explanation of the causal source of problems faced by marginalized and oppressed groups. The underlying view is that the values of society that marginalize these groups are transferred to their children, and their children's children. From this view, patterns of poverty and limited life opportunities are perpetuated through generations, leading to what some scholars argue is a locked in fate. Meaning that if a person is poor and marginalized, it is believed they will model social and economic behaviors of a poor person to their children consciously and unconsciously. In turn, newer generations will encode in their psyche the life of poverty as their reality. Over time, this becomes the script for a fate children believe is real and therefore, they become models of their parents (Wilson, 1987).

The Navajo Department of Correction detains approximately 35,607 adult individuals and 1,466 juveniles each year. 95% of these individuals have substance abuse either as a primary charge (public intoxication) and/or a secondary charge to another criminal act like battery against a family member, driving under the influence and etc. About 85% of these individuals are repeat offenders and enter the system at least 3 times

a year (M. Desiderio, personal communication, January 9, 2018). Alcohol was a factor in 59% to 95% of all types of crime committed by Indians and are over represented in arrests, courts proceedings and detention compared to all groups (May & Gossage, 1998).

The next section provides background of the problem and how this affects the constituents, discuss past solutions to the problems and offer policy recommendations for change as a means to provide solutions to address the intervention and treatment services for individuals while incarcerated.

Background of the Problem and Affected Constituents

The individuals who are detained in tribal custody do not receive substance abuse assessment and intervention services due to polices of tribal programs, health programs and lack of insurance coverage to pay for these costs. In 1992 the Navajo Nation Window Rock Judicial Court (WR-CV-235-92) issued a Consent Decree, which has limited the number of individuals that they could detain in the more then 50-year old facilities. The Decree limited the number of individuals that could be held temporarily and the number of sentenced individuals that could be housed in these facilities were severely limited. This resulted in eight-hour holds for most individuals and anyone sentenced was serving on average eight days. The short term holds created a "revolving door" system with arrestees existing the criminal justice system before any assessment or determination is made for services. These individuals cannot benefit from any social or health services presently available and the majority return to jail within a month. In some-cases individuals entered the system sooner, particularly if they are homeless, have mental health diagnosis and have no place else to go.

The Indian Health Services (IHS) delegated the Navajo Nation, Department of Health with the responsibility of providing substance abuse services for individuals residing on the reservation. The Tséhootsooí Medical Center (TMC), is an P. L. 93-638 health facility (formerly IHS) located in Fort Defiance, Arizona. Unfortunately, this health care facility does not provide out-patient services to individuals who are incarcerated. They are limited to providing refills of prescription medication while individuals are in custody and outpatient counseling when the individual is released from detention.

In order to receive services, individuals must complete an application for services, provide proof of residency, and undergo a psychological assessment before their request for services is evaluated by a team who meets once a week. This is similar to the Navajo Nation Department of Behavioral and Mental Health Services (NNDBMHS), who is delegated to provide substance abuse services—both inpatient and for out patient services. Individuals detained within the Navajo Nation Department of Corrections, who are in jail or sentenced to any type of detention are not eligible to receive this service since they no are longer eligible to receive any type of health insurance while in custody. Moreover, due to the current policy the NNDBMHS, does not provide outreach services. In short, since individuals must have some type of medical insurance in order to access services, which automatically excludes the inmate population due to lack of insurance coverage, no formal behavioral, substance, or other health services are available to treat substance, mental, or health needs while in custody.

According to Corrections Captain Desiderio, the six corrections districts do not make referrals to the Indian Health Services or the Navajo Department of Behavioral and

Mental Health program during or after detainment. In order to access the DBMHS for substance abuse treatment, individuals must agree to services prior to being arrested and complete the necessary forms for eligibility all prior to being arrested and detained in a detention facility. The only time Navajo inmates are seen by the Indian Health Services is when they attempted suicide or when inmates have a pre-existing condition and a diagnosis of mental health disorder. However, in many cases, these conditions and disorders need to be established and documented prior to incarceration. Only those inmates are regularly seen by the mental health clinic. Other than the Corrections program which is provides limited sweat lodge services, individuals who are in temporary custody and incarcerated individuals cannot be served by DBHMS due to current program policies that do not provide out-reach services.

The DBHMS has a Corrections Program that was developed as a pilot program in October 1993 under the Diné Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (DCSAT). This program was funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), a grant program under the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMASA), to focus on conducting Sweat Lodge Ceremonies (SLC) with prisoners in tribal jails and in federal prison systems. This program began with several Traditional Counselors (TC's) but personnel were recently cut down to two individuals with one individual retiring in the last six months. The DBMHS plans to reclassify this position as a "Clinical" position providing only the western approach to intervention services—in other words, sweat lodges, which had been identified as helpful for promoting spiritual and physical healing for individuals struggling with substance abuse, will no longer be provided. The last of the TC's hired under the DCSAT is scheduled to retire in the next

six months and fears that no one in management understands the type of intervention services provided through the SLC and more focus has been on the western intervention modalities of intervention in the last several years. The TC believes that the SLC works, however, because there has been much emphasis placed on "determining eligibility" for services that Navajo clients are frustrated with the paper work and the process of getting certified to be a DBMHS client. Yet certification is necessary for the program to receive reimbursement from the various insurance programs.

There remains a high need for substance abuse treatment intervention. Alcoholism is a disease that touches nearly every American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) person, either as part of a personal battle for health or in seeing family and friends struggle against the impact of alcoholism. It would appear that every individual is touched by the effects of alcohol in one way or another. Some of the reasons stated for abusing alcohol include lack of employment, not having a home, no place to go, and feeling unwanted by family members. A probation officer who has worked with incarcerated individuals for more than 20-years states:

> They don't have family or relatives who are available to them to provide the support system necessary to stay sober. This includes the love and the care to motivate them to make changes in their lives. In some cases, they don't even have friends to provide the needed support. A major part that is not known to many people is historical trauma that comes from years of abuse from the school systems. The way they were raised as children and when you have children who are around dysfunction, chances are that dysfunction becomes generational. That dysfunction can be domestic violence, physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Dealing with grief are some major things that come with historical trauma. When a person is unable to cope with and/or deal with trauma and they have lived with for 30--40 years in this environment. What do you do? I've always looked at this as a pattern. We, the courts, probation and detention, are going up against people living in this type of life-

> style for many years and more with dysfunctions, trauma and abuse and we are trying to change it in three months, six months, one year. That's where a lot of our challenges lie, to be able to change that person's thinking. (H. Mason, Senior Probation Officer, 2018).

This powerful statement offered by the probation officer suggests the family values that Native families speak about are almost non-existent to these individuals who are afflicted by alcoholism. Officer Mason points to years of systemic and historical trauma, the direct result of violent colonial efforts of Western systems to assimilate Native peoples to Eurowestern worldviews, continues to impact the lives of our Diné people. For instance, the federal policy era the 1880's was characterized by a strong push for Indian people to send their children to federal residential schools as a for of "save the child and kill the Indian" (Deloria, 1969; Lomawaima, 1999, 2000; Reyhner & Eder, 2004).

The Federal Boarding School era resulted in students being forced to speak English and could not practice cultural activities deemed as "Indian" and were severely punished if they were caught speaking their Native language or wanting to keep anything that resembled their Indianness (Locust, 1988; Lomawaima, 1999; Tuck & Yang, 2012). The result of the pain, depression, and distress brought on by these practices has now been passed on from generation to generation. In order to address interventions that could be effective and long lasting, the entire families would need to be treated *today*.

The enduring effects of colonization and specifically the boarding school era, including family separation, and severe physical and emotional punishment are part of the trauma that appears normalized by Native families. When Navajo parents are complicit

today, I speculate that there has been some internalization regarding the mores of strict discipline and punishment. I wonder, do we believe this is okay because this has been going on since the 1700s when the first Christian organizations came to Indian country and said, "This is good for you"? How many generations of Native families have been exposed to separation and abuse and have come to believe it is okay? Unfortunately, the presence of punishment and control as a means to discipline Native children is not limited to the BIE, tribal, or the federal boarding schools. Public school policies also promote practices that disproportionately target Native children, raising the likelihood that they will interface with school resource officers or representatives of the justice system rather than college scouts. It appears that the thinking of the individual and the family become an important variable when it comes to addressing substance abuse among incarcerated individuals.

Who are the key stakeholders?

The federal government is responsible, through treaties, statutes, and the trust relationship, for providing law enforcement and justice services in Indian country. This responsibility is carried out by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), with assistance from the United States Department of Justice (USDOJ). Other agencies, such as the IHS and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMASA), provide related services such as drug and alcohol treatment and mental health treatment. Tribes wishing to provide law enforcement and justice services (e.g., courts, detention centers, police, rehabilitation services) for their own people may enter into contracts with the Bureau of Indian Affairs or the Indian Health Services. Even where tribes elect to enter

into contracts to provide these services, limitations of funds prevent them from providing the best services possible to prevent relapse of individuals who go into treatment for substance and alcohol abuse. An interview with a former case manager with NNDBMHS revealed that most inpatient treatment providers are located off the Navajo Nation, with *the nearest being five hours away and the furthest being 15 hours away.* Individuals drop out of treatment due to the distance and not being able to be close to family for support.

The REBA program housed under the NNDBMHS refers most of their clients to off reservation providers that are located in bordering towns like Phoenix, Arizona and in San Francisco, California. These providers do not have Navajo counselors and therefore rely on western treatment modalities that are in conflict with traditional Navajo interventions which bring the individual back to the elements of other living beings and physical forces that are important to stay in harmony with self, nature, and spirituality.

Intervention, from the Navajo perspective, involves the services of the medicine man to through ceremonies and rituals including the sweat lodge services. These intervention services do not include use of drugs to mask the problem, but direct talk and re-learning from medicine men to address the underlying issues that lead individuals to using substances. From the western perspective, prisons and jails provide a wide range of substance abuse treatment, from 12-step programs to cognitive behavioral therapy, self-help groups, religious ministries — even Scientology yet none of these reflect a traditional, Native or cultural approach to healing.

There must be investments in Nation-building and in equipping Navajo families and communities to create the conditions to support health and wellness for incarcerated individuals. A re-introduction of local and traditional efforts, and a systemic approach to

addressing alcoholism could dramatically improve individual health and long-term sobriety for incarcerated and detained individuals.

The National Indian Child Welfare Act (NICWA) in its policy brief before the Tribal Law and Order Commission (Commissioned by the US Congress) describes the evolution of alcohol in American Indians and Alaska Native communities in order to emphasize the systemic levers that are essential in combating this disease and to combat the perspective that becoming an alcoholic is just something that happens to Native peoples (Simmons, 2011). The goal of the proposed policy presented in this report is to support tribal nations in promoting health for their citizens and in providing hope that being Native means having the best health and full wellness (Simmons, 2011).

King et al., (2009) describes the well-being of Indigenous people using the "Anishiniabek (Ojibway) word mno bmaadis, 'living the good life' or 'being alive well,' encapsulates beliefs in the importance of balance and also draws from all four elements of the medicine wheel. These four elements that make up the medicine wheel concept are necessary to support a healthy person and […] represented in the four directions of the medicine wheel" (p. 76). These four elements are necessary to support a healthy person and are similar to the Diné cultural ways of life, which are centered on self- reliance, self-determination, and family. These teaching are provided by family and are modeled for lasting effects to promote preservation of family and community.

The four areas of Diné teaching that are essential for a good foundation, learning and living a good life include; Shá bik èhgo iina (the way we live), T'áá hò ájï it' é igo (self reliance), Alhá ahnī diz bil ha jii ja (remembering the family) and Haá ayiih dòò hòdilzin (remembering yourself). These foundations are just a small part of a larger

system of Diné education philosophies and knowledge systems are part of an intricate traditional knowledge systems and teachings by Navajo families and can aid in the promotion of wellbeing and restoration of health and balance for incarcerated individuals. These foundations are illustrated in figure 4 below.

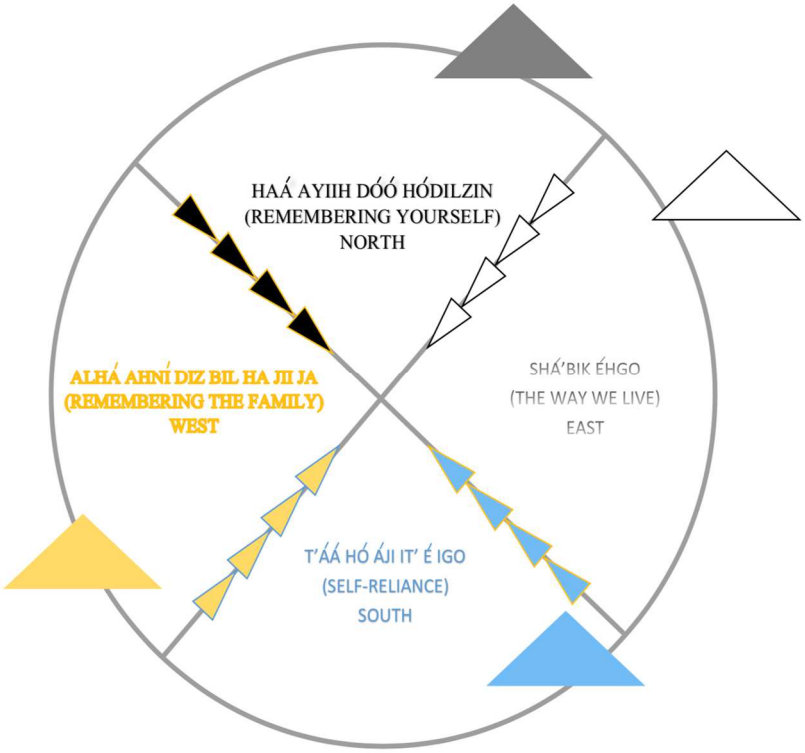

Figure 4: Four directions.

Moreover, it is important that intervention and healing services are offered on Navajo lands. This is because knowledge systems are tied to history, land, and all the natural living things, both animate and in in-animate objects, passed through stories, to form the knowledge base for future generations (Brayboy, 2006; Lomawaima, 2000; Cook-Lynn, 2008; Tuck & Yang, 2012). These stories provide the lens to guide and control behaviors, to discipline those who go off the path, and help individual members understand things that are important to the community (Abraham et al.,1984; Brayboy,

2006; Cook-Lynn, 2008; Reyner & Eder, 2004). A story that the Diné people share is the migration from the first world to the fifth world in which we live in today. The Diné people left each world due to chaos that occurred in each world, leaving behind individuals who created the monsters leading to the chaos. The Diné people use this story to warn individuals of consequences for bad behavior and there are also stories and songs used to bring individuals back into harmony.

To be in tranquility and harmony (Ho'zho' na' hasdli' i') an individual must be in balance with themselves, family, community and the spiritual beings. The use of alcohol, drugs and criminal activity is a symptom of being out of balance and harmony. In order to restore balance, we might consider Diné education philosophies are an asset-based approach for intervention and treatment of substance abuse of incarcerated Navajo individuals to return to state of harmony and are promoted in programs such as the DCSAT Sweat Lodge Program. In addition, my research has also explored the lack of these teachings at the family level and their relationship to the current experiences of Navajo male prisoners who are working to learn these philosophies.

Asset-based approaches for treatment using Ke' include using Indigenous Knowledges and incorporating heritage language and culture in intervention strategies. Brayboy (2006) found in that "inclusion of Native languages and culture in schools are indicators of academic success for Native students" (p. 437). Similarly in education, non-Indigenous scholars like in Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) have focused on culturally relevant schooling (CRS). Ladson-Billings found that "culturally relevant teachers utilize students' culture as a vehicle for learning which includes involvement of parents in the

classroom and encouraging students to use their home language in the classroom" (p. 161).

Therefore, we might think of this assertion as relevant to how those Navajo males and incarcerated individuals in the justice system can best participate in their own learning and knowledge recovery. For example, the Navajo traditional sweat lodge uses these concepts as part of the intervention during the sweat ceremony. This is a form of re-teaching individuals what they have lost or never learned. In other words, rather than excluding the culture, language, history, knowledges, and practices of Indian communities – research shows Indian people do well when these things are included. It is important to note that these trends in "culturally-relevant" healing have been ongoing for centuries. Navajo traditional healing ceremonies are teaching are values, tradition and ways to remain in harmony with self and others.

Past Solutions

By laying the foundation for my policy recommendations based on research conducted with Navajo male prisoners, I have attempted to outline the current demographics of Navajo incarceration, as well as the factors that I see contributing to this trend—including trauma through historical and contemporary educational experiences. I have also outlined some arguments for alternatives in education that are culturally-relevant and that can be applied to knowledge recovery among those incarcerated currently.

- First Offenders Program is an adult peer support program through peer courts and sentencing by prisoners and to hold one another accountable for

completing their treatment program. This was a federally funded program which ended due to lack of funding.

- In the year 2000, the Navajo Nation revised its tribal code to provide opportunity for courts to resort to an alternative sentencing that would include "restorative justice" which provides an option for Navajo police officers and the judicial courts to refer cases to the peace-making program on minor infractions (Nielson & Gold, 2003). This collaborative effort between the courts, peace makers and police officers provide an opportunity for individuals to be part of the criminal justice process and, lessons the need for the Navajo courts to hear minor infractions and handing down a judgment which may include a jail sentence. Instead the individual would work with the "police and the peacemakers to determine how restorative justice will be carried out" (Nielsen & Gould, 2003, p. 441). This program never "formally ended," it just died a slow death due to lack of interest.
- Concerned with the high number of incarcerated Navajos, in 2011, the Navajo Nation's Judicial Branch partnered with the Navajo Department of Corrections to create a case management program for juveniles who were incarcerated and 90 days following their release. The case management program was called "Nábináhaazláagoo" which translates to "the life around you." This was an intense case management program within the juvenile facilities to provide "wrap around" services to juveniles coming into the criminal justice system and after-care services up to 90 days after

their release. This approach was effective and Navajo youth seemed to respond well to the services provided. On May 25, 2012, the Navajo Nation Council voted not to sustain this program after a three-year grant ended. Currently, there are rehabilitation programs that are provided in the youth and adult detention facilities on the Navajo Nation with no after care programs. Without any after-care programs to sustain these individuals from recidivating, these individuals will likely be back in the intersection of the criminal justice system.

- Youth Courts – The Crownpoint District located on the far eastern side of the Navajo reservation offered a Youth court (also called teen, peer, and student courts) offer a diversion program in which youth are sentenced by their peers for minor crimes, offenses, and/or violations. The intent of this youth court diversion program was to offer an alternative to the traditional juvenile justice system serving Navajo youth up to age 17, who are charged with misdemeanor or status offenses, offenses including theft, vandalism, disorderly conduct and crew violations. The youth court was a voluntary program using positive peer pressure and peer judgment to help address the anti-social, delinquent, and/or criminal behavior of youth. The peer judgment and positive peer pressure aspects of teen/youth court diversion program ended when federal funding ran out and the tribal council decided not to continue funding this project.
- Capacity Builders Parenting for Young fathers: This program targets young fathers between the ages of 18-24 and provides skills training in

areas of parenting, financial management, and other life skills development. This program is currently ongoing in three districts. However, the average population in detention is 35-40 years of age making them ineligible to participate in the program. This program is currently on-going but federal funds will be ending in a couple years. The likelihood of this program continuing is dependent upon how the policy recommendation above are addressed and supported by tribal leaders.

- Sweat Lodge Program by Department of Behavioral and Mental Health Services offers limited services in selected locations due to lack of funding. The sweat lodge services were initially funded through a federal grant and picked under the Navajo Department of Behavioral and Mental Health Services to provide sweat lodge services to the inmate population. There is rarely a single goal to any lodge and there can be many reasons why a person goes to a lodge. Sweat lodges are places of purification, renewing inner strength, learning about one's self, emotional release, centering the mind and connecting with the higher power and the spiritual world. Some lodges are more focused on connecting with the spiritual world and some are more focused on healing the ills of the participants. Some are like a church service and some are like a 12-step meeting. What they all have in common is uplifting and empowering individuals who attend. "If you are really working with spiritual power, you don't need physical force to make people have an experience. It's not the heat, it's the Spirit that heals." This program is dying due to lack of funding is dying

and lack of interest but may be revived based on the policy recommendations offered in this report.

- Department of Behavioral and Mental Health Services (DBMHS) is a case management program to refer individuals for inpatient treatment administered under federal funds operated by the Nation. This process continues to operate on the Nation targeting individuals with substance abuse issues and wanting to obtain services. DBMHS is a case management program determining eligibility for individuals to enter inpatient substance abuse treatment programs. Many of these programs are located off the Navajo reservation and the success rates of these programs are not known. The eligibility process according to individuals requires repeated appointments, with case managers in their offices, and no outreach is provided. This program is on-going, but the problem is with the eligibility criteria and individuals find it hard to access this program.
- Regional Behavioral Health Administration (REBA) is a case management program to refer individuals for inpatient treatment administered through various insurance programs that individual can use to enter a substance abuse treatment program. This process continues to operate on the Nation targeting individuals with substance abuse issues and wanting to obtain services. REBA is a case management program determining eligibility for individuals to enter inpatient substance abuse treatment programs. Many of these programs are located off the Navajo reservation and the success rates of these programs are not known. The eligibility process according to

individuals requires repeated appointments with case managers in their offices. No outreach is provided by this program. This program is ongoing, but the problem is with the eligibility criteria and individuals find it hard to access this program.

While my dissertation research has focused on the perceptions of Navajo male prisoners and their journeys to prison and navigating recovering within the justice system, I argue that the Navajo Nation must address the high number of incarceration of its peoples currently and find alternative means to putting their people in lock-down facilities including and not limited to conflict resolution but problem solving using Navajo traditional and cultural ways of family discipline. That argument is the focus of this policy paper and addresses what we are currently doing for Navajo males incarcerated and their knowledge recovery and balance restoration today.

However, considerations for future policies working with the Navajo Nation must also include alternatives to the harsh punishment in school and less exclusionary approaches to support improved behavioral and academic outcomes. This is an approach to the prevention of harmful impacts of schooling that are legacies of colonial education that still have powerful effects on our young people today. One recommendation might be to eliminate school suspensions as a means of punishment and to encourage more supervision of children and harmful policies.

Indigenous teaching styles have to reflect Indigenous, and in this case, Diné, life ways if they are to be effective and provide positive intervention strategies and opportunities for children and adults who face incarceration. The educational philosophies of taking the Indian out of the Indian and replacing our identities with

dominant beliefs and values (Brayboy, 2006) has clearly not worked for Indigenous peoples.

For many American Indians, their epistemological and ontological structure guiding education is around the preparation of individuals to live in a holistic environment with hòzhò (in harmony) with all things; animate and inanimate objects (Eastman, 1991; John, 2015). Education and learning is a lifetime process. It is not an outline or in a syllabus to be taught today or tomorrow. It is about life today and what will come as a result of how you conduct yourself among all living things here on earth. These teachings are taught through stories, colors of the earth, land markers and patient observation of character and behavior (K. T. Lomawaima, personal communication, January 28, 2017).

However, there have been significant disruptions to these processes, and the level of distress that afflicts many of our Native communities is overwhelming directing public services organizations to direct their energies in "treatment" of addiction, trauma, violence, suicide, and other "behavioral health" conditions that afflict Native communities (Beals, et al., 2005: U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001 cited in Gone, 2011). This level of distress is also felt among the Navajo inmates who participated in my research. The majority of the participants who participated study focused on understanding the discipline experiences of incarcerated individuals. The participants reported that fighting was among the reasons they got into trouble at school—whose zero tolerance policies served as a stepping stone to pipeline them ino the corrections system. It was clear that at the time that they did not understand their own anger, and one inmate described his developmental years as:

> No love. I don't remember my dad saying "I love you" when I was a kid… I had bad experience. Coming from a big family, you just get hand me downs you know. Kids making fund of you because you were sunburn from herding sheep. You have to defend yourself. (Participant 3)

Another participant recalls observing students being abused and could not tell his parents. He describes this observation and his feelings in the following:

> Yeah, I could see students getting hit. I saw dorm aides doing, doing that. Dorm aides use to do that; dorm aides used to beat some of those kids. And I didn't think that was—that was you know. And some of those things, I couldn't really talk about, you know. I couldn't talk—couldn't go home and say that… it was bad man. And you get out and because I don't know. I think my parents knew. I mean they went to boarding school… (Participant 6, age 28).

My participants believed that being able to deal with these issues, the traumas in their pasts, in sweat ceremonies has been positive for them. During these and other cultural experiences, they have the opportunity to learn from the elders who are also incarcerated and who run the sweats. Instead of just sitting in prison without exposure to their cultural identities, they have an opportunity to deal with their issues using our Diné and Indigenous worldviews and to begin thinking about what their life might be like when they get out.

In a community-based study conducted by Gone (2011) with First Nations peoples in Canada, the integration of cultural practices into therapeutic activities proved to have positive outcomes. Participants participated in the 12-steps Alcohol Anonymous (AA) programs along with sweat ceremonies where they learned about their culture, which they had either not been exposed to previously or had not been allowed to learn for whatever reason. This study revealed that substance abuse goes beyond the "abuse of

substances" to unveil the historical trauma inflicted on these individuals and their communities. In the study, individuals were given an opportunity to discuss and visit the residential boarding schools where they were subjected to the colonial subjugation, coercive assimilation, and abuse at the hands of federal residential staff. A participant in this study stated:

> Okay, I'm sober. Good. But little did I know that I had to go further. To have that health lifestyle you've got to look at your attitude, your thinking, your behavior. You've got to look at yourself emotionally, mentally, physical, and spiritually in order to have that balance of living" (cited in Gone, 2011, p. 191).

Other scholars too have argued that it is vital to incorporate Indigenous therapeutic expertise into services delivery settings by recruiting Native individuals into formal and informal helping roles (Jilek,1971; Torrey 1970). This includes positions that would oversee the helping organizations. Not only being able to understand the need to be sober, the participants needed to have support 24/7 to prevent them from recidivating. Having counselors and other support systems is important when individuals have the urge to drink.

> I had the urge go to the bottle. But I said, "Never mind. Not this. I'll just go run to [my counselor]." And I came to [him]. And I think I cried a little when I talked to him. And then he said, "Well, it's a good thing you came." But he understands…He talks to me real good. He made me feel better. I don't have to turn to the bottle. (cited in Gone, 2011, p. 191).

The sweat lodge ceremony is a culturally relevant approach to group therapy in working with Indigenous peoples. This form of intervention has been used by Native Americans for centuries to address many aliments, diseases, and stressors of life. It has

been used to cleans and provide renewal of the spirit following traumatic experiences and to celebrate the transitioning of a boy into manhood. In the past decade the sweat lodge ceremonies have been increasingly popular and used throughout mental health organizations, in corrections and prison facilities and in substance abuse treatment centers (Garrett et al., 2011). The sweat lodge ceremony is a combination of intense heat exposure to the participant while incorporating the elements of the group counseling process for the participants (Gone, 2011). Although there is still very limited research demonstrating its effectiveness from the western perspective of intervention and treatment, it appears to be a positive intervention approach for Native peoples (Garrett et al., 2011; Gone, 2011). The Native peoples have used this form of mental and emotional therapy, ceremony for healing and for purification purposes.

To remain in harmony, balance, and wellness, a person must participate in the ceremony or sweat cleansing of the mind, body, and spirit, which could be done in a sweat lodge ceremony. Native people use the heat from the hot stones to relax the tensions of their body, to ease their minds of worries and anger by mediating in the heat to cleans the mind and spirit of undesirable thoughts, behaviors, substance abuse, domestic violence and other pathological effects resulting from the effects of settler colonization (Gone, 2013).

Policy Recommendations

- Funding for intervention services within correctional facilities across the Navajo Nation to support substance abuse intervention services, which often is tied to criminal activity on the Nation. This will include advocacy

for transfer of funds and services from the Navajo Department of Behavioral and Mental Health Services to support funding for an intake case manager, a traditional counselor and a social worker to provide the individual and group substance abuse intervention services. Research on state and federal funding to support this program is essential due to the high rates of incarceration and the high percentage of substance abuse as a secondary offense to criminal charges.

- To provide for Navajo traditional intervention and inpatient programs alongside the western perspectives of intervention to complete a "holistic perspective of healing" through teaching and re-teaching of cultural and traditional values as part of re-entry of into their local communities. Evidence has shown repeatedly as discussed above that traditional intervention coupled with western counseling service is effective. The inmates studied at the Winslow State Prison have stated that this intervention even on periodic basis has influence their thinking, behavior and desire to be a better person as they return to their communities.
- To introduce and provide peer support programs like Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT) with Navajo prisoners to support their rehabilitation and re-entry into their communities. MRT is a systematic treatment strategy that seeks to decrease recidivism among juvenile and adult criminal offenders by increasing moral reasoning. This behavioral intervention has been found to work with federal and state prison.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

I argued that six distinct education policy eras and the role of epistemological and ontological clashes between Indian ways of thinking about discipline and education and western education practices impact Indian education and it does not work for the schooling and educational achievement of American Indian students. I present a discussion on the case study that informs this research, the Navajo Nation, and how a focus on Western discipline practices deviate from traditional models of conflict resolution which prioritize community-based peacemaking practices rather than in school suspension, detention, expulsion and, at worst, jailing.

I discussed policy proposals for ways to improve outreach and support services for currently incarcerated Navajos to receive culturally relevant outreach and services while they are detained as well as establish a plan of support for outreach when they are released. This policy proposal is intended to reduce Navajo rates of recidivism and promote improved social, wellbeing and health services. My research that the relationship among the three major influences: schools, juvenile detention, and family facilitated and reinforced the participant's sense of adaptation to incarceration. Overall, the impact of teachers and principals in setting the path for the participants' played a key role in shaping the school-to-prison pipeline.

School teachers and principals recommended students for disciplinary measures for misbehavior with assessing for environmental factors that might be contributing to the behavior. There were some exceptions that participants shared where they had positive experiences with their teachers and coaches. The participants felt that had they received

this positive experience from most or all their teachers they believe they would have had a much better outcome.

Negative family environment was identified by participants' as influencing their perceptions of school and future. The indicators of negative family environment included absent father, abusive father, lack of financial support, absent mother, abusive home, no available family to help with homework, siblings abusive to participant, and lack of cultural teachings in the home. The research participants felt that if they were taught their Diné traditional and cultural values and language they would have been better grounded and might have made better choices and their lives might have been very different. The participants believed that being culturally connected and having a strong cultural identity could serve as a foundation for self-confidence. While in State Prison the participants reported participating in a weekly the Sweat Lodge Ceremony (SLC) and they are learning to speak their language, learning the stories that tie them to their clan, and what it means to be Diné. They suggest including these types of teachings with current inmates in every institution that houses Navajos.

I argued that, traditional healing is often referred to as alternative treatments, meaning alternatives to Western medical models. However, traditional healing is hardly alternative in the history of Native peoples who have used traditional approaches as a form of intervention for centuries to maintain emotional and spiritual health. Other studies indicate the intrinsic value of renewed understanding and attachment to cultural traditions gained from using traditional healing provides not only an empirical benefit, but perhaps more important, a philosophical one. Studies have shown that tribal and culturally based interventions are key healing factors because strong cultural identity is

correlated with better mental health (Gossage et. a., 2003; Johnston, 2002; Moodley and Wester, 2005; Whitbeck et al., 2004). “Policymakers must seriously consider a greater infusion of cultural information and education perhaps as part of formal curricula for school serving predominately native youth” (Freemen et. al., 2016, p. 466).

I connect these sections by offering a detailed discussion, informed by my mother’s traditional cultural teachings, on how traditional Diné models of child development and discipline can inform a holistic approach to schooling that prioritizes the students well-being and disrupts policies that contribute to decisions that maintain a school-to-prison pipleline for Native children. I conclude by calling for a return to the Diné traditional epistemology and pedagogies that support positive dispute resolutions through peacemaking.

In closing, I want to share with you a statement by the Honorable Russell Begaye, President of the Navajo Nation in a press release following several meetings with the State of New Mexico Supreme Court Justice:

> *Good Sunday Morning! Had the privilege of meeting with members of the New Mexico Supreme Court Justices on addressing the prolonged incarceration of Navajo juveniles in San Juan County. Was told 40% are Navajo youth and they serve from 30 to 90 days in detention. We decided to form a team consisting of health care workers, law enforcement, and social services from Navajo to begin working with the county…Every Navajo youth is our future whether we like it or not so we better help those that commit crime and are addicted to drugs a whole lot better than we*

> *are doing. Love your people!! (The Honorable Navajo Nation President, Russell Begaye, (2016). Facebook Post, Kinlichiini Bitani. [Emphasis by author]*.

I share this statement in hopes that the Diné leaders will support efforts of schooling practices that is based on restorative justice that can mitigate negative disciplinary and violent schooling experiences and restore the trust and success of American Indians in the education system.

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APPENDIX A

APPROVAL FOR RESEARCH LETTER – ARIZONA STATE PRISON

Arizona Department of Corrections

1601 WEST JEFFERSON
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007
(602) 542-5497
www.azcorrections.gov

DOUGLAS A. DUCEY
GOVERNOR

CHARLES L. RYAN
DIRECTOR

March 22, 2017

Ms. Delcora Greyeyes
via e-mail <dlgreyeye@nau.edu>

Dear Ms. Greyeyes:

Thank you for your proposal to conduct research in order to compile information for your doctoral dissertation entitled *Education and discipline: Policies and narratives of young Navajo Offenders in the Winslow Prison.*

After review of your request by executive staff and Director Ryan, I am pleased to inform you that your proposal has been approved. We acknowledge that the research period will start on May 1, 2017 and will end on March 31, 2018. As per your proposal, we understand that you will be conducting research on "school to prison" with a focus group of 5 to 10 Navajo inmates' serving their sentence in the Winslow Prison. The approved research includes the questions provided in your research proposal for two group discussions as well as individual interviews.

Please ensure compliance with Department Order 203, Research Projects, when coordinating your activities. Warden Barry Larson will be your initial point-of-contact for ensuring compliance with the policy. Warden Larson may be reached at (928) 289-9551 extension 5500 or via email at blarson@azcorrections.gov.

Prior to proceeding with your research, please complete and sign the Waiver of Liability and Consent to Comply, form 203-3, and along with the IRB authorization return to the Planning, Budget, and Research Bureau.

I look forward to reviewing your findings.

Sincerely,

Jacob Gable
Human Administrator
Planning, Budget, and Research

JG/dv

Attachment: Form 203-3

Cc: Carson McWilliams, Division Director, Offender Operation
Barry Larson, Warden, Arizona State Prison-Winslow

APPENDIX B

QUESTION SET FOR GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Questions for Group Discussion One:

1. This study is focused on understanding how school experiences may impact a person's life choices. Before we get into it, tell me about yourself and the most interesting idea you've heard this week.
2. Let's talk about school. Think back to when you were in school, what did you imagine you would be doing at your age? Did you have any big goals? What were they?
3. What are some of your most memorable experiences of school? Did you like going to school?
4. Did you ever have any negative or bad experiences at school? What were they?
5. Did you ever get in trouble while at school? If so, do you remember why?
6. Were you disciplined?
7. Do you believe the discipline was fair? Please describe in your own words why you believe it was not fair or fair.
8. Were you given an opportunity to tell your story before you were disciplined?
9. Do you believe the discipline helped to improve your behavior in school?
10. Can you describe your feelings toward school as a result of the discipline.
11. Let's go back to something positive. We talked about your goals when you were younger. Tell me about what you are doing now to prepare for life outside of your current environment?
12. Do you have any goals for when you get out?
13. Is there anything else you'd like to talk about?

Questions for Individual Interviews.

1. Tell me a little about yourself. Where are you from?
2. Where did you attend school?
3. Did you like school? Why not?
4. What did you like best about school?
5. Can you describe what it meant to attend school? What was your reason for attending?
6. What was your relationship like with your classmates? What about your teachers?
7. Tell me about your friends. Did you have a lot friends?
8. What kinds of grades did you get while you were in school?
9. What kinds of school activities did you participate in? For example, were you part of any sports team, clubs, or hold a class officer position?
10. Did you ever get in trouble while in school? And if so, how often and why?
11. Were you ever sent to the principal's office or go to after-school or in-school detention? Why?
12. Were you ever referred to school counseling services? If so, why?
13. Were you ever suspended from school? In school suspension or out of school suspension?
14. What's the highest grade you finished? Did you finish high school?
15. Do you think experiencing school discipline influenced any of your other, non-school, choices – whether good or bad? If so how?

16. Have you ever heard the term “school-to-prison pipeline” If so, what do you think it means?
17. Tell me about what life was like after you went home from school. What was your home environment like?
18. Were either of your parents’ home to receive you after school?
19. Did your parents and/or guardians help you get through school? If so, how did your parents or guardians help you with school?
20. Do you believe your home environment influenced how you did at school?
21. Is there anything else you want to share with me about school and how you believe it ties in with you being here in prison?

Questions for the follow up group discussion.

1. You have had sometime to think about our last meeting. The following questions are the result of our focus group meeting and your individual interviews where we talked a bit about your family life. I’d like us to think how your family, or life outside of school, influenced your experiences and life goals.
2. Think back to when you were in school, what was your family or personal life like?
3. Who did you turn to when you got in trouble or needed help?
4. If you got in trouble at school, what would happen when you got home?
5. Can someone describe to me what discipline was like at home and how this was different to discipline at school.
6. Who was the disciplinarian in your home?
7. What recommendations would you offer to parents on discipline to improve the outcome for children now?
8. What recommendations would you offer to educators on discipline to improve the outcome for children now?
9. What would you say to children now about behavior to stimulate a positive outcome for them?

APPENDIX C

LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronyms

AIAN-American Indian and Alaska Native

ADOC – Arizona Department of Corrections

AYP- Adequate Yearly Progress

BIA – Bureau of Indian Affairs

BIE – Bureau of Indian Education

CSAT – Center for Substance Abuse Treatment

CRS – Culturally Revelant Schooling

DBMHS – Department of Behavioral and Mental Health Services

DCSAT – Diné Center for Substance Abuse Treatment

DODE – Department of Diné Education

DOJ – Department of Justice (Navajo Department of Justice)

IHS- Indian Health Services

IRB – Institutional Review Board

INRTF – Indian Nations at Risk Task Force

NDOC – Navajo Department of Corrections

NICWA – National Indian Child Welfare Act

NNDBHMS – Navajo Nation Department of Behavioral Health and Mental Health Services

MRT – Moral Reconation Therapy

REBA – Regional Behavioral Health Agency

SLC- Sweat Lodge Ceremony

TC – Traditional Counselor