

Taos Pueblo Migration Theories: Indigenous Push and Pull Factors

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores Brain Drain and Brain Circulation phenomena at Taos Pueblo, an Indigenous community located in northern New Mexico, USA. The study examines the push and pull factors that influence the migration of educated Taos Pueblo tribal members. The information contained in this dissertation was derived from a study that was completed from 2016-2017 in Taos Pueblo. It has become evident that Indigenous communities worldwide are currently experiencing massive migration away from reservations, rural, and communities of origin and towards urbanized centers. The research conducted in this dissertation was focused on both patterns and trends and possible distinct reasons for intellectual migration, especially in Indigenous communities. This dissertation is separated into three sections. The first part is a journal article that focused on Taos Pueblo intellectual migration patterns. The article draws from studies literature review, fieldwork methodology, methods, data and findings. The second part is a book chapter that centers on a literature review and theory development. The book chapter includes a discussion on the study findings and contains broad recommendations for addressing brain drain and promoting brain circulation in Taos Pueblo. The third and final section is a Policy Paper is aimed at two audiences, the first is Indigenous Leadership and secondly, college age students who are interested in working with Indigenous Communities. The policy brief provides solutions and recommendations that were gathered from secondary literature and from the data gathered during the various interviews that were conducted during the research period.

Prologue

This dissertation explores Brain Drain and Brain Circulation phenomena at Taos Pueblo, New Mexico. The study examines the push and pull factors that influence the migration of educated Taos Pueblo tribal members—meaning, what pushes them to migrate away from community and what pulls them back to community. This dissertation is separated into three sections, which is aligned with the vision for the Pueblo Indian graduate cohort programs aimed at producing publication-worthy work and ideas for research application. The first part is a journal article entitled, “Exploration of Taos Pueblo Intellectual Migration Patterns”, the second part is a book chapter entitled, “Taos Pueblo Brain Drain and Brain Circulation Phenomena”, the third and final piece is a Policy Paper entitled, “Taos Pueblos Need for Brain Drain and Brain Circulation Policies”.

The information contained in this dissertation was derived from a study that I completed from 2016-2017 in Taos Pueblo. The study investigated the phenomena of brain drain and brain circulation in Taos Pueblo. The motivation for this study came from my preliminary observations as a tribal member, which then led to the exploration of brain drain and brain circulation literature in the first part of my doctoral studies. Based on this exploration, I saw a gap in the literature. Despite that American Indian/Alaska Native communities and Indigenous communities worldwide are currently experiencing massive migration away from reservations, rural areas, and communities of origin and towards urbanized centers, I was unable to find any prominent data or literature regarding brain drain and brain circulation phenomena on American Indian/Alaska Native communities. The only U.S. based tribe that had any brain drain literature was the Navajo

Nation. This disparity in the research motivated me to commence my study to investigate and determine if and how brain drain is impacting our Indigenous communities and using the case of Taos Pueblo, my own community. I was specifically interested in patterns and possible distinct reasons for Indigenous migration and focusing on formally-educated populations.

The first section of my dissertation contains a scholarly journal article. The article draws from my literature review, fieldwork methodology, methods, data and findings. The book chapter reveals common themes found in my literature review and highlights the key findings in order to make a few theoretical proposals regarding the brain drain and brain circulation phenomena in Taos. The chapter begins by carefully examining literature that broadly and narrowly parallels global and national circumstances with regards to brain drain and brain circulation and that have relevance to Indigenous communities, to the Pueblos of New Mexico, and more specifically, to Taos Pueblo. This book chapter outlines the theoretical frameworks that informed this study. The theoretical frameworks include a seven-generations Indigenous Planning Paradigm (Jojola, 2000, Jojola, 2008, Jojola, Natcher, Walker, 2013), a Pueblo Core Values Paradigm (Pecos, personal communication, 2015; Sumida Huaman, Chosa, & Pecos, forthcoming), Self-Locating Concepts (Kovach, 2009), and Social Support Theory (Cohen, Underwood, Gottlieb, 2000). This chapter includes a discussion on my findings and broad recommendations for addressing brain drain and promoting brain circulation that are specific to Taos Pueblo but that can be considered more broadly.

The final section of my dissertation is a policy paper that includes policy recommendations for Taos Pueblo based on this study. There are two intended audiences:

the Taos Pueblo Tribal leadership and students in a college/university setting. In order for Taos Pueblo to create effective brain drain and brain circulation policies, the recommendations needed to be supported by actual data obtained from our educated Taos Pueblo tribal members. The policy brief provides solutions and recommendations that were gathered from secondary literature and from the data gathered during the various interviews that were conducted over a period of seven months. The intent of the research was to determine why tribal members were choosing to migrate to places outside of the Taos Pueblo community and to also determine what was drawing tribal members back to the Taos Pueblo community.

My policy piece also introduces a curriculum proposal for a college course focused on Indigenous migration patterns. The course will specifically focus on teaching students how to use Indigenous Planning concepts to reduce brain drain and support brain circulation. The course will cover the overall history of Indigenous migration and include discussions on modern day migration trends. Students will choose an Indigenous community to research and apply their understanding of Indigenous planning concepts towards solutions for ending brain drain and promoting brain circulation. The final project will incorporate a hands-on approach whereby students will break into teams and choose a local Indigenous community to assist in 1) determining if that community experiences brain drain and to what extent, 2) to collaboratively work with the community to create solutions and recommendations for the community, and 3) create a strategic plan to help the community implement solutions. In this course students will learn how to successfully use community engagement tools, become familiar with Indigenous community protocols, and learn how to apply indigenous planning concepts.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this piece of work to my Taos Pueblo ancestors, especially my grandfather Onofre Montoya and grandmother Julia B. Montoya. I never got the opportunity to meet my grandfather but I could feel his strength and guidance as I made my journey through the Pueblo PhD Program. My grandfather was a survivor of the Bataan Death March and was a POW in World War II. My grandmother loved me unconditionally and always supported my educational endeavors. She was extremely proud of me. I miss her dearly. I love you both.

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CHAPTER I: JOURNAL ARTICLE- EXPLORATION OF TAOS PUEBLO INTELLECTUAL MIGRATION PATTERNS

Introduction

My research focuses on brain drain and brain circulation in Taos Pueblo, New Mexico. While my study examines these phenomena, I am also aware that Indigenous experiences with these encompass many factors including community to family to individual choices. In Taos, brain drain (migration of educated and skilled tribal members away from home who do not return) and brain circulation (migration of educated and skilled tribal members away from home who ultimately do return home) are not necessarily new or isolated trends. The histories of Indigenous peoples do include movement, forced exoduses, and other migration patterns that are related to traditional mobilities, colonization, Western education goals, and participation in wage labor. These processes may not have been documented consistently and through empirical research, especially in Taos and among the Pueblos, and moreover, by Indigenous peoples themselves.

This research seeks to address these gaps. Here, I explore if brain drain and brain circulation are taking place in Taos Pueblo and to what extent. I begin by presenting the literature review results, then explaining my own observations and relaying my researcher positionality on brain drain and brain circulation as they relate to Taos Pueblo. I describe observed “lifestyle” migration patterns for Taos Pueblo tribal members. Followed by an in-depth analysis of a descriptive case study that I completed from 2016 to 2017 that focused on what might also be referred to as the intellectual migration of

Taos Pueblo tribal members. Like the book chapter, the information provided in this journal article is intended to inform potential interventions at the community (tribal leadership) and individual (college/university student) levels, which are the primary audiences for the policy paper in this dissertation.

Brain Drain: Observed reasons why people leave Taos Pueblo

While working on the literature review for my study, I came across research completed in 2014 called “Impacts of Return Migration on Rural U.S. Communities” (Reichert et al.). This study captured information from 21 communities on the impacts of return migrants on population, economy, and society in several geographically disadvantaged non-metro counties, personal details such as their ethnicity were not identified. The authors conducted interviews at high school reunions with rural returnees in their late 20s to late 40s. They found that a vast majority of returnees brought spouses and children back with them. They also brought back much needed human capital, including education, job skills, and life experiences, and they filled professional positions that were often hard to fill in rural communities. Interviews showed how decisions to move back were grounded in social relations that promoted civic engagement. While they mainly moved back for their children and their families, return migrants valued involvement in familiar social networks and the opportunities to make a difference in their rural hometowns.

The following excerpt of researcher analysis interwoven with statements captured in interviews caught my attention because I could personally connect to interviewees and was reminded of my own personal circumstances:

- *Volunteerism therefore becomes an important resource to run a town and offer community services, such as fire protection and ambulance services:*

“Here the civic organizations are the lifeblood of the community. So, in a smaller community everyone does everything because that’s how the community continues to survive.”

- *And return migrants quite commonly are ready to help. Their readiness to be involved and contribute seems to be facilitated by return migrants’ feelings of gratitude and appreciation for their rural hometown:*

“I like this community. I think it’s given me a lot so I wanted to come back and give back to the community.”

- *That appreciation was shaped by return migrants’ rural upbringing as well as their experience while away. Indeed, the out-migration experience was an essential piece for appreciation for rural hometowns.*

“Honestly, what I brought back was a greater appreciation for a small community.”

- *Return migrants’ surprise at discovering their rural affinity and appreciation were common:*

“I guess 10 years ago I would have said ‘No way in hell am I going to be back.’ . . . I think it takes leaving to appreciate what was here.” (Reichert et al., 2014, p. 219)

These statements speak to themes of helpfulness as essential traits of rural communities, as well as the power of the out-migration experience (being away from home) connected with the appreciation for home and desire to return.

Taos Pueblo is also a rural community. Located in Taos County in Northern New Mexico, the Indigenous Pueblo is adjacent to the non-Indigenous town of Taos and many miles from larger cities—49 miles north of Espanola, 72 miles north of Santa Fe, 133 miles north of Albuquerque, and 91 miles southeast of Alamosa, Colorado. (Taos Pueblo Comprehensive Indigenous Community & Land Use Plan, 2014). According to the 2014

Taos Pueblo Comprehensive Indigenous Community and Land Use Plan (TPCICLUP)¹, the population of Taos Pueblo was 2000 in the year 2010. The comprehensive plan also stated that from the years 2000 to 2010, the population for the Taos Pueblo Census Designated Place declined. In addition, from 2008-2012, the U.S. Census, American Community Survey Estimates indicated that 43.4% of the 18-24-year-old Taos Pueblo population was obtaining some college or associates degrees. Furthermore, 17% of the 25-year and older population attained a bachelor's degree or higher (TPCICLUP, 2014). Based on the decline in population, I presume it is safe to say that the decline in population was partially due to Taos Pueblo tribal members leaving to obtain higher education. Whether they chose to come back to Taos Pueblo after receiving their degrees is another question.

My own story is one that can be categorized under brain circulation. Currently, I am the Community Development Planner (CDP) for Taos Pueblo. Although I was raised in the Pueblo, for many years, I was a product of brain drain. Up until November of 2017, I lived and worked away from Taos Pueblo. When I was offered the position of CDP, I accepted happily as I thought of the many ways I could make a difference in my community. Over the years, I too had developed an appreciation for my home community, and it took me time to see all that Taos Pueblo had to offer and what a special place it is to my fellow Taos Pueblo people.

I had a rough childhood, and during that time in my life, I could think of nothing else but leaving Taos Pueblo, so I could identify with the testimonies I had come across

¹ In 2014, the Taos Pueblo Tribal Council adopted this plan by Tribal Resolution. This plan was the first of its kind for Taos Pueblo. The plan contained information on several elements such as education, housing, economic development, utilities, facilities, hazard mitigation, land use, community health and transportation.

in Reichert's work (2014), "No way in hell am I going back", is what one participant said and summarizes exactly how I used to feel. But as time went on, and I was able to migrate into different areas of the U.S. and world, I was able to see other Indigenous communities that were very similar to my own.

Through my educational endeavors and various professional positions I have been able to travel throughout the state and around the U.S. to visit several tribal communities and institutes such as New Mexico Pueblos, Navajo Nation Chapter communities, Jicarilla Apache Nation, Mescalero Apache Nation, Salish-Kootenai Tribe in Montana, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community in Arizona, Wai'anae High School in Hawaii, Kamehameha Schools in Hawaii, Quilloac Community in Canar Ecuador, and the University of San Francisco at Quito in Ecuador to name a few. Visiting these communities and institutions impressively opened my eyes to the endless possibilities of community-based initiatives. I was inspired by the "champions" that I met. These were individuals who were trying to make a difference in their communities or trying to start projects or launch programs that would impact indigenous peoples in a positive way. Many of these initiatives and projects dealt with issues that Taos Pueblo was also dealing with. Their work inspired me to come home and help Taos Pueblo in whatever way possible. Essentially, my modern-day migration story helped me to reconnect with my home.

There are multiple terms used to describe "Brain Drain": emigration (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011), human capital flight (Kapur &McHale, 2005), movers (Helliwell, 1999), high skilled emigration (Docquier, 2006), nonreturnees (Reichert, Cromartie, Arthun, 2014) and high skilled migration (Bollard et al., 2011). Brain drain refers to a

phenomenon in which educated or skilled professionals depart from their native country for another in order for a series of reasons, including likelihood of better wages, improved working conditions, or possibility of promising opportunities that are not available at home (Bagdanavicius & Jodkoniene, 2008; Kwok & Leland, 1982). Although brain drain is generally reserved for people with higher education (professional or post-secondary), termed “highly skilled professionals” or those with expertise in their fields (Iredale, 1999), when considering Indigenous communities, I believe there are different ways of defining educated, skilled, and knowledgeable people. For example, Pueblo people also recognize traditional and local knowledge (of language and cultural practices) as essential to our survival as a people (Dozier Enos, 2017). A community member may not be a white-collar worker but will still have necessary and intrinsic value to the life of the community due to particular sets of skills or talents they may bring, which can also be considered “gifts” sharable with the greater community (Romero, 1994). The potential loss of these people and their children and subsequent generations is deeply troubling to community members.

While my research will reveal some new and critical information on brain drain and brain circulation with regards to Taos, I think it is important to also provide some of the biases and speculation that I held prior to conducting fieldwork. Below is a list of observed reasons that I constructed that hypothesize why tribal members leave. I made these informal observations during the following times: while being in Taos for work, being home to visit with family and community, and through conversations with other Taos Pueblo tribal members.

Lack of Housing

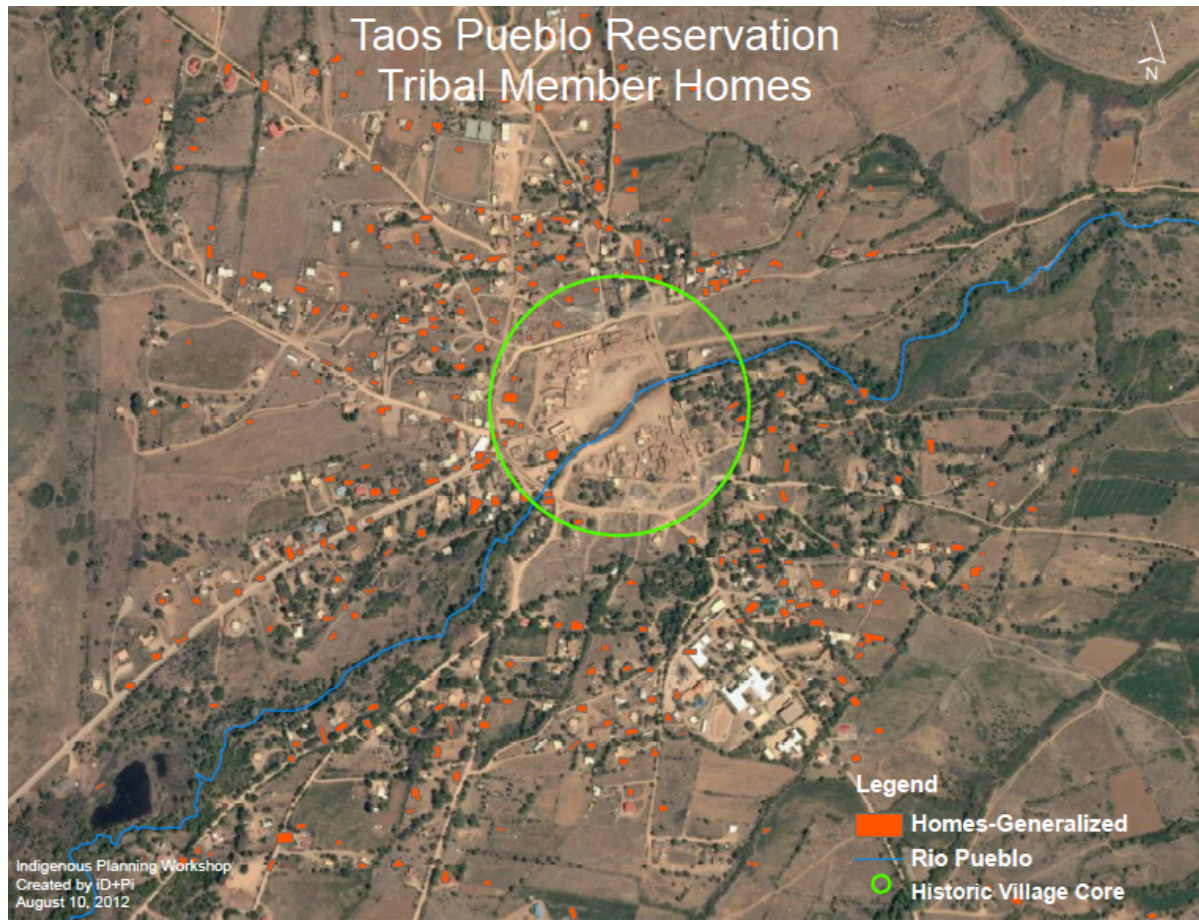


Figure 1: Map of homes on Taos Pueblo tribal lands. Courtesy of University of New Mexico's Indigenous Design & Planning Institute, School of Architecture and Planning

The TPCICLUP (2014) states the following on Taos Pueblo Housing:

The Inner Village structures were built between 1000 and 1450 AD. Until the 1950s, most Taos Pueblo residents lived in the Inner Village. Most Taos Pueblo residents lived in the Inner Village and also had summer field houses near their farm fields. Some of these summer homes became permanent homes. In the 1960's, the pueblo developed wells, and some Tribal members began building houses on land assignments. (p. VI-1)

Traditionally, these land assignments were used by tribal members for agricultural purposes and husbandry practices only.

In the 1970s, life at Taos Pueblo, however financially constrained, was profoundly changed by the relocation of almost the entire population to newly constructed, government-funded Housing and Urban Development (HUD) housing outside the historic Pueblo walls. The major impetus for this was the lack of plumbing and electricity in the historic pueblo (stemming from the tribe's adherence to traditions of construction and cultural beliefs) and HUD's wish to ensure that "safe, decent, and affordable housing is available to all Native American families." From that point forward, the living units within the historic pueblo have only been used for ceremonial purposes (World Monument Fund, 2012, p.6).

Like many Indigenous communities, Taos Pueblo has a lack of housing. The last time Taos Pueblo added housing units was in 2000. Prior to that 41 units were added in the 1990's. As of 2013 the Taos Pueblo Housing Office had 105 applications on file for new housing units. Many tribal members live in the town of Taos or elsewhere off tribal lands due to the lack of housing options (TPCICLUP, 2014). Informally, I have heard many people express their frustration with the amount of rent that they have to pay in the town of Taos. The average rent for a studio in the Town of Taos is \$583, a 1-bedroom is \$740, 2-bedroom is \$879, 3-bedroom \$1091 and a 4-bedroom is \$1205 (www.bestplace.net). According to the TPCICLUP (2014), 20.2% of the Taos Pueblo population is below poverty. The annual household income is estimated at \$41,518 and annual per capita income is estimated at \$14,000. At first glance, the annual household income appears to be sufficient to cover a mortgage or high-end rent, however, the household income appears greater because usually there are multiple generations living in one home.

Currently, the Taos Pueblo Housing department is planning to build a subdivision on tribal lands for Taos Pueblo members, however it is uncertain when this subdivision will be completed and how many tribal members will qualify for these homes. At the same time, the creation of this subdivision has the potential to perpetuate the community disconnectedness that has resulted from the original HUD homes. Customarily, Taos Pueblo was an interconnected community because everyone resided in the traditional village. In the village core, all adobe homes are connected, often sharing a common wall. The community was close knit, and everyone looked out for one another, everyone knew one another, and help and support were always readily available. In modern times, tribal members have acknowledged this relatively recent disconnectedness and have the desire to unify the community once again, particularly as language loss is now being linked by Pueblo leaders to the dissolution of the core village area. I have also observed that tribal members would prefer to live on tribal lands, closer to community events, services and traditional activities which is a very good thing because it fosters cultural participation and nurtures core values.

Employment Issues

According to the U.S. Census 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, an estimated 510 persons 16 years and older living on Taos Pueblo, Census Designated Place, were in the labor force, with a participation level of 57%. This level is 7% lower than the state average and 4% lower than Taos County. According to the Census Bureau estimates (2008-2012), over 65% of the employed Taos Pueblo workforce are government workers. The Pueblo has a significant amount of employment in

government services. These include Tribal government, the Taos Mountain Casino, Taos Day School, Taos Picuris Indian Health Service and the recent Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council juvenile facility (TPCICLUP, 2014). Some of our tribal members use their homes in the historic village, both a designated United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site and a National Historic Landmark, to sell arts and crafts or to sell homemade products and food. Based on preliminary and informal conversations with tribal members, people expressed their disappointment with tribal government and programs when it comes to issues such as perceptions of nepotism that they view as impacting employment opportunities. As a result, they explained that they opted to work in other places. Tribal members who chose to return home often could not find a job within their field of expertise, sometimes because there was a non-tribal member already occupying the position.

Governance Structure

The Pueblo tribes today operate under a form of government that is at once Native and European, the European form of government having been introduced by the Spaniards in colonial times. While each of the nineteen pueblos is autonomous, most of them are being governed according to ancient tribal systems while also operating a coalition system of government under the All Indian Pueblo Council². This permits

² In 2013 the 20 Pueblo Governors of the All Indian Pueblo Council (AIPC) decided to dissolve its business corporation in order to re-structure and return to the original cultural and leadership model of the council. For more information please visit: www.apcg.org

mutual counsel and allows for the development of a degree of political power in Pueblo relations with the state and federal governments (Sando, 1992, p.13).

Taos Pueblo has two forms of governmental offices, the Governor's Office and the Warchief's office. The Governor's Office is responsible for all tribal business of the modern world. This office is the liaison with the outside business and economic world and its various activities (Sando, 1992, p.14). The Warchief's office is "responsible for policing the pueblo, and for conducting and supervising the traditional social activities. These traditional officers are also responsible for the reservation land, as well as the domestic and wild game animals (Sando, 1992, p.13). The two offices are overseen by the Taos Pueblo tribal council, and the council is comprised of 50 elders who have served as Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Warchief or Lieutenant Warchief.

Taos Pueblo Tribal Officials are appointed on an annual basis, which means that a lack of continuity from one year to the next can be expected. It appears to tribal members that each new administration that comes in has a different agenda in mind for the year than the previous administration. Cornell and Kalt (2006) observed this in other tribal governments across the U.S. where "short terms of elected office, common in many tribal governments, have similar effects. With only two years in which to produce results, few politicians will have incentives to think about long-term strategies (p.4)." However, in the case of Taos Pueblo, tribal officials are only in office for a one-year term. Not much change or progress can typically be made in that short time period. This causes frustration for many tribal officials, tribal members and tribal programs and departments alike. At the same time, this governance system is viewed as traditional, pre-Columbian and rooted in not only our history as a people but what has shaped our distinct worldview.

Social Impacts/Social Issues

Social impacts of migration operate through personal place ties and closely hinge on how migrants connect with their destination community. Newcomer integration is a benefit to both newcomer and community (Brown and Glasgow 2008), but such integration is often challenging (Reichert et al., 2014). Returnees are less likely to experience conflicts that often arise between newcomers and “old-timers” and that limit social integration. Acceptance in destination communities allows returnees to more easily participate in social networks and develop affiliations of trust (Paxton 1999). As a result, tangible community benefits arise in the form of social capital (Shortall 2008). Social capital is particularly relevant in smaller rural communities, where social networks and support partly compensate for the lack of financial resources (Flora, Flora, and Fey, 2003)

These arguments relate to my preliminary observations in Taos: If a Taos Pueblo tribal member is able to keep their familial and cultural connections intact while they are away from home, they have a better chance of integration when they return home. Being accepted and being reacquainted with traditional roles and activities is important to Taos Pueblo people, especially, those who have been away for a long time or those who are wanting to be connected with their Taos Pueblo roots.

Healthy Community-family, safety/security, domestic violence, drugs and alcohol abuse

Issues of alcoholism and substance abuse affect the social health of many in the Taos Pueblo community, leading to incarceration, idleness, and premature death.

Domestic abuse and chronic household poverty are also prevailing factors for many in the community. Many youth say that they feel there is no future for them if they stay in the community, and concerns are that without a young and vibrant population, the overall health of the community can be put at risk (TPCICLUP, 2014, p.XI-1).

According to the literature, the feelings and perspectives that Taos Pueblo youth have may be comparable to many of the perceptions that Indigenous peoples have elsewhere, including Inupiat tribal members in Alaska. From 1999- 2002, Brenda Goodwin (the Inupiaq Community Coordinator), Lisa Wexler (Author/researcher) were employed by a tribal non-profit to use Participatory Action Research (PAR) to coordinate and direct a suicide prevention effort in a way that was responsive to the regional villages' needs. The effort focused on illuminating the meanings and practices surrounding youth suicide in Northwest Alaska. According to Wexler (2009) "As emerging adults, young people watch village grown-ups with critical eyes, and say that they will probably follow their lead and abuse alcohol, feel hopeless, and become "bums." These recriminations reflect the tensions of living between two worlds, blaming oneself and one's community for the struggle, and falling through the cracks in the meantime (p.8).

According to Wexler (2009):

When asked about the future, many Inupiaq young people expect adulthood will be more stressful than their teenage years. In focus groups, they easily rattled off the additional stressors, such as "finding a place to stay," "...bills, cleaning the house and having a job," and "voting even though we don't know how." These adult activities are not easy. Something as simple as finding a place separate from one's family of origin can be surprisingly difficult in villages with few modern houses and few prospects for jobs. Entering adulthood involves a confusing array of new skills and responsibilities for almost everyone. For Inupiat living in rural villages where everyone knows each other, however, the new expectations,

knowledge, and skills required to leave home, go to college, or get a job can be overwhelming (p.14).

These are troubling issues that unfortunately resonate across Indigenous communities in the U.S. According to the TPCICLUP (2014), suicide rates for American Indian Youth in New Mexico are of particular concern. According to Kids Count (2013 Kids Count Data Book), American Indian youth have the highest rate of any racial or ethnic group; this is about 50% higher than the overall rate for New Mexico's youth. If the youth are not content in Taos Pueblo and see no opportunities to come back after college, they will choose to stay in urbanized area or work for other tribal communities.

Infrastructure -Access to Broadband

In a recent *Choices* article, Brian Whitacre and Bradford Mills (2003) reported a substantial difference between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas regarding access to high-speed Internet service, whereas the difference in dial-up phone access is minimal. Although dial-up service may be sufficient for home use of the Internet, telecommuting requires faster connections. There is no correlation between brain drain and access to high-speed Internet service for metropolitan counties because nearly all these counties have high-speed access. Among rural counties, however, variation in high-speed service is much greater. For these counties, the correlation coefficient between brain drain/gain and high-speed Internet access is 0.15. Although this relationship is not strong, it does suggest that some educated workers are attracted to or stay in more remote locations when they can access the urban labor market through the Internet (Artz, 2003).

Presently, Taos Pueblo households do not have access to high-speed Internet. Some people (myself included), try to use hot spot devices; however, the access to the internet is extremely slow, which hinders one's ability to work from home. According to research by Reichert et al. (2014),

A few returnees we spoke with overcame rural employment challenges by bringing urban jobs back with them and *working remotely*, often relying on urban-based professional networks, business partners, or clients. While their jobs were, in essence, in larger urban labor markets, their professional networks paired with communications technology allowed them to go about their work while living in their rural hometown. The following returnee, for instance, continues to practice law in Los Angeles, while living in his rural hometown: "I make court appearances by telephone, because the traffic is so bad in LA . . . they let people do court appearances by telephone. . . It doesn't matter whether I am in Bakersfield or here. . . I have to go back once a year. . . But otherwise, I do all my work from here" (p.215, my emphasis).

One day, I hope access to the most beneficial technology will be a reality for many of our tribal members who chose to work remotely from Taos Pueblo while maintaining a great paying position in another part of the country.

Brain Circulation: Observed reasons why people return to Taos Pueblo

As in the previous section on Brain Drain observations, I offer my preliminary observations regarding Brain Circulation here, which were made prior to conducting fieldwork.

Brain circulation is also referred to as brain gain (Gibson and McKenzie, 2011), returnees (Reichert, Cromartie, Arthun, 2014), return migration (Gibson and McKenzie, 2011) and reverse brain drain (Johnson, 2009). Brain circulation is the process in which talented out migrants who have studied and/or worked abroad return to their home

countries to pursue promising opportunities there. This reverse migration is either temporary or permanent (Soni, 2008). Return migration is one of the sources of brain gain where highly skilled migrants return home and apply the knowledge and skills acquired during their stay abroad (Docquier, 2006). Returnees are also viewed as playing a critical role in rural areas towards slowing population loss, rejuvenating the population base, generating jobs, and increasing human, social, and financial capital (Reichert et al, 2014).

Return with new knowledge/new ideas/solutions

Education, job skills, experience, and vision brought home by returnees frequently translates into economic impacts by sparking entrepreneurial activities and otherwise contributing to economic growth, and returnees may fill high-skill private and public-sector jobs that are hard to recruit for in isolated rural communities (Reichert et al., 2014). As one might expect, return migrants tend to increase the human capital endowment of rural places, meaning that while most left town to get a college education, they have acquired valuable labor force and life experiences in addition to their degrees. Return migrants also recognized the benefits of these outside experiences in broadening their perspectives, vision, and ideas (Reichert et al, 2014).

One of the main benefits of brain circulation is brain gain, in which highly skilled migrants return home and apply the knowledge and skills acquired during their stay abroad. My observations in Taos Pueblo have been that tribal members do return home to implement new ideas and new ways of thinking but are limited in the amount of change they can actually make during a particular timeframe and due to different and strongly

rooted ways of thinking that exist within the community, accompanied by what may be fear of change by those who hold those views.

Return as ‘movers and shakers’ of the community

In Reichert’s study (2014), returnees described themselves as motivated and well-suited to take on leadership roles, given the human capital gained while away, their outside and local knowledge, and their ties to the community: “It is important to bring back educated people so that they become a part of your city council, school boards and various other things. . . You know, people that are willing to think outside the box, . . . those positive people...that, you know, are always looking to make things better” (p.217).

Many of Taos Pueblo’s educated tribal members return as the “movers and shakers” of the community, driving initiatives and ideas and full of energy. They are often the ones who want to be involved in community events and efforts. Many of them are asked to sit on community boards and asked to be involved in community initiatives. This acknowledgement of their participation is critical, as it will allow Pueblo returnees to learn the details about the various boards that are in place in our community and the work being done. These are learning spaces for everyone, and boards provide a space where both returnees and those who stayed home can make change on an incremental basis.

Return with high expectations

Below is a compelling set of interview statements from the “Impacts of Return Migration on Rural U.S. Communities” study (Reichert et al., 2014):

It's easier to get involved because people know each other and you kind of work together to get things accomplished. You do things because it's your neighbors there—it's not just a faceless person.

I send my kids out when it snows and we go around . . . [to]all the elderly folks and—no charge—go and shovel all their walks and driveways . . . because that is just part of being a good neighbor. . . Whenever they grow up they know that is a good thing to do, to help out older folks that don't normally get elderly assistance.

I am very involved because in a small town that's what you are expected to do. I am on the city council and a variety of boards and people just take turns. That comes with the turf.

These reminded me of many conversations I have had over the past 15 years.

People in my community spoke about how 'times have changed' to where community members asked to help out expect to be paid for everything that they do. According to my understanding of community stories and narratives told within my family and families of friends, this was not always the case. Based on those stories and much like the interview excerpt above, youth and younger adults were expected to shovel snow for their elders without being compensated, because it was a way of taking care of them. In my view, the value of helping one another at zero costs needs to be instilled in our youth along with the value of respect for our elders. These acts of kindness promote social connectivity and demonstrate the core values of respect and reciprocity. I suspect that these core values are common in smaller communities versus urban areas due to the interdependence that people require to live in community. In my preliminary search for reasons regarding why people might return home, my hunch was that return migrants would comeback to home communities so that their children can learn and practice these core values in the same community from which they acquired these same values.

Population increase and quality of life

Reichert's study stated the following with regards to population (2014):

The findings reported here confirm that the impacts return migrants have on their home communities extend far beyond increasing the population base. By bringing spouses and children home with them, return migrants add more persons back into the community population than were removed when they left on their own. Returning with young children, who have *opportunities to develop close friendships and who will most likely graduate from local high schools*, increases the long-term population impact of return migration (p.213, my emphasis).

This is an important finding. However, for communities like Taos Pueblo, bringing spouses and children could have differing impacts based on the race or ethnicity of the spouse and mixed-race or intertribal children. If a spouse is from Taos Pueblo, acceptance into the community is done with ease. If a spouse is not from Taos Pueblo, acceptance of the returning family might be met with disapproval due to the conservative nature of Taos Pueblo, which has resulted in frowning upon "outsiders".

This may be a harsh realization, but it is one that must be mentioned, especially with regards to processes of "returning home" and "being home." Informally speaking, among the 19 Pueblos of New Mexico, Taos Pueblo has always been known as one of the more conservative communities. Taos leadership and community members cite this conservative nature as the reason for Taos Pueblo being able to keep its language and cultural practices intact. Relatedly and speaking of another, albeit distinct, northern Pueblo, a study completed by Shirley Hill Witt in 1969 called, "Migration into San Juan Indian Pueblo, 1726-1968," focused on gene flow as it occurs via formal marriages between subpopulations, with special reference to San Juan Indian Pueblo (p.vi). Chapter three mentioned,

In terms of population, the Pueblo contributed its members to the outside groups by way of marriages and matings. And the reverse is also true: that the surrounding population likewise contributed genes to the Pueblo.

Not only genes were passed back and forth through time but also cultural elements, as well. In short, a sort of genetic and cultural cross fertilization has continued in the area for over three and a half centuries (p.73).

Her study kept track of tribal members who left the community after they married someone from outside of the community and also documented non-San Juan community members who moved onto tribal lands after marrying a San Juan Pueblo member. The study gives the impression that “cultural cross fertilization” was a societal change that was actually accepted. In the case of Taos Pueblo, non-tribal members are not allowed to participate in any cultural activities, which is a defining and foundational feature of being a part of the Pueblo. Again, informally speaking and based on personal observation, this restriction this sometimes led to tribal members to leave Taos Pueblo because their spouses felt excluded.

Need for Social Support-Integration

According to Reichert et al. (2014), returnees and non-returnees alike frequently spoke of satisfaction gained from feelings of belonging to a rural community, of knowing each other, in contrast to anonymity in urban contexts. Participant comments suggested that social connections and belonging promoted community involvement, while anonymity discouraged it (p.219).

Likewise, I had observed that social support and social connections are important to individuals who come back to Taos Pueblo. The feelings of belonging play a huge role

in social integration, especially if you are not aware of social and traditional protocols and roles. A woman in Taos Pueblo once told me the story of a young lady who went to participate in a traditional dance for her first time. While the group was dancing, an elderly woman pulled the young lady to the side and told her that she was not dancing correctly. She did this in front of everyone and shamed the young lady. That young lady never danced again. I think about this scenario and believe this must have been devastating for this young lady. Unfortunately, from what I have observed, behavior like this is common in Taos Pueblo. This can have negative effects on younger tribal members, impacting their ideas of what cultural participation is and means, and perhaps equally as important, how it is perceived by the very people you respect and who define what experiences at home can be. One would think that people of all ages who are new to our traditional way of life need to be educated and guided, not shamed and pushed away.

Observed “Lifestyle” Migration Patterns

For the past few years, the term ‘lifestyle migration’ has been used to refer to an increasing number of people who make the decision to migrate based on their belief that there is a more fulfilling way of life available to them elsewhere. Lifestyle migration is thus a growing, disparate phenomenon, with important but little understood implications for both societies and individuals (Benson and O’Reilly, 2009). In this section I describe the observations that I have noticed in regards to Taos Pueblo Tribal member lifestyle migration patterns. The patterns observed are associated with employment, housing, and connections.

Factor	Observed Lifestyle Pattern
Employment	Living in Taos but not working for the tribe
Employment	Working for Taos but not in the field of your expertise
Housing	Working for the tribe but not living in Taos
Housing	Having two places of residence
Connections	Loss of connections and social relations

Table 1: Observed Lifestyle Patterns and Factors

Living in Taos but not working for the tribe

Some tribal members live in Taos or Taos Pueblo but have chosen to work in areas outside of tribal lands. Some work for the Town of Taos or for other Pueblos or communities around the Taos vicinity. The commuting costs can become costly for these individuals, both financially and physically. Tribal members chose to work outside of the Taos Pueblo because there is not a job available in their field of education or pay rate is not what they expected.

Working for Taos but not in the field of your expertise

Mattoo et al. (2010) noted that there is often a concern that not all educated migrants end up working in skilled occupations after they have migrated— a phenomenon which they call—brain waste (Gibson and McKenzie, 2011). The literature also identifies the notion of brain waste being one of the reasons that some college graduates are reluctant to return to the Navajo Nation. Brain waste refers to the waste of professional skills and qualifications that occurs as a result of migration into a job that

requires lower levels of skills and training than those attained by the graduate (Bagdanavicius & Jodkoniene, 2008).

Based on my observations, brain waste occurs in Taos Pueblo. For example, I know of friends working in positions that have nothing to do with their degrees. I was also asked to apply for an Executive Director position, in which I had no background, and so I explained that I did not have a degree in that area. I was told, “It’s ok, you’ll do fine, you’ll pick it up on the job.” Needless to say, I did not apply.

Working for the tribe but not living in Taos

Then there are others who have accepted employment with the tribe however, due to the lack of housing have had to secure housing elsewhere. They then commute daily or stay with family in Taos Pueblo.

Housing: Two residences

Some people in Taos maintain two houses. They usually take care of the “family house” in Taos Pueblo but also care for a home outside of tribal lands, usually in towns where they have secured employment. From what I have observed these are typically highly educated tribal members who fit into this scenario.

Connections

Migrants return if they have maintained place ties and if they feel affinity toward their rural hometown. If personal and place ties are severed or the sense of affinity is missing, people who moved away from rural areas show little desire to move back. The decision to move back is therefore grounded in well-established social relations, and these community ties translate into an increased ability and desire to make a difference back home. Long established, multifaceted relationships translate into community

membership. Membership comes with privileges as well as obligations, and that is well understood by returnees (Reichert et al, 2014).

Those individuals who grew up in Taos Pueblo have a sense of obligation to return home to make a difference in some way. In my own experience, throughout my college and professional career I maintained my ties with Taos Pueblo through my connections with my family and as a professional. When given the option on a project location of a school assignment, I always chose to work with my community. These experiences allowed me to learn more about my community and to give back in some way. As the Community Development Planner for Taos, I do feel very lucky to be a position where I can make changes that will help my people, including doing research on why and how our tribal members leave and do not return or leave and do return.

In the subsequent section I provide a detailed description of the research that I completed for my dissertation. I conducted a descriptive case study analysis on my home community of Taos Pueblo. My research aimed to answer the following question: “What is the Context of Modern Migration in Taos Pueblo today?”

Taos Pueblo Case Study

My research looks at the experiences of formally educated Taos Pueblo migrants who left our community and either stayed elsewhere or returned home. The purpose of my research was to investigate the global phenomena of this process, which is widely known as brain drain and brain circulation, but specifically in Taos Pueblo, New Mexico. Based on preliminary observations as a tribal member, my own experiences and

professional work, and via exploration of the literature, I saw a critical need to explore the different ways that brain drain is impacting Taos Pueblo, the navigation strategies of those who leave, and what we can do to address the real human capital needs that our community faces. I myself both observed and experienced brain drain. In my preliminary reflections as a Taos Pueblo tribal member, I defined brain drain as educated tribal members choosing not to return home due to a number of reasons that may include one or more of these—better wages at other locations, housing opportunities, access to quality health services, and better school systems for themselves and their children.

However, what both ties our experiences with brain drain together *and* makes them unique is that relatively small local Indigenous populations like Taos Pueblo are concentrated in specific geographic regions with languages and cultural practices distinct from those of others found anywhere else in the world. What brain drain implies for populations like these is that when talented and skilled Indigenous migrants choose not to return, they take their expertise and training (whatever these may be) to other countries, states, communities or, perhaps tribes.

Leaders in Taos Pueblo are in agreement that something needs to be done as soon as possible to encourage brain circulation, which signals the return of our educated people. Tribal leadership appear to share the belief that Pueblo people need to be provided opportunities and incentives for obtaining their education at home or returning to tribal lands after they receive their education. They also fear that without our educated Pueblo people coming back home, our community will continue to fall behind in today's technologies, educational systems, economic development opportunities, and health initiatives. Additionally, for Taos Pueblo where language (Tiwa) and cultural practices

(including distinct ceremonial life) are critical to our identities as Pueblo people, the fear expressed by leadership is that while our people are away in other parts of the world, they and their children and future generations may be at risk of losing their connections to these things—the people at home (relatives), our language, our core values (how we function as a community), and our cultural practices.

My research aimed to explore and first determine if Taos Pueblo does in fact have an issue with brain drain. Conversely, I also wanted to explore challenges that community members faced when they choose to return home after receiving postsecondary education. American Indian/Alaska Native communities and Indigenous communities worldwide are currently experiencing massive migration away from reservations, rural areas, and communities of origin and towards urbanized centers. Additionally, despite the concern over brain drain, my initial observation and impetus for this study was that Indigenous communities like Taos Pueblo are ill-prepared to re-integrate our own tribal members back into our communities. The world is ever changing and perhaps so are the needs of our educated tribal members.

I conducted a descriptive case study analysis on my home community of Taos Pueblo. My research aspired to answer the following question: “What are the brain drain and brain circulation phenomena, and how do they impact our Indigenous communities?” I was more specifically interested in the following questions: Does Taos Pueblo have a brain drain Issue? What are the root causes of brain drain? What will it take for people to return to Taos Pueblo? Why do people choose to return to Taos Pueblo? What keeps people in Taos Pueblo? Prior to engaging this research, I used four theoretical components that I identified as salient to my questions in order to help shape my research

and guide my analysis. These theories were: Seven Generations Planning Theory, A Core Values Paradigm, Self-Locating Concepts and Social Support Theory.

Methodology and Results

I chose to complete a descriptive case study analysis using both quantitative and qualitative research methods along with Geographic Information Systems mapping. This section delineates my study sampling, describes my data collection, and presents my findings.

Sampling

This study had a total of nineteen participants. Participants were chosen on the following criteria:

- Brain Drain Group: Enrolled Taos Pueblo Tribal members, over the age of 18, who have post-secondary education, who do not reside in Taos, NM;
- Brain Circulation Group: Enrolled Taos Pueblo Tribal members, over the age of 18, who have post-secondary education, who do reside in Taos, NM.

Ten participants were categorized as brain circulation and nine were categorized as brain drain based on this criterion. Of the nineteen participants, eighteen were enrolled tribal members, one person was not. I decided to include one participant who was not enrolled, but grew up in Taos Pueblo, is college educated and is a very active participant in the Taos Pueblo community. I recruited the study participants through direct face-to-face and word-of-mouth contact. Initially contact was done through email correspondence. I had planned to utilize social media (Facebook) to seek participants but

it was not necessary after all. Other participants were recruited through recommendations from other participants or based on social interactions with other Taos Pueblo tribal members.

Data Collection

The research procedures involved in this research activity were as follows: semi-formal interviews, personal observation, participant observation, and questionnaires. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed with the consent of participants. The interviews were conducted over multiple months, and each interview ranged between 15 minutes to 2 hours. I used questionnaires to gather quantitative responses; these were given to participants before the interview. I used *Stata* statistical software for my quantitative data analysis to prepare, document and analyze data. I organized semi-formal interviews on which I completed a qualitative analysis using *ATLAS.ti* software to allow for bivariate and multivariate analysis. In terms of the qualitative data, I utilized narrative analysis and produced codes based on participant data. I will use information I collected on the questionnaire to create a map using *ArcGIS* software. My data collection started in May 2017 and concluded in December of 2017. Each participant was given a pseudonym to protect their identity.

Findings

The study results presented here begin with a description of overall study group information, proceeded by a “clustered theme” approach. Furthermore, this information is organized by Brain Drain or Brain Circulation categories. As stated previously, this study had nineteen participants. Of those nineteen, 10 were males and 9 were females. My

participants ranged from age 24 through 64. The group gender composition was as follows: Brain Drain (9): 4 males, 5 females; Brain Circulation (10): 6 males, 4 females.

Overall: Study Group Degree Composition, Assistance from Taos Pueblo and Income

Of these participants, 14 participants received some type of assistance from the Taos Pueblo Education and Training division. They received either small scholarships, school tuition waivers, or book reimbursements. Study participants achieved the following degrees, listed by highest degree completed: 10 had earned Bachelor’s degrees, 6 had earned Masters degrees, and 3 had earned Doctorate degrees. When analyzing the data, I wanted to determine if study participants were indeed using their degrees in their current employment positions. In a comparison of degrees earned and current employment positions, I discovered that 14 out of 19 participants were using their earned degrees in their current employment positions. Furthermore, I found out that 3 out of 7 participants that are Taos Pueblo tribal employees were using their degree at Taos Pueblo. The following chart illustrates annual income range for study participants:

Income	Brain Drain	Brain Circulation	Total
<i>Less than 30K</i>	2	2	4
<i>30-40K</i>	1	1	2
<i>41K-50K</i>	2	3	5
<i>51K-60K</i>	0	1	1
<i>61K-70K</i>	1	0	1
<i>71K-80K</i>	2	2	4
<i>81K-90K</i>	0	0	0
<i>91K-100K</i>	0	1	1
<i>More than 100K</i>	1	0	1
	9	10	19

Table 2: Illustration of Study Participants Income Range

Language, Cultural Participation, Land

The Tiwa language was a central and common theme in this study. There were varying levels of language fluency amongst the participants. All of the participants viewed the language as a connection to Taos Pueblo, particularly their identity. The questionnaire asked three questions in regards to language. The first question was, “Do you speak Tiwa?” The second question was, “If yes, on a scale of 1 to 5, what is your fluency?” Finally, I asked “If you are not a fluent speaker, are you interested in learning Tiwa?” Fourteen of the nineteen study participants had some level of fluency in the Tiwa language, and four of them were fluent speakers. Seventeen of the nineteen participants were interested in either learning Tiwa or improving their comprehension of the language.

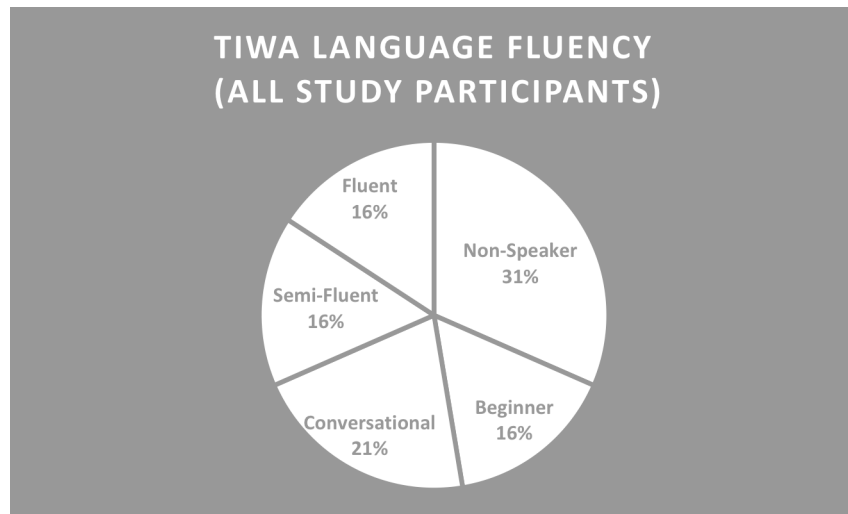


Figure 2: Illustration of overall language fluency for all study participants

Knowledge of the Tiwa language plays an intricate role in a person’s ability to participate in cultural activities. The questionnaire asked participants for their personal definition of what “Cultural Participation” is, furthermore it asked if study participants participated in cultural activities based on *their* definition, additionally the questionnaire

asked how often they participated, and lastly, it asked them to identify cultural characteristics that have helped them to be at home. Sixteen of the nineteen participants stated that they participate in cultural activities. The three individuals who stated that they do not participate in cultural activities said they did not because of the following reasons: 1) Lives in another state and was never culturally initiated (no Taos Pueblo religious affiliation), 2) Affiliates with Navajo identity and was never initiated in Taos Pueblo (mixed tribal identity) 3) Initiated but due to family difficulties chooses not to be culturally involved (extenuating circumstances). The sixteen individuals who participate in cultural activities, participate on a monthly, semi-annual and annual basis.

The participants had varying definitions for “cultural participation”. These definitions were based upon their distinct knowledge as either a product of brain drain or brain circulation, if they are male or female, the current age of the participant and if they grew up in Taos Pueblo. Below you will find definitions from brain circulation and brain drain participants. Note that this study is not a cultural anthropological study, so I do not delve into explaining cultural practices, ceremonies, or gender roles. I mention what I can as appropriately and respectfully as possible and only if and where relevant to the research topic without violating cultural protections and norms for the Pueblo.

Brain Circulation Females

From a female, Brain Circulation perspective, women defined cultural participation as dancing, engaging in traditional practices, doings, and activities. Cultural participation was further defined as “giving back to the community”, a responsibility or commitment to community and land. Furthermore, it is simply “being human”. Ava Concha, Agronomist,

46, stated that participation to her was also ensuring the care of others, specifically men in supporting them in their cultural roles—taking care of her son and men in her family that were partaking in cultural activities, which included cooking, cleaning traditional spaces, making clothes and preparing them for different cultural events. Makayla Lujan, Lawyer, 31, felt that cultural participation was comprised of community, traditions, religion, family, friends and being human. She conveys this in the following statement:

Because of my experiences I think there's all different levels of cultural participation. When we talk about culture it's community, it's traditions, it's religion, it's family, it's friends, it's being human. If we didn't have culture we wouldn't be human. And that's what sets us apart from other animals and whatnot, is that we have conformities of culture... and knowing that we have a responsibility back to each other, back to the land... As far as community goes, I feel like, part of my responsibility is to somehow give back and if that means going down to the kiva or dancing or learning a language that's a way or a form of me giving myself back to the community. To ensure that it continues on. I guess culture for me is having a sense of responsibility to a place or to people and because culture has to be maintained no matter what it is even if it's you know... even if it's the way you tie your shoes or the way you wear your hair. If you were taught that, that's your responsibility as to how you do that. Then you're responsible for maintaining it.

This notion of “Giving back” stood out in the analysis of my research regarding why people return, why people stay in the community. Participants spoke about wanting to come back home and “give back” to the tribe for their support and because they felt that it was the right thing to do. Several of the participants said that they, like me, had received the speech that included, “Go out and get an education and come back and help your people”, and they took these words to heart and were truly aspired to do just that.

Moreover, participants felt that cultural participation includes being a mentor and supporter to younger tribal members and that as a tribal member you should place cultural

participation above all else. For example, Linnett Gomez, Public Relations Specialist, 25, states the following:

Culturally, I see participation as being engaged in every traditional practice and activity that happens. I see participation the way that I saw participation growing up, in that, instead of going to.... for instance, instead of going to – how can I phrase this? – instead of going to an educational activity the same time as a cultural activity, it's the cultural activity that takes precedence. So, I feel like with culture and with tradition, it should take precedence, and that's what participation means to me. I put that above all else.

Linnett felt obligated to serve as a “guiding force” for younger females:

I don't see a lot of women my age – I see a lot of younger women, though, younger than me, who may not have children or who may still be in school, participating. And I feel like I need to be there to show, and to just be a guiding force in their lives as well, even if they don't know me.

In contrast to what these participants have stated, another participant who did not grow up in Taos Pueblo articulated that she wanted to participate in cultural activities but she did not have the social support needed to help her get culturally involved. When asked if she participated in traditional activities, she responded, “Well, I don't, and it's not because I don't want to. It's just that I've been gone so long and I don't feel I have the support to ask anybody. I wouldn't even know who to ask to help me get ready.” Her response underscores the crucial role of social support as a major and necessary component of one's involvement in cultural activities. Brain circulation participants believed that social support was very important to those tribal members who returned to Taos Pueblo. Social support was also essential for those individuals who wanted to return home and become involved in cultural ceremonies, securing a home, land and learn the language. The consequences of lack of social support around these areas are particularly dire, and despite my research and participant testimonies, we cannot fully know the extent of the damage or

problems that arise when these supports are not in place or provided. For example, one participant in particular spoke about the lack of support she received from her family when she wanted to put her son through traditional manhood initiation, which demonstrates the impacts to those children and subsequent descendants of those returning home.

Brain Circulation Males

Speaking of traditional male activities and supports, Jaxon Romero, Marketing Manager, 40, stated that he had gone through the traditional initiation for Taos Pueblo men. He states,

Cultural participation is deeply rooted within the kivas. Being an active participant within your own clan and whatever ceremonies they have going on. As well as just participating in the different cultural dances, I guess you would say.

Jacob Archuleta, Technical Writer, 24, felt that cultural participation was, “showing up, being vigilant *and* teaching his younger brother (my emphasis).” This again demonstrates the critical role of social supports with regard to how individuals engage with each other. Jacob also felt that cultural participation was, “just passing down the knowledge, basically,” speaking to the perpetuation of what is considered traditional knowledge in Taos Pueblo. Another participant who is half Taos Pueblo and half Navajo also explains his view of cultural participation,

My point of view, me personally, I always been – the way my grandpa taught me was just to respect Mother Earth and do your best by what’s out there. Every day that’s what I do. It might be in a church, or it might not be – you know?

These three examples show that the men in Taos Pueblo have varying characterizations of what cultural participation is. Jaxon speaks to the importance of being involved in your kiva and clan, whilst Jacob speaks about the importance of sharing his

cultural knowledge with his younger sibling. It is apparent that Jaxon and Jacob are both active participants in Taos Pueblo cultural activities. On the other hand, the participant who is half Taos Pueblo and half Navajo does not mention any involvement in cultural activity and speaks to a different kind of religious practice, which may be take place in church or possibly other activities on his Navajo side.

Brain Drain Females

Female Brain Drain participants defined cultural participation as the following: dancing, day-to-day activities, participating in cultural activities such as funerals, going to Blue Lake (which is a Taos Pueblo traditional activity to a sacred and important site for us as a people), going on community picnics, cooking, learning the language, completing female initiation process, observing female figures in your life, being mentored as a child and being a mentor as an adult and being with family. One of the senior study participants explained that cultural participation “grows in levels” and that the older you get the more responsibilities that you assume as a tribal member and that observation of the females in your life plays a vital role in your cultural education. Zoey Bernal, Psychologist, 57, says,

Well I see it as something that grows in levels like for example when I was 5 or 6 years old my level of participation was dancing at Christmas when the kids dance. I used to help my grandma make food, so when she was grinding corn I would help her, I wouldn't grind corn yet, but I would just help her. It was mostly my grandma, just living in the village. When you live in the village, you just can't help but participate, just getting water. Like during the winter time, as you know the village we don't have indoor plumbing or anything or electricity. So, my grandma's sisters bring her grandkids over and we would do [*storytelling*] in the winter evenings and we would eat dried deer meat, pinons and tell stories. Yeah, so just grew up, you know doing stuff and seeing my mom and my grandma go down for [cultural doing]... and always... I couldn't wait to participate. Slowly watching my friends reach puberty and seeing them [go through female initiation], it wasn't happening for me, not until I was like 14. And I was thinking

what's wrong with me. Finally, it happened and I did [female initiation process] and I participated more and more. I started to take on more responsibilities. So, I think for us participation means growing up there, hearing the language and doing your little part. That's the way that you are mentored in it. You know, my grandma would give me more and more responsibilities. Everything I know how to make [paper bread], grind corn and make all this stuff and do [male graduation ceremony], just following my grandma and my mom and just watching and doing.

These participants had a wide array of experiences and defining moments in their lives that they shared during the interview process. Their perspectives relayed their ties to and knowledge of Taos Pueblo and a deep understanding of cultural participation despite being away from the community. Aria Martinez, Assistant Principle, 26, states,

I would say just being there for all the kind of day to days things. I don't think just going for dancing is participating, for the most part. There's so much more to our culture and to our life. That's not the only thing I should be there for, I feel, you learn so much more by just being around everybody, you know? Funerals are so powerful. I feel there's everybody there, and everybody's trying to help everybody out. For the most part, they're speaking the language, and you're able to be around it and hear it and remember what things mean and how to say things, and all that. Then, also, All Souls Day is huge, too, because everybody is cooking. That's where you learn things and I like that, that is participation.

Likewise, another participant, Alexa Sandoval, Nurse, 28, states, "I consider participation as being there for the non-easy parts, the dealing with the dozens of women in this little kitchen, and waking up early, but laughing with them when you're tired with them."

Both Alexa and Aria feel that there is value in being around other women while they are partaking in the "non-easy" parts of a Taos woman's life. This is an opportunity to bond with family and friends, to learn new things, to be immersed in the language.

Likewise, Zoey, who is older than Alexa and Aria, stated that she learned what she knows from following her mother and grandmother around and observing their roles and taking

on more responsibilities. Even though all three women are characterized as brain drain participants, which means they are not living or working in Taos Pueblo on a full-time basis, it is apparent that they all participate in cultural activities frequently, and they all left Taos with a solid cultural foundation which allows them to come back often and resume involvement without any hindrances. This is especially important when your family calls you home to help with family events (funerals, weddings, baptism's, etc.) or cultural doings (Blue lake, community picnics, ceremonial graduation, etc.)

Being with family or helping your family was another descriptor used to describe what "cultural participation" meant to an individual. The importance of being there for one another and helping each other in a time of need or to learn from one another contained significant meaning. Alexa states,

So, I'd say it's being there for your family members, like being there for my godmother, even though we're not related but just being there when money is...and things are expensive, too, so when money is tight, and you have all these responsibilities, and you have to direct all these things that need to happen at the exact same time. I think being there for that.

Ella Lefthand, 39, also viewed "family" as an important factor in cultural participation.

She says,

Growing up and having my son, I realized, I personally, this is just my opinion, yes, that is very important. That is very important to know your ways. But at the same time, I feel it's also important to know your family. And to know like, to be around everyone and to learn, because I feel that's also how we learn is being around our family and people who we love and that things are passed down, that's how we hear our language. That's how we are told our stories. That's how I feel about that.

As mentioned, knowledge of the Tiwa language plays an intricate role in a person's ability to participate in cultural activities. Zoey was asked how she viewed individuals who were trying to come home and participate in cultural activities:

I think, it's good. I mean, I think we should always support anybody who wants to come home and participate. I think the challenge for them is...I think the first biggest challenge is if they don't understand the language, at least understand the language, like basics like, "Are you hungry? Are you thirsty? Get me some water, make a fire," you know, "Do this, do that." I think it's really challenging for them and I feel bad because I feel like they are there and they're dressed beautifully and it looks like they're into it but then *they don't understand the significance* of certain ceremonies like [community picnic] or if they go to Blue Lake. I've seen girls that go to Blue Lake and you know, they make it but I don't think they fully understand the whole thing. So, I think that's a challenge when you don't speak the language.

I have been told that there are no words in English to describe some of the activities, feelings or the significance of certain ceremonies in which we partake. There is utterly no translation. A non-speaker, will never be able to fully understand the importance and complete meaning of a ceremony such as going to Blue Lake. Therefore, it is imperative that we try to maintain our Tiwa language because it is the key to our Tiwa worldview.

Brain Drain Males

Male Brain Drain participants defined cultural participation as "sharing the load" by helping out with "all the things that go on at home," and primarily doing what you are asked to do by your elders or kiva leaders. Jayden Mondragon, Web Designer, 34, says,

Doing whatever your [kiva leader] tells you to do. I know that's from me, that's from me. I know a lot of people, they weren't put through the system and they don't sometimes...and they want to partake. But for me, yeah, I was given up to a clan as a kid. I went through the manhood training. I became a man, I graduated, and with that, there's all those obligations that come with it. That's forever. So, for me, participating is to be there for everything – well, as much as you can, for the most part. But you have to be there to do stuff. And if all my [kiva brothers]

and [kiva leaders], know my name and they can off the bat name five things that I've done within that year at least, then I'm doing my part. So yeah, for me that's what it's about.

During the interview process with brain drain males, when I asked them about cultural participation, they all answered very cautiously and only told me as much as they felt comfortable with and as much as they felt was necessary to explain their point of view. It is important to note this point since this section might appear "thin," ethnographically, when in reality, there is much that can be said, but due to gender and cultural protocols, this is not permissible. The "privacy" of our cultural has been of utmost importance for the continuity of our Taos Pueblo way of life. From what I gathered from these interviews is that essentially as a male you are responsible for coming home to help carry out cultural obligations, whatever those may be.

Land as essential to connection

I asked both Brain Circulation and Brain Drain participants about land. I was interested to know if they had land in Taos Pueblo, and if they have land, was it currently being used. The reason for asking about land was 1) to determine if people had a connection to land in Taos Pueblo, 2) to clarify if tribal members had land to build a house on, if needed upon their return 3) to determine if having land played a role in a participant's choice to return home. Eight of the nine Brain Drain participants stated that they have land in Taos Pueblo. Some of them claimed individual land assignments while others stated that they had family land. Of those that have land, seven participants stated that they plan to return to Taos eventually. Those that have land in Taos Pueblo are currently using their land for homes sites or for agriculture.

Noah Suazo, 28, inherited a house and land. He currently uses his land to live on and for agricultural purposes:

So I find myself being the only one in my family that has the ability and time and freedom to be able to maintain our family homestead. So, I didn't want that to go to waste. I have a lot of pride in my home and the land and its potential.

During the interview process I asked Noah if he thought that having land in Taos Pueblo was important. He says,

I think it's important to have land anywhere, but having land here, it gives you a foot in the door to really be part of the community, because if you have a piece of land and you take care of it, everybody around it notices that you're taking care of your land. They are like "Whose land is that?" and they find out it's your land. Then they're like "Oh man, that's awesome. Whose horses are those on that land?" Whatever... So, it's recognition that wherever your land it, is where you're from.

I also asked Noah if "recognition" meant a lot to an individual:

Yeah, because then you're a part of the community and you inspire people. Even if you just inspire a good compliment out of them, that's enough. Others are inspired to ask you where you got your trees, or "Hey, I need help with my place, can I pay you to come help me do this?" And with that freedom, flexibility, and indigenous community lifestyle, I'm like "Sure, yeah, I've got the tool. What do you have?" If it's money, cool. If it's "Let me use your land to put my horses for a while," cool.

I felt that this quote was important to show because having land in Taos Pueblo is very significant to Noah as a Taos Pueblo man; furthermore, it is not just having land, but it is also about the way that you care of your land and your animals. These actions show the kind of person that you are, one's character, and show what you are capable of; Noah hopes that his actions will inspire others to do the same. Based on the information in this quote, a different time of barter and trade is also represented. Noah is saying that if they have money to pay him for his work, that is "cool", if not that is still okay we can make

an exchange for something else, which I feel is not common nowadays. In current times, I see that people are more about monetary exchange.

Several participants stated that they have family land assignments that they share with family members. They stated that the family uses the land for agriculture, farming, or cattle grazing. One other individual stated he purchased one acre of land in which to build a house on, however at this point it lays undeveloped. Khloe, 45, stated that she recently learned she had land in Taos Pueblo. She had recently been contacted by the Pueblo and informed that she had land. As a non-resident in Taos, Khloe commutes to Taos on a daily basis for work. She is married to a non-tribal member and resides off tribal lands. She was asked to take on her current position and was happy to come back and work for the tribe. Previously, she had been gone for over 15 years from Taos Pueblo. Upon her return she decided to take the position but keep her residence off tribal lands. When she found out that she had land, she explained that she had asked herself, “What does this mean?” In her eyes it was a big step to fully return home after 15 years, so taking the position and doing the daily commute was okay with her because she was not completely ready to make a complete return. When she found out she had land, she no longer was able to use the reason of “I don’t have land to build a house on” anymore. So, she felt like since she had land, it meant, she *had* to fully return. And she questions this because she is still not sure if she is ready for the “complete” return to Taos Pueblo. Because Khloe lives off of tribal land, she relayed that she has a sense of freedom, privacy and distance from other Taos Pueblo Community members.

Do we have an issue with Brain Drain?

During the interview process I chose to openly ask all interview participants if they thought that Taos Pueblo had an issue with Brain Drain. The answers were mixed, some individuals felt that Taos Pueblo did, others said that the Pueblo did not and others felt that the Pueblo had an even pattern of people who left and people that returned. An interesting view that came up during the interviews was this notion of “connection”. Most of the individuals who felt that we did have a Brain Drain problem were participants from the Brain Circulation category.

Alexa Sandoval (BD), 28, feels that Taos Pueblo does have an issue with Brain Drain. She felt that many of her classmates who had PhD’s or Masters degrees were living in other cities or states and she was curious as to how we could bring them back to Taos Pueblo. Furthermore, Jacob Archuleta (BC), 24, strongly feels that Taos Pueblo has an issue with Brain Drain. Jacob describes a personal experience that he went through while he was a tribal employee. This could explain why he believes that Taos Pueblo has issues with Brain Drain. Jacob describes his experience here:

I don’t know, it’s kind of saddening that most job applications only ask for a high school diploma, or graduate, or a GED, and nothing more. So, it kind of strays me away from that. I’m better than this. Why should I lower myself to a lower pay grade because of this? I didn’t go five years to make \$12 an hour.

Jacob stated that Taos Pueblo does have an issue with Brain Drain and he feels this is because individuals like himself tell other tribal members about their personal experiences and this influences others not to return. Jacob explains here why he thinks Taos Pueblo has an issue with Brain Drain:

“Yes. I think there are kids out there that just don’t want to be back here. I know a few that have come back from getting their education. But I think some of the old.... some of the ones that are smart enough realize that there’s nothing here for them. They may not go far, they stay in New Mexico, but I think they’re aspiring to do more than just.... I’ve talked with a few, and some that are still getting their education. They are like “ahhhh, I’m not coming back.” They already made up their mind. They may not have been through everything that some of the guys that have been here long, trying to figure things out. But they have their mind set. I think there’s a trickle-down effect. They hear it from us, and they just don’t want to be a part of that. They don’t even want to go through the hardship of trying to find something, or even look, because they hear from everybody that there’s nothing here.”

Ethan Lucero (BC), 43, also felt that Taos Pueblo deals with Brain Drain because individuals like himself are not utilized when they return home. As a tribal member, he wanted to give back to the tribe, so he met with tribal administration and he was never asked to work for the tribe. Similarly, Jaxon Romero (BC), 40, believes that Taos Pueblo Brain Drain occurs due to the lack of employment opportunities that are available to tribal members. Jaxon describes his viewpoint here:

“Yes, I do. Just because of the lack of opportunities here at the Pueblo. Not only at the Pueblo but in Taos as a whole. Just because there's no jobs. What I see here at the Pueblo is that a lot of the high paying jobs are being held by people who have been in the system, who've been working here for 20-30 years. It's really an aging workforce that really needs to kind of step aside in my view and let other people come in. But I see that as really a factor in brain drain. Is that there’s no job opportunities here for tribal members who are educated. And want to come and work for the tribe but there's no opportunities for them.”

Eventually, because Ethan was not utilized by the tribe upon his return, he among others decided to create his own business where he could utilize his skills and education. Furthermore, Khloe Duran (BC), 45, explains her thoughts on the causes of Brain Drain. She explains that Brain Drain is determined by the “support” and “release” and “blessings” that one receives when they choose to leave home. Khloe describes her belief here:

“So, like I said, for people from here – I guess it’s in the unique way that they did leave. That they left with blessing, and that they left positive, and they left supported? Then they know, and then the community has to let them go. You know? It gave them their blessing, like “Go out, put us on the map. Just don’t forget where you came from.” You know what I mean? That’s a positive thing, that’s healthy because that’s a two-way communication, meaning they left with the blessing, they left taking their proud heritage with them, and wherever they’re going to be they’re going to know Taos. And then on the community side, they’re going to now say “We’re extending ourselves out.” So, there’s still that connection, it was never broken, there’s still that connection... But sometimes it’s not about the surface things, it’s about what your connection is. And deep down, there was still a connection here. Somebody just had to come out and get it. So, when [name of tribal employee] did that, I felt like “Wow! There is a chance.” In my heart, I never left this place, I really didn’t. But physically I had to leave it. So, when somebody reaches out to you, and they make that invitation, and they let you know, “Hey, we need you,” that pulls on the heartstrings more than anything. So, I did, I left a good-paying job, ideal location, family time, everything, to come back. So, I think brain drain happens because we assume that they don’t want to be connected – meaning the ones that left – or sometimes we get jealous. It’s the lobster mentality. The lobster mentality is you have lobsters in there, and its boiling water, somebody’s getting out and what do we do? We pull them back in: “You’re stuck with us.” How is that going to help any community, much less ours?? So, there is brain drain. But I think if we have a healthy connection of release, I think we would never lose anybody. I really don’t think so. It’s when we have that other connection, whether it’s through pride or bitterness or whatever, that we feel “No,” and we’re angry that they left. Then how would it have been if they hadn’t left? So yes, there is brain drain.”

On the contrary, Jayden Mondragon (BD), 34, felt that Taos Pueblo did not have a Brain Drain issue. His stance was based on the belief that people ultimately want to be in Taos Pueblo and they will do whatever is necessary to be in Taos Pueblo. Here is Jayden’s point of view:

“Shoot. Within my generation, not really. Seems like a lot of us know what we’re up against, and a lot of us do want to come back. Especially those of us that have family members. We have family that’s involved. Seems like if you have that base, it’s easier. It makes you want to come back, to get that education and come back to contribute and to make Taos Pueblo a better way. That might take a little bit of compromise and just finding the work. Like with myself. I have my

passions and I know I'm going to fulfill those passions. But I have to figure out how I can make my passions work and still be able to have my base as Taos Pueblo, because that's where it's all at."

Carter Reyna (BD), 37 and Logan Trujillo (BD), 56, had similar points of view on Brain Drain. Both felt that that many tribal members never left Taos Pueblo, especially their classmates. Logan stated that, "First off, you consider that the vast majority of people don't go anywhere. If they do, they come back real fast. So, then it's the people who go on for education, or for employment, are almost the outliers. So, I don't know. To be part of the brain drain, you actually have to leave." Therefore, these two individuals felt that not many tribal members left to pursue higher education, in the first place. Another individual, Alexander Mirabal (BD), 41, stated that he didn't feel that people chose to leave Taos Pueblo for education or employment opportunities but had to leave for other reasons, such as incarceration.

Moreover, other participants felt that Taos Pueblo had a "50/50" pattern of migration. They felt that the number of people that left Taos Pueblo was equivalent to the amount of people that return to Taos Pueblo. Linnett Gomez (BC), 25, explains her point of view:

"In my experience, I can say that a lot of my classmates are 50/50 in that some of them have persevered with their education. I'm talking about Taos kids from the Pueblo. So, one of them being Aria Martinez, how she got her degree. She works in Albuquerque. So, I see people like that, who have earned their degrees but stay away. But then I also see people like Noah Suazo, who still tries to be involved in our community as much as he can with his degree. So, it's kind of hard to say. I feel that the biggest issue is the fact that the employment opportunity isn't what it needs to be, to sustain the people who come back with degrees. I came back because I wanted to integrate in some way, and I figured I'm going to do whichever avenue it takes. So that's why I took Court Clerk because I thought it was going to be law for me. But being in that environment, I learned a lot about

myself, in that I absorb the energy in the environment around me, and I was going home very sad a lot, and very emotionally drained every day, like “I can’t deal with this in the community.” It’s really hard to take that all in and see people who I know that didn’t have...it’s just a lot to know. It was very close, too close. But I don’t see a lot of people my age right now, with degrees, working either in or for our community, or at least some type of partnership with our community.”

Additionally, Faith Jiron (BD), 64, also felt that Taos Pueblo had a 50/50 pattern of migration. However, she explains, that people are not returning due to a lack of housing. Faith stated, “I feel like it’s maybe half and half. There are people like me who are educated but there are different things holding them where they are. But they DO want to go home, for the most part. Or they don’t have land; or they don’t have the house; or they don’t have – you know? There are those kinds of challenges. Because when you’re gone, your other family takes over your stuff, and stuff like that happens a lot. So, then they don’t have anywhere to go to.”

Lastly, Zoey Bernal (BD), 57, had a slightly different point of view on Brain Drain. She feels that Brain Drain is dependent upon your occupation, your education and your personal reputation in Taos Pueblo. Zoey explains her belief here:

“I think it depends on the occupation. I think if you have a profession or occupation like mine where you’re an educator you can probably find a way to work somewhere to be useful to somebody some way or like Mason, my [friend] Mason Cordova he’s a lawyer and now he’s a judge. I think it’s good. I think it depends on how much education you have, the more education and skills you have and if you know you have a good record. Clean record not just criminal but also have a good reputation at Taos Pueblo, you’re not one of those who’s like doing bad things and stuff. Whatever bad means. I think, you know, it’s easier for you to go home. The challenges I see for people or for people who don’t have a skill set, that can be transferable to different places. I think if you’re working class, you could probably get a job in town but you have to work in town or you can maybe get a job at the Pueblo but that is by funding I notice like they like their grants like we had all those guys working on the renovation and then that grant ended and then all of a sudden all those guys are unemployed and that really

hurts me you know see that. So, I think it depends on a lot on the village and if we can sustain them because if they don't work at the Pueblo then they have to work in town as you know the race relations in town are bad. I don't know how many people want to hire native people from the Pueblo, without even knowing who we are they already have a stereotype of who we are as a people. So, I think if we were self-sustaining, if we had a really strong infrastructure, people would go home and say, I can be a plumber, I can be a welder, I can do high way maintenance and I can do stuff.”

Brain Drain Participants Study Results

Brain Drain participants stated that they currently reside in the following states: New Mexico, Oregon and Oklahoma. Most of the participants stated that they return to Taos Pueblo, “All the time”. Two of the nine said they return, “Sometimes” and one stated they return, “Every Once in A While”. The questionnaire asked participants if they were planning to eventually return home. Seven of the nine participants said, “Yes”. The two individuals who didn’t respond to this question, gave the following responses to this question. One person stated that they return fairly often, so she feels like she has already made her return. The other individual is older and is content living outside of Taos Pueblo. She is interested in possibly coming back one day but feels that housing and employment would be an issue. When participants were asked when the last time they were in Taos Pueblo was, they stated the following: five participants said, “a few days ago”, two participants said, “a few weeks ago” and two participants said, “a few months ago.” The questionnaire posed the question, “What would it take for you to return to Taos Pueblo?” Participants stated that they would need employment opportunities in their specific field of expertise, housing, a job that pays well, consistent policies and procedures to be followed by all employees in Tribal Government. Furthermore, participants want policies to be created for the following issues: fire at will, sexism and

nepotism. Jacob Archuleta, 24, describes his experience with nepotism in Taos Pueblo in this excerpt:

“But we’ve seen several instances where jobs aren’t prioritized toward the educated. I remember there was an incident with [tribal employee name], that we kind of had front-row seats for, because he wasn’t educated far enough in his Master’s program, and I think it was the Acting Lieutenant or Governor or something that year tried to sneak his niece into that spot? [employees name] ended up...he kept his job, but that’s just an instance of “what the hell??! Why?” Just so she can have a job? He’s been here for years and no one’s ever questioned him. Now all of a sudden this is coming up? So, there’s that fear that you’re just going to be replaced by someone, “Oh, my niece just graduated college, or high school, and she needs a job, she’s coming for yours.” You know?”

Moreover, the questionnaire inquired as to whether or not participants wanted to work in Taos Pueblo. Six of the participants stated they wanted to work for Taos Pueblo, two participants said, “No” and one person said, “Maybe”. There were a few individuals who said that they were already working as consultants to the tribe or participating in volunteer work of some kind. Another individual stated that she wanted to return home and work for the tribe so her son could be around her family and cultural ways. One of the senior participants, Faith Jiron, 64, stated that she wanted to work for the tribe for the following reason, “I have professional work experience to assist in education.” Another participation who was also interested in Taos Pueblo education stated the following:

“I would like to work in the education department at Taos Pueblo in order to make the school better, to advocate for better education, to raise money and find grants for remodeling the school and most importantly to take over our own school so that we can teach our own history, our language, and our ways of life to our kids. I would also want to work to create programs and opportunities, all it takes is someone who is willing to do the work and who knows the community. Another thing I would say is that when there are job opportunities that open up, they don't try to get the word out to people who are qualified and may live elsewhere, like if I knew the education director position was open I would have applied and just moved back right then!”

Alexa Sandoval, 28, expressed the following, “I am interested because I feel like it is what I am supposed to do, I have been told getting educated and returning home was the right thing to do since Taos Day School years. I want to be able to participate and get traditional holidays off and not miss out on pay to carry on what is so important.” The two individuals who didn’t have an interest in working for the Pueblo stated that they didn’t want to work for the Pueblo because they were, “too closely related” to many of the people whom they had to work with or for. However, this individual was interested in volunteering his time to the tribe. Carter Reyna, 37, stated, “I find my current job rewarding and challenging. I want to become an expert in my field.” Based on his answer, we can presume that he feels that working for the tribe will not challenge him or provide the opportunity for him to learn more in his chosen field of expertise.

Furthermore, the questionnaire asked participants what their reason was for not living in Taos Pueblo. They gave the following reasons: they were already living and working in places outside of Taos Pueblo, relocated to another state for employment opportunity, there are no economic/professional opportunities in Taos Pueblo, moved to another state because of spouse, current job requires a lot of travel, life partner doesn’t want to live in Taos Pueblo, no available housing options, cannot find adequate pay for my education and area of interest and lastly, Taos Pueblo is not a place for interracial relationship. Zoey Bernal, Psychologist, 57, describes her difficulties here in choosing to be in an interracial marriage:

I’ve heard people make remarks about who I married. That’s a whole different thing, “Oh she’s married to a white guy.” It’s like, well okay, you know, just let it go. You know, to me, he’s a very good man. And, I get angry about that. Because

sometimes like people will say something, oh, you know, what we weren't good enough for you? or something and I'm just thinking actually yeah you used to make fun of me when I was like a teenager. I think to myself, you don't realize how much [name of husband] supports this Pueblo indirectly through me. He's never ever said, don't [participate in cultural doing], don't go to the Pueblo, don't walk to Blue Lake. I mean he's been nothing but supportive by buying me wood, knowing that he can't go into the village at certain times and he respects that. And it kind of angers me that some people who don't know him and make that judgment about him and then about me and I just think to myself that's your issue. You know, I'm good.

Likewise, Noah Suazo, Conservation Scientist, 28, feels that it is difficult to have an interracial relationship in Taos Pueblo and on top of that having interracial children, he expresses his frustrations in the following excerpt:

Even the whole thing about having a mixed child is something where there are real traditionalists around here who think you should have a kid with somebody who's from around here to continue that blood line and all that stuff. So, it's very hard to get your significant other the support that's necessary from the community because they're not always open arms if they're not a Native person. So that can be difficult too. People don't want to deal with the shit of "Well, I'm dating a white girl, or a black girl, or whatever," and people are scared because of the old traditional community.

During the interview process I asked, Alexa Sandoval, Nurse, 28, if she had land to build a house on in Taos Pueblo. She said that her and her siblings had land in Taos however, she was not sure if she would want to live in Taos because she was dating a non-Native person. Grounded on stories she had heard and based on the experience that she had witnessed her brother and sister-in-law (Native American woman from another tribe) go through, she provided the following answer:

But still, it was just like – and you hear about it all the time, and the perception is that you can't live there. So even my boyfriend's parents were like "Oh, [boyfriend's name] can't live in the Pueblo because they don't like it when non-Native people live on the reservation." So even though I know a lot of people who

aren't from the Pueblo live on the reservation, it's still – and I think there's not a lot of rights. I think there is a perception well, I don't even know if it's perception or not because I don't know what the rules really are. But there is a perception that a person who lives there who is not Native doesn't have as many rights as a regular Native would.

Alexa went on to describe some of the issues that her older brother and his wife had experienced while living in Taos Pueblo. Even though her sister-in-law is a Native woman, she was still treated badly because she was not from Taos Pueblo. Therefore, Alexa does not feel comfortable bringing her non-native boyfriend to Taos Pueblo. This has deeply impacted her decision to move back to Taos Pueblo. Moreover, Linnet Gomez, Public Relations Specialist, 25 also stated that she had experienced “tribe-on-tribe” discrimination growing up in Taos Pueblo. She is half Taos and half [another tribal nation]. She stated that her and her siblings were constantly compared to others because of the perception that their other tribe was wealthy and provided them with considerable amounts of money. However, this was not the case.

When tribal members leave to obtain higher education, their chances of dating and marrying someone of another race is highly likely. Sadly, these few study participants have had to deal with these kinds of issues. It is unbeknownst to me exactly why tribal members treat interracial and intertribal relations in this way.

Interracial and intertribal marriages have been taking place in Taos Pueblo for ages. The belief of this ever ending is impractical. Additionally, when interracial or intertribal children are born, the parents have to deal with blood quantum issues and enrollment policies, which is a whole other story.

What are the root cause of Brain Drain?

During the interview process I asked participants what they thought were the main reasons for tribal members leaving or not wanting to be in Taos Pueblo. Answers included a wide range of influences and factors in areas such as Economic Stability, Physical Environment, Education, Community and Social Context.

Economic Stability

Almost all of the participants indicated that Taos Pueblo lacks employment opportunities for educated tribal members and if you get hired in Taos Pueblo you will most likely will not be paid what your education is worth or you will be placed in a “menial position”. The challenge of not having economic stability in one’s life causes much frustration and dissatisfaction with the environment in which they find themselves in. Jacob Archuleta, 24, describes his frustration in the following:

“Yeah. For me, I keep telling myself I want to get out of Taos, but I keep finding myself saying, “Ohhh, I’ll just give it another year, give it another year.” I don’t want to hold myself back because at this point in my life I’m thinking I should have at least something permanent. That way I can start looking toward a better future, not just for me. If I want to start thinking about having a family, or something like that. Taos just doesn’t offer any of that, not even the town. I applied up there and didn’t hear back from anything. But I applied in Colorado and I’ve been hearing – I’ve at least been getting callbacks, you now? “Hey, you’re a great candidate, but we don’t have any positions,” or no funding, or anything like that. At least I’m getting callbacks for that. That’s a level of professionalism that I respect. I expect that from a job, to at least say you don’t have a job. That way you can stop putting the effort forward, you know?”

Despite the frustration with either working for the tribe or not find a job in Taos, educated participants have been able to rely on their education and skills to create entrepreneurship opportunities for themselves. Jayden Mondragon, 34, took it upon

himself to begin a business where he could utilize his skills. He stated the following, “I finally came up with just doing all these different businesses and creating web content for their sites, video content for their sites. So, I started getting all these great ideas on different businesses, what I could do for them. I started looking at all their websites and how I could enhance them.”

Furthermore, Ethan Lucero, 43, explained in his interview that he had made numerous efforts to speak to tribal leadership to inform them of his skills and education, however none of the yearly administrations took the initiative to utilize him. So, after some time, he decided to creation his own business. Ethan decided to start a Range Management business for himself. By creating his own business it has lead to other opportunities for him. He is now getting paid to teach ag business classes to Natives in Gallup, Acoma, Ysleta del Sur and Espanola. From his point of view, since the tribe will not allow him to “give back” to the community, he feels that this is a way for him to give back to the Natives and other ranchers. Additionally this individual currently works for famous golfer Notah Begay, by purchasing Bison for Mr. Begay’s Commodity Food Program.

Physical Environment-Housing

Many participants stated that they would need a house when they returned home. This desire does not just stem from a need for modern day housing but also the need for a traditional home in the village. Individuals either commute to Taos if they work for the tribe or have to live with family, in single-family homes. Alexander Mirabal, 41, stated that maybe tribal members “were already planning to go back they just didn’t have a place to

stay.” Currently the Taos Pueblo Housing Office provides classes for financial training for tribal members who are interested in purchasing a home. Aria Martinez, 26, describes her experience here with trying to obtain information from the Taos Pueblo Housing Office:

“Oh, I was going to say, I went to the Housing Department and my dad was telling me that you can build your own house on your land. So I went to one of the trainings, the Financial training? Because you have to go to those in order to be in the program. So then she got my information and they told me to come back in May 18 and that’s when the loan stuff was going to be there. So, she never followed up with me, she never sent me any information. I didn’t email her either. But she said she would email me stuff and then she never did, so I just never went back. But that makes me nervous. There’s no follow-up, there’s nothing. I was thinking about getting an \$80,000 loan for a house and nobody is giving me any information?? I was like “I’m not doing it through them.” And that makes it harder on me, too. Now I have to think about all the things I have to do to build a house. I was scared in the first place to get a loan that big, and now that I have to work through people who aren’t going to follow up with me or help me out?? I don’t want to do it. That was the Housing Director. She just never contacted me again. That’s a huge problem, I think. For those people who are trying to go through the Housing Department, and that happens? They’re not going to want to come back then... I’m so young, I don’t know anything about housing loans or stuff like that. I just want to figure out how to build my own house and not have to go through anybody. Why do we have a Housing Department if they aren’t going to help anybody?”

Given the housing shortage on Taos Pueblo tribal lands, tribal members often find themselves resorting to whatever is available. Jacob Archuleta currently lives in an old family house on the reservation next to his uncle. The house is primarily used for most tribal or traditional events. Other individuals find that they have to live in the Town of Taos where they have to pay a considerate amount of money for rent.

Education

Some of the study participants were concerned with how the community viewed western education. To some it appeared that the community valued traditional education

over western education. This could be because the community is very conservative and the traditional way of life is of utmost importance to the community as a whole. Linnett Gomez, Public Relations Specialist, 25, explains here that she feels that working for an outside entity, she is valued as an educated employee, she stated the following, “Where I’m at right now, in an outside entity, working for my community but really working for someone else, I do feel a lot more valued. And it shows in a lot of different ways. Not just with the monetary compensation, but also with the integrity of it all. I don’t see education valued in our community as much as it needs to be valued. So that’s how I feel about it, to be honest.” Jacob Archuleta, Technical Writer, 24, also felt that value wasn’t placed on educated tribal members. Jacob had hopes of coming home and doing some work on policy management and tribal government. But no one hired him. He indicated that he applied for several jobs and he never received a call back.

Overall, coming home and being home may not really be what we expected. Noah Suazo, Conservation Scientist, 28, explains what educated tribal members face upon their return:

“Not because the traditional life is favored over education. It’s more like traditional life is so dominant here that education isn’t something that’s seen as a really strong need. Yeah, we need people to be educated and come back and work in these positions that are higher, to be able to manage our tribe. But at the same time, when those people come back, they are subject to nepotism and they don’t get the job. Or they aren’t given what they’re worth, or what they deserve, or what their experience reflects because there’s also this feeling of “Come on! Come work for your tribe.” Like it’s obligatory, you know what I mean? That’s not cool because that makes you feel like you’re really doing something good, but then your community service doesn’t put that food on your table. You know? Yeah, Taos is very traditional, and I appreciate that. This is one of the few places in the world that I’ve been so far that is like that. But it does have its downfalls, too, especially when it comes to economic development. But economic development, education, and those things, go hand in hand. Our tribe will never be in the

driver's seat until we get our own people who are educated in those top positions, running things. Otherwise we have to outsource those jobs to people who are qualified. Then it's kind of crazy, like I was talking about earlier, that people are valued and rated on their degrees and their experience, not valued and rated on whether or not they have the values of the tribe or of people, of life, or whatever. I know that's kind of ambiguous, but you're either a mercenary for work and that's what you do and you're making money for yourself, or you're a community member that wants to live and exist without having this crazy, I call it "savior syndrome." where you want to go out and you want to change the world. I'm like, whatever. That's not me, but everybody has been conditioned or brainwashed to do it, to leave your mark on the world, and change the world.

Community and Social Context

Study participants spoke about how they were treated when they decided to return home or how they have been treated in the past with has led to them choosing not to be in Taos Pueblo. Several participants expressed a need for social support to learn the language, participate in cultural doings, and difficulties that individuals encounter when they try to incorporate themselves back into the Taos Pueblo community. Individuals who have been away from Taos Pueblo for several years often times find it hard to reconnect with the traditional lifestyle of the Taos Pueblo community.

Ava Concha, Agronomist, 46, describes her experience here when she was trying to learn the language and put her son through the male initiation process.

"He had 2 years before he went in. So, I had to drive down here every weekend, make an effort to bring my kids home because (a) they didn't grow up here, and (b) was trying to learn the language, try to seek out relatives that knew the language, because at the time, my [uncle] who now lives here, lived in Arizona. So, he didn't live here, and I didn't really grow up here so I didn't really know many of my relatives, and a lot of them were cold towards us. They were like "Oh hey, nice to see you," and then after I started showing up around more, they were like "You want something from me, no thank you." They weren't interested, you know? So actually, I learned a lot from my boyfriend at the time and his family. They were very

welcoming, and nice to us, and spoke to us. So, we learned little things like our numbers, colors, body parts, things that he could try to utilize when he went into the kiva.”

Many participants who are new to cultural doings often seek social support to help them get acquainted with traditional protocol, they sometimes seek out social support from family or friends. In rare cases, individuals may return to Taos Pueblo with no cultural connections. For example, Khloe Duran, Therapist, 45, explained that she had been gone for almost 24 years before she decided to return to Taos Pueblo. When asked if she participated in cultural activities, this was her response, “Well, I don’t, and it’s not because I don’t want to. It’s just that I’ve been gone so long and I don’t feel I have the support to ask anybody. I wouldn’t even know who to ask to help me get ready.”

Furthermore, Alexander Mirabal, American History Teacher, 41, goes on to expound upon his experience being at home:

“There is a little fear of the unknown, I guess, of the future and what it would mean to return home, I’ve spent so much time away. So, I’m not too sure. Even when I was there, it felt awkward at times because you get chewed out for not understanding specifically what we were being told or we would be made fun of for doing the wrong thing. But the thing was I understood enough to realize that everybody was being picked on. If it wasn’t the language, then it was something dumb like rumors that were going around, or it might have been that their hair was funky or maybe that they were too prideful...for a time period I could only understand the language part, part of the mentality of the environment is the everyone gets torn up from time to time.”

It is apparent that some of our tribal members have faced disconcerting issues when it comes down to cultural integration. It was interesting to observe Alexander speak about how he was treated while participating in cultural doings. At first, he seemed like he was distraught about how individuals were being treated for not understanding the language

or what to do during cultural activities but then states that this kind of behavior is “normal” and that everyone gets “torn up from time to time”. If this is the norm, how can an individual who has not been home for years be prepared for this kind of particular treatment and how can they be expected them to adjust to this environment?

Critical to understand is that migration is not new to Taos Pueblo. In addition to a number of contemporary processes since World War II that saw the migration of males away from the Pueblos and other American Indian communities (Romero, 2003), there have been concerted efforts to assimilate Indigenous peoples in the U.S. American Indians were subjected to the federal Indian policies of the boarding school era from the 1800s all the way up to the Federal Indian Relocation Act in the 1950s. Makayla Lujan, 31, speaks to the more contemporary effects of the “Indian Assimilation Process,” and how that has impacted some Taos Pueblo people when they try to reintegrate themselves back onto the community:

“But it really made me understand where my uncles were coming from because before that I was like their just being lazy, like you don’t want to come home and work hard. But it really made me have a better understanding as to why it would be so hard to go back into your communities. And then when I got into IAIA and learning about the assimilation process and how it worked and realizing how... what Indian Centers really are, is re-associating yourself with a community because there isn't that sense of community going back home. How do you relate when you've lived in like, concrete and buses, you know, and you're just trying to work to eat and to live. And then you go home and then all of a sudden you have to go to the kiva or you've got all these other cultural responsibilities on top of just trying to eat. You know it's like we're trying to live and survive and take care of your family where that's all you've been taught. And because you've been absorbed in that way of life there's always something that you get back, you get back and it's the tangible and tangible deal that you get back. Tangible feedback you get back a paycheck you get a house back, you pay for your car, whereas you come home and spiritually, depending on how that assimilation process worked on that person. You may not feel like you're getting anything back. You're working your ass off which we do as Indian people or being from home. We do work hard. But I feel fulfilled because I know spiritually

that, that's where I belong, it's a sense of belonging. But for someone who's been in an urban setting for so long that may not be the same feeling that they have."

During the interview process with Aria Martinez, Assistant Principle, 26, I asked her, "What do you think are some of the reasons why people leave and don't come back? What do you think some of the reasons are?" She stated, "I think the #1 thing is if they're not initiated, they don't feel like they belong there." I further clarified if she meant for men or women and she went on to describe the following:

"I think for men it's more so. But for women who leave, especially if they're not initiated, probably they're treated as like...with all the women's rights movements and stuff going on, you don't understand your role if you're not initiated. And you're not taught, you don't understand it. So, they feel like they're oppressed there. That's what I think. If women who leave, or who have a bad view of our religion, or stuff like that, they just don't understand it, I feel. But yeah, for men, I feel it's initiation because they are ridiculed for not being initiated, for not participating. And it's so sad because it's not their fault, it's their parents who didn't initiate them. So how do we fix that? Why are you making fun of them? That's my boyfriend, he's not initiated, so he doesn't feel like he belongs there, and that's why he doesn't want to move home. And there are family problems too, but it's frustrating. "Why are you making fun of them, that they're not initiated?" It's not their fault. You're just making him never want to be a part of his religion. And he has these instincts, he wants to know, and he wants to be a part of it. He said "But they've fun of me my entire life. Why should I go back? Why should I get initiated? They look down on me." And it's so sad."

In that same line of thinking, Faith Jiron, Operations Manager, 64, stated that she was never initiated in Taos Pueblo and if she had been, that might have kept her in Taos Pueblo. She describes her feelings in the following:

"My allegiance is always to Taos, I've always represented well. I don't feel a disconnect. I just prefer not to.... Maybe it's about not having a real place there. Because my mom was from a difference village, I don't speak Taos, I don't have cultural obligations because I was never initiated. So, if those things had happened, especially the language and the initiation, maybe that might have kept

me there. But I didn't. So that's probably a really bottom-line one. I didn't have those ties. My brother speaks Taos, or he was raised by his godparents."

The town of Taos borders Taos Pueblo lands. There has always been an issue with racial tensions for years. The senior participants of this study had much to say about different racial experiences they had while attending school in the town of Taos.

Fortunately, these experiences didn't deter them from their education journeys. Faith describes a life changing event that took place while she was in the 3rd grade:

"Third grade I had this Hispanic nun, and I don't know what I did, but there was 3rd grade and 4th grade in the same class, and they were all Hispanic kids or Anglo kids – and me. I don't know what I did, but I wasn't one to act up, you know? But she pointed at me and said, "You stupid Indio!" Just like that. When people talk about your life being shaped, when did it get shaped? It was really that, because first of all, she was a teacher; second of all, she was a nun, and she was an adult. I was a child. So I kind of – I was shocked. At the time, they had desks that you could put your books inside the desk, and I tried to force my head as far as I could in there, to cry. The kids laughed and everything. So I told my brother, he was in the high school at the time, and we used to walk home. So I told him and he told my parents, and they went down to see the priest and the nuns. They didn't take me with them, but the nuns denied it happened. They promised that they would really pay more attention to me, or whatever. So, I stayed 3rd grade and 4th grade. Mom was the kind that we all had homework, and we had spelling tests, and all that kind of stuff. She noticed that my grades were not improving, they were always C's, no matter what. C's in 4th grade. So, she decided in 5th grade to take me out of there because she was concerned that I would get complacent and not go anywhere academically because I was there. So, she put me into public school, but she researched the teachers in the public school and found the best teacher, who taught all the "smart" kids. She talked with this teacher, told her what happened, and she put me in there to save my education, to save me."

Similarly, Zoey Bernal, Psychologist, 57, describes what she experienced while attending Taos High School:

"But there was a lot of racism, a lot of racism, as you know, at the time I was educated was during a time of a lot of racial turmoil. So, the civil rights movement was relatively new. The Vietnam War was ending and American

Indian Movement and American Indian activism was on the rise. So of course we were engaged in our own major struggle to get back Blue Lake. So, all of those things, I'm convinced really shaped who I am. Because I kind of grew up really aware of things and you can't help but be aware. My mom was pretty active in a lot of things as well. So, there was a lot of racism in town like we would go to school and people would call you a "fucking indio", they would cuss you out in Spanish."

Likewise, Mason Cordova, Professional Counselor, 61, also experienced a life-changing moment while attending Taos High School:

"But the life-changing episode for me was in high school. I was on the yearbook staff, and my yearbook sponsor in my junior year sat me aside and said, "David, you are really smart and I think you can go to any college you want to go to. I did my graduate work in education at Stanford, and you could do this." So that was my junior year, and she left after my junior year. I was yearbook editor my senior year. And you now, senior year you start thinking about "what am I going to do?" And I thought about what she told me, encouraged me to do that. I started on my own looking up the school, Stanford itself. I went to my high school senior counselor to ask him for any brochures, pamphlets, anything he had on Stanford. And he told me that I really shouldn't think about that, that I really should focus on a vocational school. I said, "Well, Mr. So-and-So, have you looked at my transcript? Do you know what classes I'm taking? Why would you say that?" He just blew it off. So, I took it upon myself to write the school, get all the information I needed to see whether that was a place I wanted to go to."

After years and years of educational attainment, Zoey tried to work for Taos Municipal School, she describes her experience in the following excerpt:

"I tried to go back to Taos to get a job at the high school. I went to Taos Municipal School and I had my application and this Hispanic woman says, "Well there's no openings, she said mija there's no openings" and I said, "well do you keep these on file. She said yeah we can keep it on file, are you certified. I said yeah, I'm certified, I got my papers here. She said ok, well I'll take them. And she was really, just like she didn't care, you know. I'm just thinking to myself you have a Native woman from the Pueblo, you know, you should be excited. So, I never heard from them, no phone calls, nothing from Taos Municipal Schools."

Racism in Taos Pueblo is still evident in the town of Taos. Not many tribal members work in the Town of Taos. If they do, they are occupying an entry level or lower-level position within a business.

Moreover, during my interview with Jacob Archuleta, Technical Writer, 24, I asked him what needed to change for tribal members to come home, he exclaimed politics! He also mentioned that Taos Pueblo has an issue with nepotism. He stated the following, “The way I see it is, you can apply for whatever job you’re qualified for, but their relative that they’re closest to, or their friends, are going to get the job.”

Furthermore, Noah Suazo, 28, expressed similar feelings about nepotism in the Taos Pueblo Community. Noah stated that Taos Pueblo has limited employee opportunities and those jobs that are available, people have already called “dibs” on them. Noah describes his viewpoint in the following way:

“I think nepotism is a huge thing that brings people back or keeps people away. It could go either way. Also, I feel when there is a need for a specialist, like an educated person who is from our community and there is a job opening, they come back and then they’re not treated like how they’ve experienced things in the world. We have a whole unique different way of running things here. There’s no standards, no protocols. There IS, but they are unique to THIS area, right here, and a lot of those can be amended or on a case-to-case basis, which is fuckin’ crazy too. And that could be nepotism coming in, or just favoritism, or all of the above. There’s a lot of politics that you have to deal with if you do get into a top position here. You have to be somebody, they have to know you, they have to know your family, you have to know something of our way and our language. All of that ties into who gets top jobs here. For a lot of people who are part of the brain drain, it’s because they don’t want to have to deal with all that shit because it’s so much harder to be a part of the community, and work with other people, and have those kinds of things expected of you besides what your specialty is, and your education for your job. There’s all these other added things that people don’t want to do and I don’t think they come from either. Plus it’s very intimidating if you’ve been away for a while and you have to come back and get back into the swing of things. If you don’t have an in, or you don’t have somebody who is really strong and willing to help and guide you, it’s almost impossible.”

Lastly, tribal members choose not to work and live in Taos Pueblo because of traumatic social issues. Having a “rough upbringing” was a prominent theme among my participants. Many of them spoke about growing up in uncontrollable circumstances that stemmed from different types of social issues. Many of the participants dealt with varying kinds of abuse. Others spoke of drugs addiction and alcohol abuse at young ages. Some participants dealt with bullying while in high school from their peers who were native and non-native. The bullying resulted from the fact that many of these individuals were different from their native peers in areas such as their personal interests and educational ambition. All of the participants used their rough upbringing as motivation to obtain a better life. This inspired many of them to pursue higher education.

What will it take for people to Return to Taos Pueblo?

Throughout the interview process, I asked all participants what they thought we needed to do to motivate our educated tribal members to move back to Taos Pueblo. As expected the answers corresponded to the causes of Brain Drain in the areas of Economic Stability, Physical Environment, Education, Community and Social Context.

Economic Stability

Alexa Sandoval, Nurse, 28, I think that less restrictions from the tribal government. I think that it would be nice if there was an environment of opportunity that didn't involve the tribe being as involved as I perceive it to be, and all these other agencies and initiatives and stuff. The tribe is IN there and I want to run – for me, I'd like to run a business, I'd like to run some kind of health program or something without tribal government involvement. Let people work and create something. And let's have

transparency too. If you're going to tax me and my business, I want to know what's happening with that money. So, for me, I'd like to see – not no restrictions, but I just want people to be able to see entrepreneurship as an opportunity, as something that's doable for them and their families, instead of having to come back and wait for the tribe to think of something to do with me, with the federal block grant. Additionally, Jaxon Romero, Marketing Manager, 40, stated that returning educated tribal members need “good paying jobs”. He mentioned that the cost of living in Taos was very high, especially if a tribal member has to live in town.

Physical Environment

Participants felt that we lacked certain infrastructure such as housing, industry, and specific services such as an assisted living center. Makayla Lujan, Lawyer, 31, felt very strongly about the housing issues in Taos Pueblo, she stated the following, “No one can really live in town. And I think that's a huge one is housing. We have multiple generations already living in homes. How do you expect someone to come home, where there's already 10 people living in a HUD house? So, I think that's huge. And I think we have to value our people where, we have housing that's available to them that's affordable. But it's not like cheap and rundown or giving them the scraps.” Moreover, Zoey Bernal mentioned a study that she came across that was done on Taos Pueblo in regards to agriculture. The study stated that Taos Pueblo is an optimal place to grow blueberries, raspberries and choke cherries. She felt that the Pueblo needed to look towards creating sustainable employment opportunities for tribal members who decided to come home. She also stated that we should look in the creation of an assisted living center, where we can train people to be professional care providers and nurses. This

would be better for our elders instead of sending them to Laguna or someplace else. She feels that the community needs to work on providing a permanent income stream instead of relying on grant funding.

Education

Ethan Lucero, Agricultural and Food Science Technician, 43, suggested that the tribe looks into creating a “Pathways Program”. This would be a collaborative approach between the tribe and a school. This would allow a student to be trained or educated in a specific type of job that the Pueblo needs filled. The student would be strategically trained for that specific position. Therefore, upon graduation the student is guaranteed a job when they return.

Community and Social Context

The typical words of advice from our families and elders is “Go off and get your education and then come back and help your people”. Many participants of this study took that advice to heart and came back home. However, upon their return, they didn’t expect what was waiting for them. Therefore, their answers are based on their personal experience and what they hope will be done for other educated tribal members who considering returning to Taos Pueblo. Makayla Lujan, Lawyer, 31, emphasized the following:

“We have to value our people when they do come home. I think there is a real disservice that we do to our people who go to school or who go away and get their experiences. And then when they come home we treat them like shit. And we don't pay them very well and it's not the good ole days where there's like handshakes and whatnot going on. There's real bills to be paid.”

Khloe Duran, Therapist, 45, feel that in order for us to encourage people to return home we need to maintain personal contact with all of our students and uphold our connections with them. She describes her thoughts in the following excerpt:

“I think it’s that personal contact. Like I said, [name of tribal employee] reached out. I think having that contact anyway, even if the community isn’t guaranteed that the people who left aren’t going to come back, I think sending cards, acknowledgements, honoring them. I don’t think we’ve ever had – yeah, we honor our veterans, which is awesome. But I don’t think we do anything else outside of that to say, “Hey, we’re proud of you. Come back and share your story with us.” I’m not saying, “Come back and stay,” because we don’t know. Things could so change, seasons change, things could change a lot. But if you don’t embrace that, then you kill it. So, I’m thinking our community, Taos Pueblo, needs to extend their hand of welcome out there. Not complain about it; not guilt them; not say “Well, you owe us.” You’re having an open hand, extending that hand of friendship, restoring those lines of communication, and just talking to them. Because for me, when that hand was extended out to me, it erased the distance and the time, it really did. And it was like “Wow! They still love me,” you know? Whether it was to fill a position or not, it was saying – and I knew it took a lot for them to do that. So, I’m thinking the community Taos Pueblo needs to extend their hand of friendship. Bygones be bygones, whatever it is. And you pray for them. You really pray for your community members. It’s not all about participation, because you have people participating in dancing and they are so far from here mentally, they are. But you have people who are far physically but they still want that connection. So, if they extend that, man, a lot of things could change. And it should be from tribal government, whoever is in tribal government. Obviously, our families are going to try and keep us connected. But we want to hear from the Governor and staff, and War Chief and staff, and TPA, whatever. We want to hear them say, “We’re proud of you. Keep doing well.” Even if it’s a little incentive, even if it’s you know, a gift card to a restaurant or whatever. Something that says, “When you have dinner tonight, think of us, that we can break bread too one day. Come home and share your story. We want to honor you.”

Brain Circulation Participants Study Results

The ten Brain Circulation participants stated that they reside in the following areas: El Prado, NM, Town of Taos, NM, Taos Pueblo, NM, Espanola, NM and Rio

Rancho, NM. The participant that lives in Espanola commutes to Taos Pueblo on a daily basis for their job with Taos Pueblo. The participant that resides in Rio Rancho, works in Taos during the week day and then goes back to Rio Rancho on the weekends. It was determined that on average study participants were away from home between five and six years working on their degrees. Of the ten participants, seven are tribal employees. The purpose for including Brain Circulation participants in this study was to determine how individuals were treated when they decided to return home to Taos Pueblo and to establish if their experience “beyond the cattle guard” was useful to them and benefited them in anyway when they returned.

I asked participants “if there was value in being away from home,” and their responses varied. Participants stated that there was value in leaving because you are able to get “an outside experience”, “you can learn a lot out there” and it brought a sense of clarity to some. Mason Cordova, 61, stated the following: “I definitely find value in leaving the community because I would not have had the experiences to be able to come back and help on a different level. Some lawyers go into the practice of law so they can be judges. That’s kind of their career path. That was never my goal. It was always to work with people and help people out. So, people would always ask me, “Why don’t you apply to be a judge down in Albuquerque?” I didn’t want to be a judge, it just didn’t interest me at all. But to be asked to be a [name of position] at home, to me that’s a different matter, a totally different matter.” Being asked to come back to Taos Pueblo to fulfill a specific tribal position was held in high regard by many of the participants. Several participants felt as though they had come full circle by accepting positions in Taos Pueblo.

Unexpectedly, another point that was made by several of the participants was the notion of “taking things for granted”. Participants felt that several tribal members who do not leave Taos Pueblo, do not fully ultimately understand the value of living on Taos Pueblo tribal lands and being a Taos Pueblo tribal member. Makayla Lujan, Lawyer, 31, describes this perception here:

“I think that there's something to be said, when you're away from here...Community members who have never left home, they take things for granted. They don't realize how beautiful the land is that we live in. And how amazing it is here. When you've been in environments where you can't even have clean air, you don't see the stars or all you hear is cars day in and day out. And there is no hope in certain places. Or you go to school with other Native people who are from places where they're removed, they're not in their original home lands and that's why there's so much turmoil in their communities too. And you hear how they are fighting for land still in this kind of stuff. It really makes you appreciate like, our grandparents did good by us and our grandmothers.”

Noah Suazo, Conservation Scientist, 28, shared similar feelings about the value of leaving Taos Pueblo, even for a short time and at any age. Noah expresses his concerns in the following excerpt:

“What I was going to say, though, about value of people leaving here? I think it would be cool if people could go, at any age but ideally if it were up to me I'd make people go at a young age, like college age, or high school age. They could go out in the world and see what's happening, have some things imprinted on them from the world while they're still young. Because an older person will go out there, and if they don't like it or they are intimidated, I feel they are less likely to adapt and learn, and more likely to retreat and go to what's comfortable. If you're young and strong, you have the ability to go out there and adapt and learn. Then you end up seeing what's out in the world, and you're like “Wow! We have everything at home. I need to go develop what I've already been gifted, which is this land, community, culture, religion.” We're born with all that here. But I feel like everybody else in the world (I know it's a generalization) but to me it isn't, they have to find all that. There are very few areas in world, spots in the world that have what we have here. So, I do believe that people could go out there and

see how the world works, then they'll appreciate their home more and it will make them clean their fuckin' yards up and participate in the culture and help out their families however they can. Because then they're like, this IS life, this IS what it's about."

Contrary to those participants who believed there was value in leaving, there were some participants who felt that there was no value in leaving, because there is no support from the Pueblo, particularly the tribal programs. Certain individuals felt that, these positions are held by non-degreed individuals who have a lot of experience from just being in those positions for so long. Some positions are held by degreed individuals who are not from Taos Pueblo. Who, unfortunately, are in very great position of making change happen for a community in which they are not a part of and do not fully understand. Another participant felt that leaving the community was not ideal for some kids because they are ill prepared because they are so secluded in Taos Pueblo. Ava Concha, Agronomist, 46, expresses that here:

There are some kids who leave here who just aren't ready to leave, and they're told to go out and get an education. And they might not be ready for that world, because a lot of them are so secluded here. It happened to my ex's daughter. Full scholarship, doctorate program, everything. So proud of her. She only went to UNM, and it was so rough on her, she just quit. Who gives that up! It was just Albuquerque. She'd never been away from here. What was she going to do? She felt lonely, she felt lost, she didn't have that support, and she broke down. Then she also found that there were smarter kids than her. She was a very smart kid here, and she got there with all these silver-spoon kind of kids (excuse my language) but that was her challenge. She had zero idea how to deal with that. There was not much interaction when she went to town school. Sure, there were white kids, sure there were Spanish kids, a few black kids. There is not really a lot of diversity, and there is not a lot of interaction. There's a ton of segregation, and I don't think she was well-prepared for that experience. Everybody thought, "Oh, it's just right here, cool." Within a year, she came home. Opportunity gone. She's working as a server in a restaurant now. She could have been a surgeon. So that, for me, is like a "no." We need to better prepare our kids for what's out there if we want them to go out."

Noah Suazo, Conservation Scientist, 28, also felt that kids are too comfortable in their home environment and choose not to leave. He describes that in the following:

“I know people who go off and succeed, but the ones that I see come back home? They are ... [thinking] too comfortable. They can't fly far from the nest, you know what I mean? That's just what it is. We have everything. The way our indigenous culture is (and this may be a generalization) but for Taos Pueblo and us, I know we're very family-oriented. There could be multiple generations living in one household, their homestead, or whatever. Even if it's one piece of land, there are multiple houses on it. Grandma lives over here; parents live over here; kids have a clubhouse, you know what I mean? Anyway, you get to grow up around all of that. And because you get to grow up around all of that, it's comfortable. It's cushioned because Mom or Dad work, while Grandma will get their disability or Social Security. And it's all in one household and the kids are just taken care of. There's no push for them to go out and get a job. Where out in America, each family it “to each their own.” There's no comfort. That's why kids in America, they are forced to go out and get an education, to make something of themselves. Otherwise you end up seeing this huge homeless population, or whatever. Here I think it's just the comforts of home, kids knowing that they have land, they have parents, they have grandparents. They also know that they have this inheritance, too. I think that's why people – it's not like people are scared to go out, but I think when they go out, they just get uncomfortable and it's a tough thing to go to school and have a job and for an individual to figure out where the next meal is coming from, the next rent. You have to be dynamic, to think about your education, your life, your income, all your responsibilities, plus your home, where you come from. That's a lot of responsibility for an individual. And around here, there's not a lot of responsibility given to the young people.”

I chose to include this section on brain circulation because I wanted to provide examples of brain circulation experiences and illustrate some of the perspectives that brain circulation participants have on the “value of leaving”, what their perspective is on Taos Pueblo after leaving tribal lands for educational purposes, and to see what impacts that had on their perspective. Several of the participants kept referring to the “cattle guard”. Years ago there used to be a cattle guard on the main road at the entrance to tribal

lands (a cattle guard is a metal grid covering a ditch, allowing vehicles and pedestrians to pass over but not cattle and other animals). The “cattle guard” is commonly used by tribal members to signify the difference between tribal lands and the “outside” world. Thus, I asked participants if they saw value in leaving Taos Pueblo. I wanted to see if their perspective had changed after being away from home. Participants made some remarkable comments as to how they viewed being “at home” and how they viewed it after being in the outside world. Mason, Makayla and Noah felt that there was extreme value in leaving and that it helped them to gain a whole new perspective and appreciation for Taos Pueblo. Being away helped them to realize just how special Taos Pueblo was and how lucky they were to be from Taos Pueblo. Makayla and Noah emphasized that those who do not leave do not fully and completely understand how extraordinary our land, people and culture are, hence came the notion of “taking things for granted”. Additionally, those who returned believed that they had come full circle in that they finally made it home and were actually doing what they set out to do when they first left Taos Pueblo.

In the subsequent section, I asked participants two essential questions that I felt were important in determining “why” they chose to return and why they “choose” to stay in Taos Pueblo.

Why did you choose to return to Taos Pueblo? What keeps you in Taos Pueblo?

Two of the most fundamental questions that I asked Brain Circulation participants were, “Why did you choose to return home?” and “What keeps you here?” Study participants had numerous reasons for why they decided to return to Taos Pueblo. Noah

Suazo came back because he had secured a position with Taos Pueblo and already had his own home on tribal lands. Jacob Archuleta had a job waiting for him, while Ryker Montoya had to come home for cultural obligations. Linnet Gomez was a young mother and wanted to raise her children in Taos Pueblo around their culture and family. Ethan Lucero was called home to take care of his family's land and cattle. Jaxon Romero came home to be closer to family to participate in cultural doings, likewise Makayla Lujan returned to raise her daughter at home and to participate in cultural activities, and Mason Cordova was asked to come home and fulfill a tribal position, which he happily accepted.

Khloe Duran (BC), Therapist, 45, stated that she returned home after accepting a position with the Pueblo. When asked, "What keeps you in Taos Pueblo?" She stated,

A commitment. The need. There was a great need. They have been trying to fill this position for years. It's a position that is not easily fillable, only because the requirements and I guess the grit – you have to have grit to be in this position. You have to have, what is it? you have to a tough hide but a soft heart.

During the interview process she spoke about the perception that some community members had of her because of her disruptive behavior in the past. The community had mixed feelings about her return, but once they got reacquainted with her, they realized that she had changed for the good; she was now an educated and responsible person whom had devoted her life to her faith and her sobriety. She stated that in her current position you have to have compassion, sensitivity for the tribal members with whom one works. She explained that in her position she deals with many tribal members who are going through difficult life situations and that working with them is not always easy. And because of this, the position is hard to keep occupied. Khloe is very passionate about her work. She had the following to say about her position:

The clients that I deal with now, they are broken, and they are hurting. I'm not here to rub their nose in it, I'm not here to be superior or look down on them. I know where they come from, and I want to be able to say, "I'm willing to walk with you, from the beginning to the end." That's something that is a reward for me, to help, that's what I want to bring back to the Pueblo.

Thus, Khloe is committed to the work that she does for the tribe. She is thoroughly invested in the responsibilities of her position. She speaks from personal experience. The challenges that she faced in her past have shaped her into the person she is today. Her past has given her a unique perspective on her job. She learned from her mistakes and is using that knowledge to help others. Logan Trujillo (BD), Lobbyist, 56, describes why he has chosen to stay close to Taos Pueblo:

There was one point in my life when I was a journalist where my goal wasn't to work at a big newspaper in – well, actually, I could have been a regional reporter for the old Rocky Mountain News and roamed all over the West and stuff like that. But my actual ambition at that time was to get on with a news service and go be a correspondent somewhere else in the world. That was my actual dream. My intermediate step was to get on with the US State Department and be stationed somewhere, learn the language, learn the culture, get that training and then leave the State Department and get on with a news organization because I would have gotten all that training from the government and I could do my work better there. But then I thought about it, "Well, shit, what if my Dad gets sick? We have all these things we do around Christmas. What about going to Blue Lake?" I began to think about all these things and I thought "I don't want to be away from that. I don't want to be a citizen of the world while leaving all this behind. Maybe one day the culture will disappear, but I still want to do my part. As insignificant as my role is, as little as I know, I still want to be there to do that." At least do my part. So, I felt that pull and that obligation – probably because they buried my umbilical cord there – and I just can't leave...I can't leave, it's in my blood. I'm not like one of the hardcore dudes who knows everything, and does all the stuff you're supposed to do, and has all the spiritual and cultural knowledge. But I still feel it, and I would feel weird if I was not attached to it.

Logan touches on some very significant points here. He speaks to the importance of family and cultural doings that are directly linked to place-Taos Pueblo. He knows that in leaving he would not have access to family or traditional doings that are centered on

the unique environment in which these people or activities can be found. He also mentions his “role” or his connection to culture and feels that whatever part he fulfills may be considered insignificant but he still feels obligated to be in Taos Pueblo. He explains that the reason for this is because his umbilical cord is buried in Taos Pueblo. From what I have heard, parents will bury a child’s umbilical cord at their place of origin to connect them to the land and ancestors. I feel that almost all of the educated tribal members that were part of this study feel this same pull that Logan has described here.

Based on the brain circulation responses, which speak directly to how people experience returning home and their compelling reasons for remaining in Taos Pueblo, we can gather that each of these individuals feels a sense of commitment and obligation to the Pueblo. Taos Pueblo is “home” to all of the study participants. This is where they feel a sense of belonging and connectedness. The care and maintenance of culture is of utmost importance to Taos Pueblo people, even if the role they play is considered minor according to our cultural structures.

Conclusion

In this article, my goal was to offer observations on brain drain and brain circulation as they relate to Taos Pueblo, followed by a working set of ideas regarding “Lifestyle” migration patterns for Taos Pueblo. Through informal conversations, community members emphasized lack of housing, employment issues, issues with governance structure, social impacts/social issues, healthy community and infrastructure. My own observations and experiences with regards to brain circulation included access to new knowledge/new ideas/new solutions, return as ‘movers and shakers’ of the

community, return with high expectations, population increase, need for social support-integration. Furthermore, I described what I refer to as “Lifestyle” Migration Patterns I see taking place in Taos Pueblo, which are most visible in the areas of employment, housing, and community connections.

After I introduced my research that focused on the experiences of formally educated Taos Pueblo migrants who left Taos Pueblo and either stayed elsewhere or returned home. This research revealed that Taos Pueblo has a complex relationship with brain drain, and actually is one that cannot be compartmentalized as “yes, this is a problem” or “no, this is not a problem.” Clearly brain drain is occurring, but what we can see based on my research is a rather intricate design of migration patterns whereby tribal members leave Taos Pueblo but *ultimately* return because of a distinct “pull” or “connection” that each tribal member has to Taos Pueblo.

In conclusion, it is safe to say that those who choose to leave and get educated are making a huge sacrifice whether they realize it or not. When people choose to leave home, they are choosing to obtain their education and gain experiences in the outside world that they otherwise could not receive at home. But there are costs and benefits. When people move away, they lose the opportunity to become fluent in Tiwa language, which is heavily threatened, and to fulfill their roles and obligations within our traditional way of life. So, my final question is an emotional one: *Is leaving worth the sacrifice?*

CHAPTER II: TAOS PUEBLO BRAIN DRAIN AND BRAIN CIRCULATION PHENOMENA

Introduction

These are the typical words of advice from tribal elders to younger people in my Pueblo: “Go off and get your education and then come back and help your people.” I think it is possible that almost every indigenous person who has gone off to school away from their community can say that they were given this advice. As a student from Taos Pueblo, I was given this advice. And like other young, energetic Native kids, I took off into the great unknown—years of schooling in places away from community, constituting a journey to learn in order to ultimately return home to help my people. My own schooling took me to New Mexico State University, in southern New Mexico, where I studied Hotel, Restaurant & Tourism Management as an undergraduate, then earned a Master’s degree in Community and Regional Planning at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, and now this dissertation will complete the requirements for my Doctoral degree in Justice Studies at Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona.

In reflecting on the messages we are told as younger Pueblo people exiting our communities and even prior to conducting my own research, informal conversations with family and community members often revealed an unwritten ideal that community members like me return to our Pueblos; however, I have wondered—*Does it really work out this way?* Upon our return, we may find that there are no jobs available in the field that we are educated in, no housing options, the local wages are far below what we can afford to earn, and tribal offices, computers and equipment may be out of date. Overall,

trying to “come home” may be harder than we imagine, and coming home and being home may not really be what we expected.

Brain Drain & Brain Circulation Literature

American Indian/Alaska Native communities and Indigenous communities worldwide are currently experiencing massive migration away from reservations, rural, and communities of origin and towards urbanized centers. My research is interested in both patterns and trends and possible distinct reasons for migration, especially in our Indigenous communities. My own observation is that many of our Indigenous communities are ill-prepared to re-integrate our own tribal members back into our communities. The world is ever changing and so are the needs of our educated tribal members.

According to Baldacchino (2006), The current global economy perpetuates a system in which:

Locations unable to muster a knowledge critical mass will find themselves exporting people, brains, investment and other forms of capital to attractive metropolitan zones or their immediate suburbs. Local employment opportunities will stagnate or fall; actual entrepreneurs will move away; potential ones will look askance. The young and educated people will relocate first, often never to return but to visit relatives and friends on short trips and vacations. (Baldacchino, 2006, p. 3)

This statement by Baldacchino presents a disquieting perspective about the potential future of our indigenous and rural communities. In absolute levels, skilled migration is increasing (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011). Three of the main reasons people leave their home country are, to receive higher incomes, to capitalize on better career developmental opportunities and to gain a greater degree of freedom (Grubel & Scott 1977; Johnson, 2009).

There are some indigenous scholars who have written about this process, including the imminent need for both those at home and those who are away/go away to rethink what it means to leave and to return, including how we define notions we take for granted, like “home,” “community,” and “coming back.” For example, the work of educational researcher, Elizabeth Sumida Huaman (2009), provided a comparative look at her own Wanka Indigenous community in Peru and the Pueblo of Cochiti in New Mexico. Her research examined traditional farming practices as integral to a system of community education that necessarily interfaces with dominant policies and migration away from villages for schooling and wages. Her research with Cochiti community members reminds us that Pueblo people are aware of different ways of thinking about returning home: A grandmother teaching her mixed-tribe granddaughters everything she can about Pueblo feasts and ceremonies so that whenever they come home for “special times” they can be ready to help, or a father with an environmental science background observing that “Everybody comes home,” even if to be buried there. The work of Jemez Pueblo community member, Carnell Chosa (2017), takes a closer and more direct look at Pueblo migration, especially by students, and challenges us to think about what “contribution” to our communities looks like. My own research seeks to grow this body

of indigenous research through an empirical study that explores processes of tribal members leaving—which I argue is a case of brain drain, and in some cases, returning—also known as brain circulation, both of which manifest themselves in universal and unique ways in Taos. Thus, the literature I examine focuses on definitions, causes, and impacts of brain drain, benefits of brain circulation, and how these processes interface with Indigenous and Pueblo communities like Taos Pueblo. I also discuss some of the recommended solutions to brain drain that my literature review presented and conclude with my synopsis on the brain drain and brain circulation phenomena on Indigenous communities.

What is Brain Drain?

Throughout my research I have encountered several terms that have been used to describe brain drain: emigration (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011), human capital flight (Kapur & McHale, 2005), movers (Helliwell, 1999), high skilled emigration (Docquier, 2006), nonreturnees (Reichert et al., 2014) and high skilled migration (Bollard et al., 2011). Being introduced to these terms has helped me to understand the evolution of this topic throughout time while considering how brain drain is relevant to Indigenous communities.

Brain drain was coined by the British Royal Society to refer to the exodus of scientists and technologists from the United Kingdom to the United States and Canada in the 1950s and 1960s (Cervantes & Guellec, 2002) and is a phenomenon in which educated or skilled professionals depart from one country, generally their native country, to another in order to obtain better wages, working conditions, or other more promising opportunities presumably unavailable at home (Bagdanavicius & Jodkoniene, 2008;

Kwok & Leland, 1982; McKenzie et al., 2013). The term is generally reserved for those with a higher education, termed “highly skilled professionals,” or those who have expertise in their field (Iredale, 1999). The World Bank (2006) defined highly skilled professionals as those with professional or post-secondary education (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011; McKenzie, et al., 2013). Rapoport & Docquier (2006) noted in their entry in the *New Palgrave Dictionary* that brain drain is most commonly used to denote the migration of engineers, physicians, scientists, and other very highly skilled professionals with university training.

The very idea of a brain drain suggests that there is unequal distribution of the advantages and disadvantages of global migration. The source countries seem to bear most of the losses and in their estimation, have yet to be adequately compensated for the net contributions their natives have made to the receiving countries. However, the term is not without controversy and there are some scholars, such as David Hart (2006), who prefer to use “High Skill Migration” as opposed to brain drain. According to Hart, High Skill Migration (HSM) is the migration of persons with increased levels of skill and education who, if they stayed could contribute significantly to the development of the country (Johnson, 2009).

Regardless of differing terminology, the concept of brain drain is not new. In 1973, the United Nations General Assembly requested that the Secretary General prepare a report on how the world could deal with the problem of the outflow of trained or skilled personnel from developing to developed countries (Grubel & Scott 1977). However, the discourse of brain drain seemed to disappear following the Vietnam War and has only re-emerged in the last two decades, but noticeably on a larger scale. Brain drain has also

been enjoying a renaissance as a subject of study: according to Econlit there were 247 articles on brain drain written between 2005 and 2009—about twice as many as over the previous 15 years combined. Over the past decade, Factiva shows an average of 5,000 news articles in English per year about this topic (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011). The problem in the past was that this international flow of human capital was often overlooked due to migration that was attributed to voluntary exile, political and religious conflict, or involuntary flight from persecution (Grubel and Scott 1977).

Causes of Brain Drain

One of the most prominent reasons associated with brain drain is economic mobility and advancement for those leaving. According to Docquier (2006), brain drain and the economic development of home countries are two interdependent processes. First, a brain drain affects development, and its effect becomes unambiguously negative when the emigration rate is high. Second, a lack of economic growth motivates college graduates to emigrate. Interactions between these two variables can be the source of vicious and virtuous circles linked to individual decisions to migrate. Once a significant brain drain gets under way, it can have damaging effects on the economy that induce further waves of emigration by high-skilled workers. But when a return is significant, it gives incentives to other waves of returnees to come home. Devesh Kapur and John McHale argued in their book, *Give Us Your Best and Brightest*, recently published by the Center for Global Development, a research group in Washington, that the loss of institution builders—hospital managers, university department heads and political reformers, among others—can help trap countries in poverty (Dugger, 2005).

At the same time, loss of professionals due to compelling economic reasons in some cases has meant an increase in individual citizens' savings as those who leave send money home to their relatives, which in turn contributes to the national economy. This is known as remittances. Remittances refer to money that emigrants send to their families and friends in their home countries (Kapur and McHale, 2003). Remittances are the most visible channel through which migrants contribute to households back home (Gibson and McKenzie, 2011), and remittances by highly-skilled migrants to family or relatives can somewhat replenish the stock of economic capital that may have been depleted in the home country by the brain drain. At the same time, the evidence is still unclear on the relative propensity of high-skilled and low-skilled migrants to remit. In 14 household surveys on immigrants in 11 destination countries, the relationship between education and the likelihood of remitting is mixed, but the relationship between education and the amount remitted is strong and positive (Docquier, 2006). According to Todorov et al. (1996) there are legitimate concerns that out-migration can hamper development prospects because of the loss of skilled workers. Balancing this concern is the benefit through remittances to relatives in migrants' countries of origin, beyond the gains to the successful (legal or illegal) migrants themselves. When migrants are low-skilled and the recipients of remittances are poor, the potential development and poverty reduction advantages become clear. Migrants often build houses for their families and send money vital for keeping children in school and better-fed. Thus, remittances are viewed by some economists now as providing a significant pathway out of poverty. Indeed, the World Bank reports that based on household surveys, remittances have substantially reduced

poverty in such countries as Guatemala, Uganda, Ghana, and Bangladesh (Todaro, et al, 1996).

Wage levels in the high-income economies are approximately five times the level of wages for employment in similar occupations in the developing nations on average, after adjusting for purchasing power parity. This provides an obvious incentive for migration, and indeed, hopeful migrants often take great personal risks to make the journey to the United States, Europe, and even developing-country destinations (Todoro et al., 1996). Clemens (2011) also found an annual remittance level of about \$5,000 in his survey of African physicians in the U.S. and Canada. This can make a significant difference in incomes for families on a continent where countries are among the poorest economically in the world. Existing empirical evidence therefore does support the idea that high-skilled migrants remit, particularly back to lower-income countries, and that the level of these remittances can be sizeable relative to per capita income in their home countries (Gibson and McKenzie, 2011). Overall, highly-skilled migrants may remit more based on higher wages, but this result does not hold in all surveys, suggesting that the link between education and remittances is diverse and varies across host/home-country pairs. In the absence of surveys that match sending and receiving households, it remains difficult to quantify the effect of high-skilled migrant remittances on investment, poverty, or inequality in the home country. The economic consequences of remittances likely vary across home countries (Docquier, 2006).

Based on the literature, one can observe that remittances present both positive and negative impacts. According to Yaseen (2012):

These negative effects can be gathered and analyzed around three analytical topics: first, the insensible monetary penalty of the entry of foreign currencies in a low developed country open to the movements of capital, this throughout their sound effects on the exchange rate level of the home currency and on the domestic price level. Second, the uses of these funds, either within the family of the migrant worker or by the worker himself who chooses to spend his savings through real estate investment. Finally, the effect of the remittances can be also negative in terms of lacking among the members of the family remained in home country. (Yaseen, 2012, pg 9)

For now, remittances should not be considered adequate compensation for the brain drain. (Johnson, 2009). It is important to dispel one myth surrounding remittances, namely, that they compensate for the brain drain, substituting one scarce factor (financial resources) for another (human capital) that is critical for development (Kapur & McHale, 2005). Remittances do not replace the loss of individuals trained by the state, from primary to tertiary levels, who can contribute in multiple ways to their communities and countries—family-wise, socially, culturally, intellectually, and so forth. Kapur and McHale (2005) present the following common scenarios that occur in home communities:

In assessing the impact of remittances, micro-level studies (principally by anthropologists) tend to be less sanguine than more macro-level studies (usually by economists). The former tend to see a dual effect: greater wealth but fewer economic opportunities for those left behind—a Pyrrhic victory, as it were. Remittances, they point out, have helped physically transform so-called migra-villages in Latin America, but many of the new handsome houses are empty because their owners live in the United States. Likewise, remittances have helped build better schools, but enrollment has been declining. Though simply a consequence of migration initially, remittances in these regions have now become its principal driver. The very money that has increased the material wealth of these villages appears to be gradually undermining their long-term future. What is good for individual migrants and households may not be as beneficial for the communities (Kapur & McHale, 2005, p.152)

Furthermore, it is possible that remittances may be doing more harm than good for a country. It is not farfetched to believe that the continuous money distribution may encourage unemployment, complacency and lack of ambition within the recipients who become dependent on the remittances for their source of survival and livelihood. This is what Kapur and McHale (2005) term “cultural dependency,” which basically suggests that money drives apathy, and I would add, materialism and status in places that remain in an overall context of struggle. Kapur and McHale also make the point that when parents go abroad and work they often send back money that helps to increase household consumption. However, their children at home may be suffering psychologically as they are often left to grow up without sufficient contact with their parents. Further, remittances are not always used to fund consumption; they have, in certain circumstances, been used to fund terrorism, civil wars and other violent campaigns (Kapur and McHale, 2005).

A Brief Overview of Impacts of Brain Drain

Demographics

In general people who migrate from developing countries are young (aged 15-45 years) and have higher levels of education and income than individuals of the same age who remain in the home country (Saravia and Miranda, 2004). The outflow of rural youth not only reduces population size directly but also removes child-bearing cohorts.

Migration into and out of rural communities not only influences population size and rates of growth or decline but also reshapes the demographic character of places over time (Reichert, Cromartie, Arthun, 2014). When an individual leaves their home community they are more than likely to begin relationships with someone who is not from their home

community. They in turn may have children, then those children are brought home and could possibly be enrolled in the community at some point in time, this impacts the race and ethnic composition of the community. Especially if this child decides to remain in the community and marry one of their fellow community members. Situations such as these can impact the tribal enrollment policies of an Indigenous community over time.

Furthermore, individuals who return to Indigenous communities are often struggle with identity and cultural roles issues.

Connections

According to Johnson (2009) when people decide to leave their home country, they also deal with the opportunity costs of leaving. Not everyone leaves because he or she is fed up or dissatisfied with the conditions in the home country. Many are giving up their meaningful relationships with family and friends and may be leaving behind elements of their culture that were important to them. When they arrive in the new country, they must deal with assimilation and adjustment to the new culture that could include a new language, new customs, laws, societal norms and so on.

When individuals choose to leave their Indigenous communities they often are leaving behind their language, traditional ceremonies and lifestyles. Most Indigenous people are positioned in environments where English is the dominant language and Anglo rules and norms are central. Additionally, Indigenous individuals will meet other people who are of different nationalities, religions, sexual orientations, political associations, and cultures. These societal attributes will influence their individual worldview and worldly experiences, thus shaping them into individuals who are uncommon in their home

communities. Consequently, this makes it harder for an individual to integrate themselves into their community of origin when the time comes, especially if they did not maintain their connections to Indigenous community.

Brain drain has some serious implications for individuals, families, and countries. However, the cultural and generational ramifications are lesser explored as economic benefits tend to be highlighted. These cultural and generational consequences are of central importance to my own research with Pueblo peoples' experiences with brain drain or brain circulation.

What is Brain Circulation?

While brain drain represents both loss and gains, brain circulation represents a related migration pattern yet with some different outcomes. Throughout my review of the literature on brain drain, I have encountered terms used to describe brain circulation. They are, brain gain (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011), returnees (Reichert et al. 2014), return migration (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011), and reverse brain drain (Johnson, 2009).

Brain circulation is a process in which talented out migrants who have studied and worked abroad return to their home countries to pursue promising opportunities there. This reverse migration is either temporary or permanent (Soni, 2008). According to Docquier, return migration is one of the sources of brain gain: the highly skilled migrants return home and apply the knowledge and skills acquired during their stay abroad (Docquier, 2006; Boncea, 2013; Stark and Fan, 2007). Returnees potentially play a critical role in rural areas in slowing population loss, rejuvenating the population base, generating jobs, and increasing human, social, and financial capital (Reichert et al, 2014).

Additionally, Goschin et al. (2012), found that gender, age or level of education and length of the stay abroad is not significantly affecting the return intention. Income level has a significant and negative impact. According to Boncea (2013), the gap in the level of payment between the origin and the destination country confirms one more time the dominance of the financial aspect in the emigration decision.

In both domestic and transnational contexts, returnees typically bring back skills and education gained in larger cities to economically challenged home places. Across these quite diverse geographic contexts, questions aimed at understanding the impacts of return migration are similar: How do returnees affect the demographic structure and wellbeing of home communities? How are education and skills, acquired elsewhere, put to work back home? How do strong place ties translate into civic participation and other forms of social engagement? In other words: How do returnees impact their hometown's population, economy, and society? (Reichert et al, 2014, p. 202)

Return migration peaks among adults in their late 20s and 30s (Long 1988; Miller 1977), when people typically settle into long-term residential stays and many are raising families. According to Reichert (2014) newcomers of all ages add to population and thus increase the demand for goods and services, both public and private. Employment increases in locally oriented job sectors, such as retail, health, education, government, construction, and repair. Through central-place dynamics, sustained net in-migration and population growth causes expansion and diversification of commercial activities, which leads to further in-migration (Reichert et al, 2014, p.204)

The idea is that young people build skills, savings, and social networks while abroad and then return to use their accumulated human, financial, and social capital to the

benefit of the home country (Kapur and McHale, 2005). Policies and measures to repatriate nationals can be designated to target established scientists who will bring back with them other crucial skills, such as knowledge brokering, organization and entrepreneurial skills, as well as their connections to colleagues (Saravia and Miranda, 2004).

Among the few newly industrialized countries that have been successful in retaining their nationals and encouraging them to return (India, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and China), domestic investment in innovation and research and development programs has been a common denominator. The capacity built through investment in turn has created demand for advances in science and technology, increased productivity, led to the development of scientific and technological career pathways and increased employment. Thus, domestic investment in research and development has created opportunity (Saravia and Miranda, 2004). The movement of skilled and educated individuals from one nation to another is as much a response to the lack of opportunity in their home country as it is to the availability of opportunity and the deliberate and selective promotion of immigration in another. Creating opportunity, then, is a necessary and effective strategy for redirecting patterns of migration (Saravia and Miranda, 2004).

Some Benefits of Brain Circulation

Brain Gain

Described by Salt (1997), brain gain is used in reference to a nation or region that obtains experienced professionals whose skills were developed outside and brought within (McKenzie et al., 2013). Docquier, further explained that return migration is one

of the sources of brain gain: the highly skilled migrants return home and apply the knowledge and skills acquired during their stay abroad (Boncea, 2013; Docquier, 2006; Stark & Fan, 2007) In almost all cases, human capital impacts are described in positive terms, a brain gain for economically disadvantaged regions and countries. Supporting international return migrants is now viewed as a vehicle for economic development (Gubert & Nordman 2011; Hugo 2009; van Houte & Davids 2008; Reichert et al., 2014).

Application of New Knowledge

Hart (2006) suggests that even when the migrants do not return home, the knowledge they acquire often does. Those who argue from this standpoint sometimes posit that some source countries may even be better off if the highly skilled migrants never come back. This is because in the developed countries, they can learn specialized skills and acquire expertise training that they would have probably forgone had they remained in the home country. As communication channels improve, it has become easier for these migrants to share their newly acquired knowledge with those at home. The brain drain then becomes a sort of legitimate export industry (Sanders 2007). The source countries provide their citizens with the foundation knowledge and resources, and then they export them to developed countries. In turn those who migrated send back remittances and newly gained knowledge. As a result, it may be more of a mutual gain than a “drain” as the increase in knowledge and technology will eventually diffuse to the source countries (Johnson, 2009).

Based on my own observations, I see that this is common in New Mexico Pueblo communities. Pueblo tribal members choose to work as consultants for their Pueblo’s

instead of returning home to work. They choose to work for the Pueblo from the developed city, town or area in which they live and work in. It may be in some cases, more beneficial, for tribal members to remain in their current community to continue work that they might not otherwise be involved in if they returned home, especially if its work that impacts Indigenous peoples as a whole.

How does Brain Drain and Brain Circulation Impact Our Indigenous Communities?

Newer or innovative conceptualizations of brain drain and acknowledgement of brain circulation are both interesting and timely as globalization impacts the transfers of knowledge, capital, and goods across countries. While these remain important for scholars, researchers, and policymakers to consider, the impacts and realities of those impacts to more rapidly urbanizing Indigenous populations are stark. In reviewing my literature, I found it difficult to find resources specifically for American Indian (and Alaska Native, AI/AN) communities, which is where my true interest lays. The only U.S.-based tribe that I was able to find that had completed scholarly research on brain drain, was the Navajo Nation. I was also able to locate a study that was completed in 2009 for Caribbean countries. While these are differing contexts, I believe they provide some important insight into the brain drain that is currently taking place in other Indigenous communities. Due to the absence of Pueblo Brain Drain literature I decided to carry out an intellectual migration study on Taos Pueblo.

Navajo Nation

In 2013, the Diné College and the Diné Policy Institute conducted a study at the Gathering of Nations Pow-Wow, an annual three-day, intertribal dance competition, exhibition, and market in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The group was able to analyze and assess the experiences of 28 college-educated Navajos. The participants indicated that while they were raised on the reservation, they were living off the reservation after completing their post-secondary education.

According to McKenzie et al. (2013), the Navajo Nation is highly invested in educating its young people in order to increase development and improve standards of living for all of its people. The problem of losing professional skills, which were gained through tribal investment in students' education, is a problem facing the Navajo Nation (McKenzie, et al., 2013). Millions of dollars are spent every year to provide scholarships for Navajo students to receive higher education and training, in hopes of increasing the intellectual capital of its citizens. Choudhary (2002) stated, "In 2002, a total of 13,172 requests were made for financial assistance. Of this number a total of 4,659 students were awarded one or another type of financial assistance totaling an amount of \$11,159,080" (p. 47). When these students choose not to return to the reservation, not only does this constitute inefficiency in terms of educational and indirect social investment, but also such activities fail to contribute to any type of development or increased quality of life for the rest of the Navajo Nation.

Indigenous communities make investments in their college students, expecting them to return home to help make positive change. Several Indigenous communities provide educational support for their tribal members and many of them do not see a

return on their investment because students choose not to return to their tribal communities after they finish school. Usually, Indigenous students only receive partial support from their home communities, the financial burden then requires students and their families to search for other sources of funding such as external scholarships, loans, parental income and themselves, which requires them to take on part time jobs while going to college. Tuition has risen 632% in the last thirty years (Finney, 2014), and with this increase in cost, students expect more return on their investment in the form of increased earnings and a lower likelihood of unemployment (Rainie & Stull, 2014). This is in contrast to other countries that offer college and university education for free or at an extremely low cost.

The study authors believed that better understanding brain drain and how it may be impacting the Nation's long-term planning for nation building, including reclaiming self-determination initiatives that release the tribe from a federal grip, could lead to more efficient use of education funds, as well as facilitate the process of 'development for all.' In order to facilitate understanding of brain drain, they explored the experiences of college-educated members of the Navajo Nation in deciding whether to return to the Nation after completing their post-secondary education (McKenzie et al., 2013). Participants indicated a number of factors that went into their decision to live off the reservation. These included:

1. K'é': Relationships/Connections to Family, Culture, Homeland, People;
2. Iiná: Lifestyle/Lifeway, Desirable Setting, Learned Work Ethic, Social Atmosphere, Togetherness (Diné) vs. Individualism (Mainstream);

3. Bee ach'j' na'hwii'ná: Resources and Roadblocks to Making a Life, Infrastructure, Services, The “System”;
4. Bee ajit'9: Opportunity, Prosperity and Personal Improvement, Education, Extracurricular, Job Availability, Work Experience. (McKenzie et al., 2013)

Based on the results, we can derive that brain drain is an issue for Navajo Nation. The primary element that keeps Navajos connected to their homelands is family who still live on tribal lands. However, participants indicated that there is a lack of housing, jobs, and that the steps needed to start one's own business are exceedingly difficult, and that living on reservation lands is hard work and inconvenient—due to lack of resources more readily available in cities. Despite living longer distances from their communities and making their way home to see family, participants chose to live off the reservation because of factors like proximity to stores, the ease of access to basic infrastructure, entertainment options and a different social atmosphere.

Caribbean Countries

A study by Nadja Johnson touched on the subtopics mentioned in this paper, including remittances, personal connections and the migration of the highly skilled. Johnson (2009) stated that the reasons many Caribbean natives went abroad and failed to return home fell within two categories often referred to as pull and push factors. Push factors are circumstances or events in the home countries that result in persons leaving and pull factors are the immigration incentive policies of the receiving countries that tend to attract higher educated, skilled and trained personnel. As is the case with my own

research and interests on Indigenous communities, Johnson had the same concerns with brain drain. She stated,

The “Brain Drain” I am referring to is the idea that there is currently a significant increase in the migration of highly skilled and higher educated Caribbean natives to more developed countries. The idea behind the “Brain Drain” is that when these persons migrate, there is a shortage of persons remaining with the ability to adequately develop the Caribbean countries. The developed (receiving) country gains extra skills and resources from the migration as it continues to become wealthier. On the other hand, the developing (source) country loses highly skilled manpower and human capital and inevitably becomes poorer. (pg 1)

The Caribbean brain drain issues parallel with many Indigenous communities. Educated tribal members choose to migrate to “developed” areas, leaving behind lesser educated individuals to navigate community issues on their own. As mentioned above, Indigenous communities make investments in their college students and expect them to come back and help “develop” their home communities.

As countries, communities and families are dependent on remittances from their friends and relatives who are in developed countries. Johnson emphasized the “intricate link” between brain drain and remittances in the Caribbean where Jamaica gained the most remittances. According to Sanders: “In relation to its Gross National Product (GNP), the Caribbean area is the largest recipient in the world of remittances.” It is not surprising that the U.S. is the largest source of these remittances. Kapur and McHale (2003) discussed remittances as the difference between abject poverty and food on the

table for many of the people receiving the funds. Johnson also pointed out that remittances aid the national economy and increase post-emergency and disastrous events whereby “people depend on the remittances from their relatives and friends abroad to repair damages following floods, hurricanes, volcanoes and earthquakes” (Pg.5).

Brain drain has its pros (remittances) and its cons (loss of connections to friends, family, and culture). However, according to Strauss and Quinn (1997) we should not assume that once people leave their country of origin that they also leave their cultures and values behind. Strauss and Quinn argued that cultures are not bounded, and people’s experiences can be shared across time and space. Most of the time, members of diasporas want to stay connected with those left behind at home. Helping those who were left behind and reconnecting remains a consistent theme.

Take for example, Bolivian migrants in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area who created Hometown Associations (HTAs) to help maintain and develop new ties to communities of origin (Levitt 2001; Landolt, et al. 1999) Strunk (2014) argues that HTAs help migrants construct identities and communities at multiple scales through a variety of local and transnational practices. Another significant function of the HTA is to contribute resources and carry out public works in communities of origin (Lanly and Valenzuela 2004). Unlike individual and familial remittances, collective remittances organized by HTAs to build basic infrastructure, communication and recreation projects serve a public good and are designed to provide services that otherwise would be unattainable in rural communities (Goldring 2004).

On the other hand, return migration or brain circulation is viewed as a positive and favorable process. Given the massive urbanization of Indigenous peoples, distinct

cultural and linguistic shifts and losses, and in the case of the 19 Pueblos of New Mexico, smaller populations (approximately 60,000 peoples total), as a researcher, I also view brain circulation as ideal. Developing countries and rural communities encourage their community members to return home. However not all countries or communities are not prepared for their return, which I argue is the case in AI/AN communities. For example, some of the employment issues that AI/ANs in the U.S. experience are evident in the Caribbean as well. According to Johnson (2009) there are massive shortages of employment opportunities in the Caribbean. Many university graduates in all fields of study are without work, months and sometimes years after they graduate. Education is constantly promoted and encouraged but then there is limited opportunity for employment and those that are fortunate enough to get job interviews are constantly being told that they are overqualified. Johnson recommended that Caribbean governments implement new policies to ensure that there are available employment opportunities for their educated labor force.

Grubell and Scott (1977) recommended that one policy could be that any student coming to an industrialized or developed country on a student visa must return to their home country for a specified period of time before they are able to apply for a more permanent status. This would reduce the employment opportunities available to the student in the receiving country, as well as present students with an opportunity to explore career options in their home country while they become re-assimilated into their home culture. The problem with this proposed solution is that there is really no guarantee that when the student returns to his or her home country that employment opportunities will be available in the chosen field of study, especially if the chosen area of study is

outside the realm of what is normally considered to be “marketable careers” in the home country.

Another important point mentioned by scholars is how returnees reintegrate and adapt to their home countries or communities upon their return:

Indeed, some migrants return to the Caribbean, but we should spend time looking on what really happens when they return. In many cases, when migrants return home, after years of living in the developed country, they experience difficulty readjusting to the power failures, bad roads, poor health-care and conservative lifestyles in the Caribbean (The Economist 2003). In these cases, returning migrants may find it too hard to readjust, change their minds and often return to the developed countries to live; though this is only an assumption based on scarce data. (Johnson, 2009, Pg.9)

I wonder: Can someone ever *completely* return to the lifestyle or environment from which they originally came? This question forces us to consider what it means to go home and to be home, which remain the driving considerations of my work in Taos Pueblo.

Answering questions like these is difficult, but I would hypothesize that there is much to be done to prepare our communities for the return of our Indigenous migrants.

Case Study: Taos Pueblo

My research looks at the experiences of formally educated Taos Pueblo migrants who left our community and either stayed elsewhere or returned home. The purpose of my research was to investigate the global phenomena of this process, which is widely

known as brain drain and brain circulation, but specifically in Taos Pueblo, New Mexico. Based on preliminary observations as a tribal member, my own experiences and professional work, and via exploration of the literature, I saw a critical need to explore the different ways that brain drain is impacting Taos Pueblo, the navigation strategies of those who leave, and what we can do to address the real human capital needs that our community faces. I myself both observed and experienced brain drain. In my preliminary reflections as a Taos Pueblo tribal member, I defined brain drain as educated tribal members choosing not to return home due to a number of reasons that may include one or more of these—better wages at other locations, housing opportunities, access to quality health services, and better school systems for themselves and their children.

However, what both ties our experiences with brain drain together *and* makes them unique is that relatively small local Indigenous populations like Taos Pueblo are concentrated in specific geographic regions with languages and cultural practices distinct from those of others found anywhere else in the world. What brain drain implies for populations like these is that when talented and skilled Indigenous migrants choose not to return, they take their expertise and training (whatever these may be) to other countries, states, communities or, perhaps tribes.

Leaders in Taos Pueblo are in agreement that something needs to be done as soon as possible to encourage brain circulation, which signals the return of our educated people. Tribal leadership appear to share the belief that Pueblo people need to be provided opportunities and incentives for obtaining their education at home or returning to tribal lands after they receive their education. They also fear that without our educated Pueblo people coming back home, our community will continue to fall behind in today's

technologies, educational systems, economic development opportunities, and health initiatives. Additionally, for Taos Pueblo where language (Tiwa) and cultural practices (including distinct ceremonial life) are critical to our identities as Pueblo people, the fear expressed by leadership is that while our people are away in other parts of the world, they and their children and future generations may be at risk of losing their connections to these things—the people at home (relatives), our language, our core values (how we function as a community), and our cultural practices.

My research aimed to explore and first determine if Taos Pueblo does in fact have an issue with brain drain. Conversely, I also wanted to explore challenges that community members faced when they choose to return home after receiving postsecondary education. American Indian/Alaska Native communities and Indigenous communities worldwide are currently experiencing massive migration away from reservations, rural areas, and communities of origin and towards urbanized centers. Additionally, despite the concern over brain drain, my initial observation and impetus for this study was that Indigenous communities like Taos Pueblo are ill-prepared to re-integrate our own tribal members back into our communities. The world is ever changing and perhaps so are the needs of our educated tribal members.

I conducted a descriptive case study analysis on my home community of Taos Pueblo. My research aspired to answer the following questions: “What are the brain drain and brain circulation phenomena, and how do they impact our Indigenous communities?” I was more specifically interested in the following questions: Does Taos Pueblo have a brain drain Issue? What are the root cause of brain drain? What will it take for people to return to Taos Pueblo? Why do people choose to return to Taos Pueblo? What keeps

people in Taos Pueblo? Prior to engaging this research, I used four theoretical components that I identified as salient to my questions in order to help shape my research and guide my analysis. These theories were: Seven Generations Planning Theory, A Core Values Paradigm, Self-Locating Concepts and Social Support Theory.

The Seven Generations Planning Theory centers on learning from the past in order to understand the present. This understanding informs the future (Jojola, 2011). The Core Values Paradigm encourages our Pueblo communities to use our core values as the heart of our decision making and strategizing. The core values paradigm reflects how Pueblo communities view our relationship with and from this world. The paradigm reminds us of our responsibility “to the children that are yet to come” and our accountability to “maintain our connections to all of those who we encourage to go out and to get an education.” By bringing our educated tribal members home, “They will be part of the capacity of our communities, to create a kind of insulation, so that we can preserve and maintain the internal aspects that connect us to those core values” (The Leadership Institute at the Santa Fe Indian School/Pecos, 2011).

The Self- Locating Concepts help to situation one’s self in a given context. For many Indigenous people, this act is intuitive, launched immediately through the protocol of introductions. It shows respect to ancestors and allows community to locate us. Situating self implies clarifying one’s perspective on the world (Kovach 2009). Self-locating is vital to understand when working with tribal communities. This I know to be true because such a process has always been a part of the introduction protocol that has taken place throughout my life. This is our way of finding connections to one another; it is the way that we establish trust between each other.

Gottlieb (2000) defined Social Support Theory more broadly as the “process of interactions in relationships which improves coping, esteem, belonging, and competence through actual or perceived exchanges of physical or psychosocial resources” (p.28). This theory helps me to explain the importance of social support in social integration during the brain circulation process. Social support and social connections are important to individuals who come back to Taos Pueblo. The “feelings of belonging” play a huge role in social integration, especially if you are not aware of social and traditional protocols and roles.

Key Findings

Drawing from those broader theoretical frames, which helped me to consider the dynamic of the relationship of individuals to community, I was able to recognize four major themes in the study results each containing sub-themes. The four major themes that emerged from my own research that speak directly to brain drain and brain circulation phenomena in Taos Pueblo are, Economic Stability, Physical Environment, Education, Community and Social Context. The subthemes, which are specific ways of defining these areas, include the importance of language, connection to culture, family, community and land, feelings of obligations, the need expressed to “give back,” and the notion of taking things for granted. Note that in presenting the words of participants, each participant has been provided with a pseudonym and a distinction based on whether they were categorized as brain drain (BD) or brain circulation (BC).

Does Taos Pueblo have a Brain Drain Issue?

Firstly, before I launch into explanation of the findings that I believe contribute to new and critical ways of thinking about migrations taking place from Taos, I would like to establish a response to the major underlying question in my research—Does Taos Pueblo have a brain drain issue? During the interview process I chose to openly ask all interview participants if they thought that Taos Pueblo had an issue with brain drain. The answers were mixed; some individuals felt that Taos Pueblo did, others said that the Pueblo did not, and others still felt that the Pueblo had an evenly distributed pattern of people who left and people that returned. An interesting view that came up during the interviews was this notion of “connection.” Participants stated commonly that most people both stay and return to Taos Pueblo because of their connections to culture, family and land.

Alexa Sandoval (BD), Nurse, 28, states that she thought that Taos Pueblo did have an issue with brain drain. She felt that many of her classmates from the Pueblo who had PhD’s or Masters degrees were living in other cities or states, and she was curious as to how we could bring them back to Taos Pueblo. Similarly, Jacob Archuleta (BC), Technical Writer, 24, strongly feels that Taos Pueblo has an issue with Brain Drain. Jacob describes a personal experience that he went through while he was a tribal employee. This could explain why he believes that Taos Pueblo has issues with Brain Drain. Jacob describes his experience here:

I don’t know, it’s kind of saddening that most job applications only ask for a high school diploma, or graduate, or a GED, and nothing more. So, it kind of strays me away from that. I’m better than this. Why should I lower myself to a lower pay grade because of this? I didn’t go five years to make \$12 an hour. That’s one of

the reasons I left the [name of tribal office] as well. I was willing to go through all the training they were going to offer and everything because when I was there, or when I talked to them, they said I had opportunity to make more. And then I talked to my supervisor and he said, “I’m only make like \$16 or \$17.” I was like “You’ve been here how long?” And he was like “ohhh, 15 years or something like that.” I was like I don’t want that, I can do better than that.

It is these kinds of testimonies that demonstrate that Taos Pueblo does have an issue with Brain Drain. Jacob and others like him explain that they do tell other tribal members about their personal experiences, which may influence others not to return or to be wary of the issues. Jacob explains,

I think there are kids out there that just don’t want to be back here. I know a few that have come back from getting their education. But I think some of the old... some of the ones that are smart enough realize that there’s nothing here for them. They may not go far, they stay in New Mexico, but I think they’re aspiring to do more than just... I’ve talked with a few, and some that are still getting their education. They are like “ahhhh, I’m not coming back.” They already made up their mind. They may not have been through everything that some of the guys that have been here long, trying to figure things out. But they have their mind set. I think there’s a trickle-down effect. They hear it from us, and they just don’t want to be a part of that. They don’t even want to go through the hardship of trying to find something, or even look, because they hear from everybody that there’s nothing here.

Ethan Lucero (BC), Agricultural and Food Science Technician, 43, also felt that Taos Pueblo deals with Brain Drain because individuals like him are not utilized when they return home—meaning, they do not believe their talents are being leveraged. As a tribal member, Ethan wanted to give back to the tribe, so he met with tribal administration, and he was never asked to work for the tribe. Similarly, Jaxon Romero (BC), Marketing Manager, 40, believes that Taos Pueblo Brain Drain occurs due to the lack of employment opportunities that are available to tribal members. Jaxon describes his viewpoint here:

Yes, I do [believe there is a brain drain problem]. Just because of the lack of opportunities here at the Pueblo. Not only at the Pueblo but in Taos [city and region] as a whole. Just because there's no jobs. What I see here at the Pueblo is that a lot of the high paying jobs are being held by people who have been in the system, who've been working here for 20-30 years. It's really an aging workforce that really needs to kind of step aside in my view and let other people come in. But I see that as really a factor in brain drain. Is that there's no job opportunities here for tribal members who are educated. And want to come and work for the tribe but there's no opportunities for them.”

Eventually, because Ethan was not utilized by the tribe upon his return, he among others decided to create his own business where he could utilize his skills and education. Ethan is able to use Taos Pueblo as a business hub. By doing this, he is able to continue to live in Taos Pueblo and operate his business functions which sometime take place in locations outside of tribal boundaries.

Regarding causes that complicate brain drain, Khloe Duran (BC), Therapist, 45, explains her thoughts. She describes Brain Drain experiences, which are not necessarily considered permanent by participants like Khloe, as determined by the “support” and “release” and “blessings” that one receives when they choose to leave home.

for people from here – I guess it's in the unique way that they did leave. That they left with blessing, and that they left positive, and they left supported? Then they know, and then the community has to let them go. You know? It gave them their blessing, like “Go out, put us on the map. Just don't forget where you came from.” You know what I mean? That's a positive thing, that's healthy because that's a two-way communication, meaning they left with the blessing, they left taking their proud heritage with them, and wherever they're going to be they're going to know Taos. And then on the community side, they're going to now say “We're extending ourselves out.” So, there's still that connection, it was never broken, there's still that connection... But sometimes it's not about the surface things, it's about what your connection is. And deep down, there was still a connection here. Somebody just had to come out and get it. So, when [name of tribal employee] did that, I felt like “Wow! There is a chance.” In my heart, I never left this place, I really didn't. But physically I had to leave it. So, when somebody reaches out to you, and they make that invitation, and they let you

know, “Hey, we need you,” that pulls on the heartstrings more than anything. So, I did, I left a good-paying job, ideal location, family time, everything, to come back. So, I think brain drain happens because we assume that they don’t want to be connected – meaning the ones that left – or sometimes we get jealous. It’s the lobster mentality. The lobster mentality is you have lobsters in there, and its boiling water, somebody’s getting out and what do we do? We pull them back in: “You’re stuck with us.” How is that going to help any community, much less ours?? So, there is brain drain. But I think if we have a healthy connection of release, I think we would never lose anybody. I really don’t think so. It’s when we have that other connection, whether it’s through pride or bitterness or whatever, that we feel “No,” and we’re angry that they left. Then how would it have been if they hadn’t left? So yes, there is brain drain.”

This is a critical finding in my research—the impermanency of brain drain.

Despite the fact that our people may leave the Pueblo, this does not mean that they are destined to stay away forever; rather, there are indeed push and pull factors as the title of my dissertation indicates. Khloe’s explanation of the way in which one leaves is critical to the type of relationship that is maintained (or not) with individuals.

There were some participants who did not believe brain drain was an issue or problem in Taos. Jayden Mondragon (BD), Web Designer, 34, feels that Taos Pueblo did not have a Brain Drain issue. His stance is based on the belief that *people ultimately want to be in Taos Pueblo*, and they will do *whatever is necessary* to be in Taos Pueblo. Here is Jayden’s point of view:

Shoot. Within my generation, not really [brain drain]. Seems like a lot of us know what we’re up against, and a lot of us do want to come back. Especially those of us that have family members. We have family that’s involved. Seems like if you have that base, it’s easier. It makes you want to come back, to get that education and come back to contribute and to make Taos Pueblo a better way. That might take a little bit of compromise and just finding the work. Like with myself. I have my passions and I know I’m going to fulfill those passions. But I have to figure out how I can make my passions work and still be able to have my base as Taos Pueblo, because that’s where it’s all at.”

Jayden brings up four key points in his statement: 1) Taos Pueblo does not have an issue with brain drain, 2) people ultimately want to return home and will make the necessary compromises to be in Taos Pueblo, 3) if you have a traditional family or a solid foundation at Taos Pueblo, it is easier for one to make their way home and 4) if you are passionate about something, you will make it work, not matter where you are. I think Jayden is also trying to say that if you want to be, “where it’s all at”, you need to come to an understanding that your passions might not be fulfilled in Taos Pueblo but it is a sacrifice that he is willing to make because he values his cultural and is committed to his cultural obligations as a Taos man.

Carter Reyna (BD), Microbiologist, 37 and Logan Trujillo (BD), Lobbyist, 56, had similar points of view to Jayden’s. Both felt that that many tribal members never actually left Taos Pueblo, especially their classmates. Logan stated that, “First off, you consider that the vast majority of people don’t go anywhere. If they do, they come back real fast. So, then it’s the people who go on for education, or for employment, are almost the outliers. So, I don’t know. To be part of the brain drain, you actually have to leave.” Carter and Logan felt that not many tribal members actually left to pursue higher education in the first place. Note that my research and demographic information speaks to this in other areas of this dissertation. Complicating the discussion on whether or not brain drain is an issue in the community, another individual, Alexander Mirabal (BD), American History Teacher, 41, stated that he did not feel that people chose to leave Taos Pueblo for education or employment opportunities but *had* to leave for other reasons, such as incarceration. This is an interesting point, but as my research focused on formally

educated individuals and not those who leave the community for other reasons, it is an area that could be considered for future research and related to this study.

Moreover, other participants feel that Taos Pueblo had what can be referred to in the data as a “50/50” pattern of migration. These participants believe that the number of people leaving Taos Pueblo is equivalent to the amount of people returning to Taos Pueblo. Linnett Gomez (BC), Public Relations Specialist, 25, explains,

In my experience, I can say that a lot of my classmates are 50/50 in that some of them have persevered with their education. I’m talking about Taos kids from the Pueblo. So, one of them being Aria Martinez, how she got her degree. She works in Albuquerque. So, I see people like that, who have earned their degrees but stay away. But then I also see people like Noah Suazo, who still tries to be involved in our community as much as he can with his degree. So, it’s kind of hard to say. I feel that the biggest issue is the fact that the employment opportunity isn’t what it needs to be, to sustain the people who come back with degrees. I came back because I wanted to integrate in some way, and I figured I’m going to do whichever avenue it takes. So that’s why I took Court Clerk because I thought it was going to be law for me. But being in that environment, I learned a lot about myself, in that I absorb the energy in the environment around me, and I was going home very sad a lot, and very emotionally drained every day, like “I can’t deal with this in the community.” It’s really hard to take that all in and see people who I know that didn’t have...it’s just a lot to know. It was very close, too close. But I don’t see a lot of people my age right now, with degrees, working either in or for our community, or at least some type of partnership with our community.

Likewise, Faith Jiron (BD), Operations Manager, 64, believes that Taos Pueblo has a 50/50 pattern of migration. However, she adds that people are not returning due to a lack of housing:

I feel like it’s maybe half and half. There are people like me who are educated but there are different things holding them where they are. But they DO want to go home, for the most part. Or they don’t have land; or they don’t have the house; or they don’t have – you know? There are those

kinds of challenges. Because when you're gone, your other family takes over your stuff, and stuff like that happens a lot. So, then they don't have anywhere to go to.

Housing is a critical issue in Taos Pueblo, and participants are keenly aware of the tensions in securing housing that allows participants to physically remain in the community or return to the community. I discuss this more in depth in the next few sections of this chapter.

Lastly, slightly diverging from participant views on brain drain, Zoey Bernal (BD), Psychologist, 57, feels that Brain Drain is dependent upon your occupation, your education and your personal reputation in Taos Pueblo. Zoey explains,

I think it depends on the occupation. I think if you have a profession or occupation like mine where you're an educator you can probably find a way to work somewhere to be useful to somebody some way or like Mason, my [friend] Mason Cordova he's a lawyer and now he's a judge. I think it's good. I think it depends on how much education you have, the more education and skills you have and if you know you have a good record. Clean record not just criminal but also have a good reputation at Taos Pueblo, you're not one of those who's like doing bad things and stuff. Whatever bad means. I think, you know, it's easier for you to go home. The challenges I see for people or for people who don't have a skill set, that can be transferable to different places. I think if you're working class, you could probably get a job in town but you have to work in town or you can maybe get a job at the Pueblo but that is by funding I notice like they like their grants like we had all those guys working on the renovation and then that grant ended and then all of a sudden all those guys are unemployed and that really hurts me you know see that. So, I think it depends on a lot on the village and if we can sustain them because if they don't work at the Pueblo then they have to work in town as you know the race relations in town are bad. I don't know how many people want to hire native people from the Pueblo, without even knowing who we are they already have a stereotype of who we are as a people. So, I think if we were self-sustaining, if we had a really strong infrastructure, people would go home and say, I can be a plumber, I can be a welder, I can do highway maintenance and I can do stuff.”

Zoey raises some interesting discussion points here in her explanation. She is stating that the type of occupancy that a tribal member has, plays an essential role in your integration back into Taos Pueblo or even just the Taos area. If you have an occupancy or skill set that can be utilized in any community you are more likely to find your transition happen with less difficulty. If you have a specialized education your chances of finding an employment opportunity that focuses on your profession is very unlikely.

Furthermore, it's easier to go back home if you have a good reputation in Taos Pueblo. If you are a known trouble maker or if you have a poor history with the Taos community that could also hinder your acceptance back into the community as well as your employment chances. Additionally, Zoey speaks to the infrastructure that Taos Pueblo currently has in that, it is not self-sufficient and is not able to offer specific types of employment positions. Taos Pueblo does not have the adequate infrastructure to functions entirely on its own. Being self-reliant is what the Pueblo should strive for, so that we are not dependent on outside entities, especially the town of Taos to supply or support any of our needs.

Root causes of Brain Drain

In addition to learning whether or not brain drain was an actual issue in the Pueblo, I was also interested to know what participants felt might be the main reasons for tribal members leaving (either BD or BC), perhaps not wanting to be in Taos Pueblo at any given time or to make or live a life. Answers included a wide range of influences and factors, and my findings demonstrate that the top reasons for leaving the Pueblo (whether

or not one returns) are Economic Stability, Physical Environment, Education, Community and Social Context.

Economic Stability

Almost all of the participants indicated that Taos Pueblo lacks employment opportunities for educated tribal members and if you get hired in Taos Pueblo, you will most likely not be paid what your education is “worth” (meaning salaries in the outside world for equivalent positions) or you will be placed in a “menial position” (meaning a position that is actually not what one might have been trained to do and that does not leverage existing or potential talents) The challenge of not having economic stability in one’s life causes much frustration and dissatisfaction with the environment in which they find themselves in. Jacob Archuleta (BC), Technical Writer, 24, describes his frustration:

For me, I keep telling myself I want to get out of Taos, but I keep finding myself saying, “Ohhh, I’ll just give it another year, give it another year.” I don’t want to hold myself back because at this point in my life I’m thinking I should have at least something permanent. That way I can start looking toward a better future, not just for me. If I want to start thinking about having a family, or something like that. Taos just doesn’t offer any of that, not even the town. I applied up there and didn’t hear back from anything. But I applied in Colorado and I’ve been hearing – I’ve at least been getting callbacks, you know? “Hey, you’re a great candidate, but we don’t have any positions,” or no funding, or anything like that. At least I’m getting callbacks for that. That’s a level of professionalism that I respect. I expect that from a job, to at least say you don’t have a job. That way you can stop putting the effort forward, you know?”

Despite the frustration with either working for the tribe or not being able to find a job in Taos, educated participants have been able to rely on their education and skills to create entrepreneurship opportunities for themselves. In the previous section, I highlighted Jayden Mondragon’s perspectives on brain drain. Jayden is an example of an

individual who took it upon himself to begin a business where he could utilize his skills: “I finally came up with just doing all these different businesses and creating web content for their sites, video content for their sites. So, I started getting all these great ideas on different businesses, what I could do for them. I started looking at all their websites and how I could enhance them.”

Likewise, I also described the frustration that Ethan Lucero explained, making numerous efforts to speak to tribal leadership to inform them of his skills and education; however none of the yearly administrations took the initiative to utilize him. So, after some time, he also decided to create his own business. Ethan decided to start a Range Management business for himself. By creating his own business, it has led to other opportunities for him. He is now getting paid to teach ag business classes to Natives in Gallup, Acoma, Ysleta del Sur and Espanola, and he also serves as a purchaser for the famous golfer and philanthropist Notah Begay, by purchasing Bison for Mr. Begay’s Commodity Food Program. This allows him to extend his reach even further and utilizing his skills to connect his business with other tribes, institutions, and each other. From his point of view, since the tribe will not allow him to “give back” to the community through an employment position under the Pueblo, he feels that this is a way for him to give back to the Natives and other ranchers.

Physical Environment-Housing

Many participants explicitly stated that they would need a house when they returned home to the Pueblo. This desire does not just stem from a need for modern day housing, but in Taos, speaks specifically to the need for a traditional home in the village. Many of

our cultural activities occur in our traditional village houses. Therefore, having one or having a place to go is vital to a person. Our village homes connect us to a life style that our people lived successively long ago, these homes connect us to our ancestors and allow us to connect ourselves with a different time period. These dwellings embody a spirit and contain centuries of knowledge. Each house in the historic Taos Pueblo structure belongs to a specific family. These houses are passed down from generation to generation. Some homes consist of one or two rooms and infrequently three rooms.

Unfortunately, due to the lack of village houses and the way in which these houses are inherited, families often find themselves in unpleasant disputes with other family members due to family strife over justified ownership. The value of these homes is priceless and can cause terrible conflicts. Sadly, these disputes lead to displaced tribal members who are then without a traditional space within the village.

Educated tribal members cannot simply come home and build a village house or choose a piece of land to build a home on. There are procedures that tribal members have to follow to obtain land to build a home on and even at that, the land usually does not have the necessary infrastructure on it to begin construction. Acquiring basic infrastructure to a home site can be quite costly and often deters tribal members from building a home. Therefore, tribal members have to search for other housing options. Individuals either commute to Taos if they work for the tribe or have to live with family, in overcrowded single-family homes. Alexander Mirabal(BD), American History Teacher, 41, stated that maybe tribal members “were already planning to go back they just didn’t have a place to stay.” Currently the Taos Pueblo Housing Office provides classes for financial training for

tribal members who are interested in purchasing a home. Aria Martinez, 26, describes her experience here with trying to obtain information from the Taos Pueblo Housing Office:

I went to the Housing Department and my dad was telling me that you can build your own house on your land. So, I went to one of the trainings, the Financial training? Because you have to go to those in order to be in the program. So, then she got my information and they told me to come back in May 18 and that's when the loan stuff was going to be there. So, she never followed up with me, she never sent me any information. I didn't email her either. But she said she would email me stuff and then she never did, so I just never went back. But that makes me nervous. There's no follow-up, there's nothing. I was thinking about getting an \$80,000 loan for a house and nobody is giving me any information?? I was like "I'm not doing it through them." And that makes it harder on me, too. Now I have to think about all the things I have to do to build a house. I was scared in the first place to get a loan that big, and now that I have to work through people who aren't going to follow up with me or help me out?? I don't want to do it. That was the Housing Director. She just never contacted me again. That's a huge problem, I think. For those people who are trying to go through the Housing Department, and that happens? They're not going to want to come back then... I'm so young, I don't know anything about housing loans or stuff like that. I just want to figure out how to build my own house and not have to go through anybody. Why do we have a Housing Department if they aren't going to help anybody?

Given the housing shortage on Taos Pueblo tribal lands, tribal members often find themselves resorting to whatever is available. Jacob Archuleta currently lives in an old family house on tribal lands next to his uncle. The house is primarily used for most tribal or traditional events. Other individuals find that they have to live in the Town of Taos where they have to pay a considerable amount of money for rent. Informally, I have heard many people express their frustration with the amount of rent that they have to pay in the town of Taos. The average rent for a studio in the Town of Taos is \$583, a 1-bedroom is \$740, 2-bedroom is \$879, 3-bedroom \$1091 and a 4-bedroom is \$1205 (www.bestplace.net). According to the TPCICLUP (2014), 20.2% of the Taos Pueblo population is below poverty. The annual household income is estimated at \$41,518 and

annual per capita income is estimated at \$14,000. At first glance, the annual household income appears to be sufficient to cover a mortgage or high-end rent, however, the household income appears greater because usually there are multiple generations living in one home.

Education

Study participants were concerned with how the community viewed western education. To some it appeared that the community valued traditional education over western education. This could be because Taos is very conservative, meaning able to recollect and maintain pre-columbian ways of life, beliefs, and cultural practices. In Taos Pueblo, this traditional way of life is of utmost importance to the community as a whole.

Linnett Gomez (BC), Public Relations Specialist, 25, explains that she feels that working for an outside entity, she feels valued as an educated employee in a way that might not be possible in the Pueblo:

Where I'm at right now, in an outside entity, working for my community but really working for someone else, I do feel a lot more valued. And it shows in a lot of different ways. Not just with the monetary compensation, but also with the integrity of it all. I don't see education valued in our community as much as it needs to be valued. So that's how I feel about it, to be honest.

Jacob Archuleta (BC), Technical Writer, 24, shares the view that value is not placed on educated tribal members in the Pueblo. Jacob initially had hopes of coming home and

doing some work on policy management and tribal government. But no one hired him. He indicated that he applied for several jobs and he never received a call back.

At the same time, while participants may have at some point held in common a goal of returning home, my research demonstrates that coming home and being home may not really be what was expected. Noah Suazo (BC), Conservation Scientist, 28, explains what educated tribal members face upon their return:

traditional life is so dominant here that education isn't something that's seen as a really strong need. Yeah, we need people to be educated and come back and work in these positions that are higher, to be able to manage our tribe. But at the same time, when those people come back, they are subject to nepotism and they don't get the job. Or they aren't given what they're worth, or what they deserve, or what their experience reflects because there's also this feeling of "Come on! Come work for your tribe." Like it's obligatory, you know what I mean? That's not cool because that makes you feel like you're really doing something good, but then your community service doesn't put that food on your table. You know? Yeah, Taos is very traditional, and I appreciate that. This is one of the few places in the world that I've been so far that is like that. But it does have its downfalls, too, especially when it comes to economic development. But economic development, education, and those things, go hand in hand. Our tribe will never be in the driver's seat until we get our own people who are educated in those top positions, running things. Otherwise we have to outsource those jobs to people who are qualified. Then it's kind of crazy, like I was talking about earlier, that people are valued and rated on their degrees and their experience, not valued and rated on whether or not they have the values of the tribe or of people, of life, or whatever. I know that's kind of ambiguous, but you're either a mercenary for work and that's what you do and you're making money for yourself, or you're a community member that wants to live and exist without having this crazy, I call it "savior syndrome." where you want to go out and you want to change the world. I'm like, whatever. That's not me, but everybody has been conditioned or brainwashed to do it, to leave your mark on the world, and change the world.

Noah speaks to some really important challenges that educated tribal members encounter when they return to Taos Pueblo. Issues such as nepotism, low wages and the community's inferred perspective on western education. Noah states, "Our tribe will never be in the driver's seat until we get our own people who are educated in those top

positions, running things.” By making this assertion, I feel he is saying that our Pueblo is in its current situation because the Pueblo keeps putting uneducated tribal members into key decision making positions, and if we continue to do that, then we will never be a self-reliant community. Educated tribal members who return home bring with them their education, experience and ideas for making the Pueblo a more sustainable, competitive and knowledgeable community which would only add to the resiliency of the community. Moreover, Noah talks about “Savior Syndrome” and the belief that tribal members who return home have the desire to accomplish true change in Taos Pueblo. However, if the Pueblo wants to take advantage of this person’s motivation and enthusiasm for change, we have to be better prepared to “receive” them back into the community by providing employment opportunities and being able to offer basic necessities such as housing, decent health care and safe and successful schools.

Similarly, Makayla Lujan (BC), Lawyer, 31, has also observed educated tribal members who try and make changes in Taos Pueblo:

Then you see those who come home and think that they can change the whole community and that's just not going to happen. And they get really frustrated and they end up leaving which I see their frustration but it's because they don't have the same core values. You have to be open minded. When you're coming back home. You have to be open to the fact that some people just don't want change.

I feel this is a key statement because educated tribal members are coming home and expecting for changed to happen immediately however, in Pueblo’s such as Taos, change happens at a much slower pace due to the added caution that tribal leaders take to make decisions that will ultimately impact the entire community. Furthermore, Makayla explains that that “core values” of educated tribal members have changed. I think what

she is describing here is that educated tribal members come back with a different mindset and expectations of how the community should function. They are expecting the community to operate at the same pace as the outside world, whereas traditional activities and protocols may impact the times that it takes to complete the signing of document, to set up a meeting or put a program in place.

Both Noah and Makayla brought up some very interesting dynamics that take place in the Taos Pueblo community. One possible recommendation that I would propose is detailed in the policy section of this dissertation—that schools require to students to take a course on Indigenous Governance or Indigenous Planning to gain knowledge on tribal protocols, operations and tribal government before working in a native community, so they know what to expect.

Community and Social Context

Another factor that influenced participants experiences with brain drain included the tensions placed on their relationships with home. Study participants spoke about how they were treated when they decided to return home or how they have been treated in the past, which led to them to the choice to not to be in the Pueblo or to return. Here the community and social context emerges as a critical and determining force in what participant experiences look like, both when away and if and how they choose to return back to the Pueblo. For example, participants expressed a need for social support to learn the language, participate in cultural doings, and difficulties that individuals encounter when they try to incorporate themselves back into the Taos Pueblo community.

Individuals who have been away from Taos Pueblo for several years often times find it hard to reconnect with the traditional lifestyle of the Taos Pueblo community.

Ava Concha (BC), Agronomist, 46, describes her experience here when she was trying to learn the language and put her son through the male initiation process (note that this is a ceremonial process that is taboo to discuss further in writing and as such will not be detailed in any way in this dissertation):

He had 2 years before he went in. So, I had to drive down here every weekend, make an effort to bring my kids home because (a) they didn't grow up here, and (b) was trying to learn the language, try to seek out relatives that knew the language, because at the time, my [uncle] who now lives here, lived in Arizona. So, he didn't live here, and I didn't really grow up here so I didn't really know many of my relatives, and a lot of them were cold towards us. They were like "Oh hey, nice to see you," and then after I started showing up around more, they were like "You want something from me, no thank you." They weren't interested, you know? So actually, I learned a lot from my boyfriend at the time and his family. They were very welcoming, and nice to us, and spoke to us. So, we learned little things like our numbers, colors, body parts, things that he could try to utilize when he went into the kiva.

Many participants who are new to what is referred to in the Pueblo as "cultural doings" often seek social support to help them get acquainted with traditional protocol; they sometimes seek out social support from family or friends. In rare cases, individuals may return to Taos Pueblo with no cultural connections. For example, Khloe Duran (BC), Therapist, 45, explained that she had been gone for almost 24 years before she decided to return to Taos Pueblo. When asked if she participated in cultural activities, this was her response, "Well, I don't, and it's not because I don't want to. It's just that I've been gone so long and *I don't feel I have the support to ask anybody. I wouldn't even know who to ask to help me get ready* (author emphasis)."

Alexander Mirabal (BD), American History Teacher, 41, also expounds upon his experience being at home:

There is a little fear of the unknown, I guess, of the future and what it would mean to return home, I've spent so much time away. So, I'm not too sure. Even when I was there, it felt awkward at times because *you get chewed out* for not understanding specifically what we were being told or we would be made fun of for doing the wrong thing. But the thing was I understood enough to realize that everybody was being picked on. If it wasn't the language, then it was something dumb like rumors that were going around, or it might have been that their hair was funky or maybe that they were too prideful...for a time period I could only understand the language part, part of the mentality of the environment is the everyone gets torn up from time to time (author emphasis).

It is apparent that some of our tribal members have faced disconcerting issues when it comes down to cultural integration. It was interesting to observe Alexander speak about how he was treated while participating in cultural doings. At first, he seemed like he was distraught about how individuals were being treated for not understanding the language or what to do during cultural activities but then states that this kind of behavior is "normal" and that everyone gets "torn up from time to time". If this is the norm, how can an individual who has not been home for years be prepared for this kind of particular treatment and how can they be expected them to adjust to this environment?

Critical to understand is that migration is not new to Taos Pueblo. In addition to a number of contemporary processes since World War II that saw the migration of males away from the Pueblos and other American Indian communities (Romero, 2003), there have been concerted efforts to assimilate Indigenous peoples in the U.S. American Indians were subjected to the federal Indian policies of the boarding school era from the 1800s all the way up to the Federal Indian Relocation Act in the 1950s. Makayla Lujan, 31, speaks to the more contemporary effects of the "Indian Assimilation Process," and

how that has impacted some Taos Pueblo people when they try to reintegrate themselves back onto the community:

But it really made me understand where my uncles were coming from because before that I was like, “They’re just being lazy, like you don’t want to come home and work hard.” But it really made me have a better understanding as to why it would be so hard to go back into your communities. And then when I got into IAIA and learning about the assimilation process and how it worked and realizing how... what Indian Centers really are, is re-associating yourself with a community because there isn't that sense of community going back home. How do you relate when you've lived in like, concrete and buses, you know, and you're just trying to work to eat and to live. And then you go home and then all of a sudden you have to go to the kiva or you've got all these other cultural responsibilities on top of just trying to eat. You know it's like we're trying to live and survive and take care of your family where that's all you've been taught. And because you've been absorbed in that way of life there's always something that you get back, you get back and it's the tangible and tangible deal that you get back. Tangible feedback you get back a paycheck you get a house back, you pay for your car, whereas you come home and spiritually, depending on how that assimilation process worked on that person, you may not feel like you're getting anything back. You're working your ass off which we do as Indian people or being from home. We do work hard. But I feel fulfilled because I know spiritually that, that's where I belong, it's a sense of belonging. But for someone who's been in an urban setting for so long that may not be the same feeling that they have.

Aria Martinez (BD), Assistant Principle, 26, is another participant who raised some key points in this discussion as well. I asked her, “What do you think are some of the reasons why people leave and don’t come back? What do you think some of the reasons are?” Her response, “I think the #1 thing is if they’re not initiated, *they don’t feel like they belong there.*” She states,

I think for men it’s more so. But for women who leave, especially if they’re not initiated, probably they’re treated as like... with all the women’s rights movements and stuff going on, you don’t understand your role if you’re not initiated. And you’re not taught, you don’t understand it. So, they feel like they’re oppressed there. That’s what I think. If women who leave, or who have a bad view of our religion, or stuff like that, they just don’t understand it, I feel. But yeah, for men, I feel it’s initiation because they are ridiculed for not being initiated, for not participating. And it’s so sad because it’s not their fault, it’s their parents who didn’t initiate them. So how do we

fix that? Why are you making fun of them? That's my boyfriend, he's not initiated, so he doesn't feel like he belongs there, and that's why he doesn't want to move home. And there are family problems too, but it's frustrating. "Why are you making fun of them, that they're not initiated?" It's not their fault. You're just making him never want to be a part of his religion. And he has these instincts, he wants to know, and he wants to be a part of it. He said "But they've made fun of me my entire life. Why should I go back? Why should I get initiated? They look down on me." And it's so sad.

What these testimonies indicate is that ceremonial participation, which is inextricable from community and social contexts of being and belonging in the Pueblo are critical for why people might stay or leave. This is a distinct characteristic of an Indigenous community like Taos Pueblo, which is spiritually-founded and whose entire cultural calendar cycle requires community participation. Along that same line of reasoning, Faith Jiron (BD), Operations Manager 64, states that she was never initiated in Taos Pueblo and if she had been, that might have kept her in Taos Pueblo. She describes her feelings:

My allegiance is always to Taos, I've always represented well. I don't feel a disconnect. I just prefer not to. . . . Maybe it's about not having a real place there. Because my mom was from a different village, I don't speak Taos, I don't have cultural obligations because I was never initiated. So, if those things had happened, especially the language and the initiation, maybe that might have kept me there. But I didn't. So that's probably a really bottom-line one. I didn't have those ties. My brother speaks Taos, he was raised by his godparents.

Faith's testimony provides us with an even more explicit link between language and ceremony—so what is the relationship between cultural practices, ceremonies, and speaking Tiwa language to the dynamic of mobility and migration in the community. I would argue that these are pull factors that the community holds and that unlike federal Indian assimilation policies, can be controlled by the Pueblo.

Along with cultural or traditional reasons for not being in Taos Pueblo.

Participants also deal with other issues such as racism in the Taos area. The town of Taos borders Taos Pueblo lands, and there has always been an issue with racial tensions for years. Taos as a city is considered a mixture of affluent White and working class Hispanic populations. The senior participants of this study had much to say about different racial experiences they had while attending school in the town of Taos. Fortunately, these experiences did not deter them from their education journeys. Faith Jiron recounts an early primary school experience in Taos (the town),

Third grade I had this Hispanic nun, and I don't know what I did, but there was 3rd grade and 4th grade in the same class, and they were all Hispanic kids or Anglo kids – and me. I don't know what I did, but I wasn't one to act up, you know? But she pointed at me and said, "You stupid Indio!" Just like that. When people talk about your life being shaped, when did it get shaped? It was really that, because first of all, she was a teacher; second of all, she was a nun, and she was an adult. I was a child. So I kind of – I was shocked. At the time, they had desks that you could put your books inside the desk, and I tried to force my head as far as I could in there, to cry. The kids laughed and everything. So I told my brother, he was in the high school at the time, and we used to walk home. So I told him and he told my parents, and they went down to see the priest and the nuns. They didn't take me with them, but the nuns denied it happened. They promised that they would really pay more attention to me, or whatever. So, I stayed 3rd grade and 4th grade. Mom was the kind that we all had homework, and we had spelling tests, and all that kind of stuff. She noticed that my grades were not improving, they were always C's, no matter what. C's in 4th grade. So, she decided in 5th grade to take me out of there because she was concerned that I would get complacent and not go anywhere academically because I was there. So, she put me into public school, but she researched the teachers in the public school and found the best teacher, who taught all the "smart" kids. She talked with this teacher, told her what happened, and she put me in there to save my education, to save me.

Similarly, Zoey Bernal (BD), Psychologist, 57, describes her own experience while attending Taos High School, also in the town of Taos:

there was a lot of racism, a lot of racism, as you know, at the time I was educated was during a time of a lot of racial turmoil. So, the civil rights movement was relatively new. The Vietnam War was ending and American Indian Movement and American Indian activism was on the rise. So of course we were engaged in our own major struggle to get back Blue Lake. So, all of those things, I'm convinced really shaped who I am. Because I kind of grew up really aware of things and you can't help but be aware. My mom was pretty active in a lot of things as well. So, there was a lot of racism in town like we would go to school and people would call you a "fucking indio", they would cuss you out in Spanish."

Likewise, Mason Cordova (BC), Professional Counselor, 61, experienced a life-changing moment while attending Taos High School:

the life-changing episode for me was in high school. I was on the yearbook staff, and my yearbook sponsor in my junior year sat me aside and said, "David, you are really smart and I think you can go to any college you want to go to. I did my graduate work in education at Stanford, and you could do this." So that was my junior year, and she left after my junior year. I was yearbook editor my senior year. And you now, senior year you start thinking about "what am I going to do?" And I thought about what she told me, encouraged me to do that. I started on my own looking up the school, Stanford itself. I went to my high school senior counselor to ask him for any brochures, pamphlets, anything he had on Stanford. And he told me that I really shouldn't think about that, that I really should focus on a vocational school. I said, "Well, Mr. So-and-So, have you looked at my transcript? Do you know what classes I'm taking? Why would you say that?" He just blew it off. So, I took it upon myself to write the school, get all the information I needed to see whether that was a place I wanted to go to."

Racism in Taos Pueblo is still evident in the town of Taos. Not many tribal members work in the Town of Taos. If they do, they are occupying an entry level or lower-level position within a business. After all these years, during the interview process, I observed that these experiences that dealt with racism still weighted heavily on their shoulders. These experiences were so impactful and life changing that these senior participants still held resentment towards those who treated them this way, which is no surprise being that racism in the town of Taos is still apparent. The town of Taos is

known as a tourism destination because of the Taos Ski Valley and because of Taos Pueblo. The economic return that the town enjoys is directly related to Taos Pueblo. However, the relationship that is currently in place between Taos Pueblo and outside entities such as the town is almost superficial.

In speaking with Makayla Lujan (BC), Lawyer, 31, she states the following:

Yeah, I think that that's a huge piece. And the town knows it. The town knows that they need to partner with us. Whenever Taos Pueblo shows up for anything that has to do with tourism or anything like that for AIANTA, their like, "oh you're here!". Or even when we were at the Rural Economic Summit, how they were talking or referring to the Pueblo a lot. But what I find funny is that they refer to us a lot but they don't ever truly like come to us to have a partnership. To have those relationships.

Based on her statement we can assume that racial tensions will continue to exist between the Pueblo and the town for an unknown duration of time.

Adding to this is Zoey Bernal's story. After years of educational attainment, and despite her early experiences in Taos, she tried to work for Taos Municipal School. She describes her experience:

I tried to go back to Taos to get a job at the high school. I went to Taos Municipal School and I had my application, and this Hispanic woman [administrator] says, "Well there's no openings." She said, "*M'ija* [Spanish for "daughter"] there's no openings." And I said, "Well do you keep these on file?" She said, "Yeah we can keep it on file, are you certified?" I said, "Yeah, I'm certified, I got my papers here." She said, "Ok, well I'll take them." And she was really, just like she didn't care, you know. I'm just thinking to myself, "You have a Native woman from the Pueblo, you know, you should be excited." So, I never heard from them, no phone calls, nothing from Taos Municipal Schools.

In consideration of all of these shared experiences, we can gather that the town of Taos is not very welcoming and accepting of Taos Pueblo tribal members. So, if educated

tribal members cannot find a position in Taos Pueblo and they do not want to deal with racial issues in the town of Taos, they really do not have any other option than to commute to other places of employment outside of Taos County or to uproot themselves and sometimes their entire family and move to a location where they can find steady employment without the added stress of racial oppression.

Clearly according to participants, there are a number of push and pull factors, and the catch is that these factors can be one or the other at any given time. The assumptions regarding their impact on individuals cannot be made. For example, the community and social context should ideally serve as a support to individuals either leaving home (with hopes of returning to the Pueblo) or actually returning home to the Pueblo. However, this is not always guaranteed. In addition, these factors that I have described, including economics, education, and community and social contexts do overlap in some important ways that limit individuals. However, knowing that these are areas for improvement create opportunity for change. I asked Jacob Archuleta what needed to change for tribal members to come home, and he exclaimed, “Politics!” He explained that Taos Pueblo has an issue with nepotism, which in many ways could be seen as community and social support gone awry: “The way I see it is, you can apply for whatever job you’re qualified for, but their relative that they’re closest to, or their friends, are going to get the job.” Noah Suazo also expressed similar feelings about nepotism in the Pueblo, stating that Taos Pueblo has limited employee opportunities, and those jobs that are available, people have already called “dibs” on them:

I think nepotism is a huge thing that brings people back or keeps people away. It could go either way. Also, I feel when there is a need for a specialist, like an

educated person who is from our community and there is a job opening, they come back and then they're not treated like how they've experienced things in the world. We have a whole unique different way of running things here. There's no standards, no protocols. There IS, but they are unique to THIS area, right here, and a lot of those can be amended or on a case-to-case basis, which is fuckin' crazy too. And that could be nepotism coming in, or just favoritism, or all of the above. There's a lot of politics that you have to deal with if you do get into a top position here. You have to be somebody, they have to know you, they have to know your family, you have to know something of our way and our language. All of that ties into who gets top jobs here. For a lot of people who are part of the brain drain, it's because they don't want to have to deal with all that shit because it's so much harder to be a part of the community, and work with other people, and have those kinds of things expected of you besides what your specialty is, and your education for your job. There's all these other added things that people don't want to do and I don't think they come from either. Plus it's very intimidating if you've been away for a while and you have to come back and get back into the swing of things. If you don't have an in, or you don't have somebody who is really strong and willing to help and guide you, it's almost impossible.

Also related to the community and social context gone awry, tribal members expressed choosing not to work and live in Taos Pueblo because of traumatic social issues. Having a "rough upbringing" was a prominent theme among my participants. Many of them spoke about growing up in uncontrollable circumstances that stemmed from different types of social issues. Many of the participants dealt with varying kinds of abuse at home and in the community. Others spoke of drugs addiction and alcohol abuse at young ages. Some participants dealt with bullying while in high school from their peers who were Native and non-Native. The bullying resulted from the fact that many of these individuals were different from their Native peers in areas such as their personal interests and educational ambition. At the same time, all of the participants used their rough upbringing as motivation to obtain a better life. This inspired many of them to pursue higher education. While my research is not a study on trauma, mention of these

experiences was common across participants, clearly begging further research that examines this more specifically as a factor related to migration patterns in the Pueblo.

What will it take for people to Return to Taos Pueblo?

Throughout my research, a driving question remained regarding what we all (community members, brain drain, brain circulation, tribal leadership, etc.) needed to do to motivate our educated tribal members to move back to Taos Pueblo. As expected based on my research findings, the responses speak to interventions that correspond directly to the causes of brain drain in the areas of Economic Stability, Physical Environment, Education, Community and Social Context.

Economic Stability=Economic Innovation and Growth

Alexa Sandoval (BD), Nurse, 28, states,

I think that less restrictions from the tribal government. I think that it would be nice if there was an environment of opportunity that didn't involve the tribe being as involved as I perceive it to be, and all these other agencies and initiatives and stuff. The tribe is IN there and I want to run – for me, I'd like to run a business, I'd like to run some kind of health program or something without tribal government involvement. Let people work and create something. And let's have transparency too. If you're going to tax me and my business, I want to know what's happening with that money. So, for me, I'd like to see – not no restrictions, but I just want people to be able to see entrepreneurship as an opportunity, as something that's doable for them and their families, instead of having to come back

and wait for the tribe to think of something to do with me, with the federal block grant.

During the interview process Alexa spoke about issues that her and her family have faced with entrepreneurial activities. Her and her siblings are all highly educated. Her siblings have tried to work for Taos Pueblo but were unsuccessful in attaining a position with the tribe. Therefore, they turned to other forms of entrepreneurship, only to be questioned by Tribal Leadership and others about their business. This is from where her feelings stem. As the Community Development Planner for the Pueblo, I am aware that the Pueblo asks all businesses to purchase a business license in order to conduct business. It is unclear what is done with the money that is collected from those licensing fees. This is why she stated that there is no transparency. During the time that I have worked for the Pueblo I have seen that tribal members want and need transparency from tribal programs and tribal government. If the Pueblo does not have the capability of offering employment opportunities to educated tribal members they should be in full support of their choice to start a business or create whatever opportunities are needed to keep them close to Taos Pueblo.

Jaxon Romero (BC), Marketing Manager, 40, believes that returning educated tribal members need “good paying jobs”. He mentioned that the cost of living in Taos was very high, especially if a tribal member has to live in town. Due to the lack of housing on tribal lands, tribal members have no other option but to seek residency in the town of Taos. With the high cost of living in Taos and the low wages that are paid to tribal employees, acquiring the basic necessity of housing can be quite challenging,

especially if students are trying to pay off student loans. It is imperative that the tribe see the value of educated tribal members and be willing to pay them competitive wages to prove to them that they are valued and that their educational journey was worth everything that they sacrificed to achieve it.

Physical Environment and Housing=Building infrastructure creatively

Participants felt that the Pueblo lacked certain infrastructure such as housing, industry, and specific services such as an assisted living center. Makayla Lujan, 31, feels very strongly about the housing issues in Taos Pueblo:

No one can really live in town. And I think that's a huge one is housing.

We have multiple generations already living in homes. How do you expect someone to come home, where there's already 10 people living in a HUD house? So, I think that's huge. And I think we have to value our people where, we have housing that's available to them that's affordable. But it's not like cheap and rundown or giving them the scraps.

Zoey Bernal (BD), Psychologist, 57, describes a study that she came across that was done on Taos Pueblo in regards to agriculture. The study stated that Taos Pueblo is an optimal place to grow blueberries, raspberries and choke cherries. Zoey argues that the Pueblo needs to look towards creating sustainable employment opportunities for tribal members who decided to come home, that we should look in the creation of an assisted living center where we can train people to be professional care providers and nurses. This would be better for our elders instead of sending them to Laguna or someplace else. She

feels that the community needs to work on providing a permanent income stream instead of relying on grant funding.

Education=Long-term tribal investment and care in its people

Ethan Lucero (BC), Agricultural and Food Technician, 43, suggests that the tribe looks into creating a “Pathways Program”. This would be a collaborative approach between the tribe and a school. This would allow a student to be trained or educated in a specific type of job that the Pueblo needs filled. The student would be strategically trained for that specific position. Therefore, upon graduation the student is guaranteed a job when they return. As a community member, Ethan’s suggestion for creating a “Pathways Program” makes sense. By doing this, the Pueblo would already be preparing for the return of our educated tribal members and actively working towards capacity building. This would ensure that new knowledge is brought into the community and the tribe is kept abreast of changes in the outside world.

Community and Social Context=A return to kindness and sharing

I began this book chapter with the typical words of advice from our families and elders, “Go off and get your education and then come back and help your people.” Participants in this study took that advice to heart and either tried to come back home, desired to return, or came back home. However, upon their return, most did not realize what would be waiting for them. Therefore, their answers are based on their personal experience and what they hope will be done for other educated tribal members who are considering returning to Taos Pueblo. These could be considered two basic tenets of returning to kindness and sharing in order to maintain connections socially and culturally that both individuals and community can uphold together.

Value our people: *We have to value our people when they do come home. I think there is a real disservice that we do to our people who go to school or who go away and get their experiences. And then when they come home we treat them like shit. And we don't pay them very well and it's not the good ole days where there's like handshakes and whatnot going on. There's real bills to be paid. (Makayla Lujan)*

Maintain personal contact with our people: *I think it's that personal contact. Like I said, [name of tribal employee] reached out. I think having that contact anyway, even if the community isn't guaranteed that the people who left aren't going to come back, I think sending cards, acknowledgements, honoring them. I don't think we've ever had – yeah, we honor our veterans, which is awesome. But I don't think we do anything else outside of that to say, “Hey, we're proud of you. Come back and share your story with us.” I'm not saying, “Come back and stay,” because we don't know. Things could so change, seasons change, things could change a lot. But if you don't embrace that, then you kill it. So, I'm thinking our community, Taos Pueblo, needs to extend their hand of welcome out there. Not complain about it; not guilt them; not say “Well, you owe us.” You're having an open hand, extending that hand of friendship, restoring those lines of communication, and just talking to them. Because for me, when that hand was extended out to me, it erased the distance and the time, it really did. And it was like “Wow! They still love me,” you know? Whether it was to fill a position or not, it was saying – and I knew it took a lot for them to do that. So, I'm thinking the community Taos Pueblo needs to extend their hand of friendship. Bygones be bygones, whatever it is. And you pray for them. You really pray for your community members. It's not all about participation, because you have people participating in dancing and they are so far from here mentally, they are. But you have people who are far physically but they still want that connection. So, if they extend that, man, a lot of things could change. And it should be from tribal government, whoever is in tribal government. Obviously, our families are going to try and keep us connected. But we want to hear from the Governor and staff, and War Chief and staff, and TPA, whatever. We want to hear them say, “We're proud of you. Keep doing well.” Even if it's a little incentive, even if it's you know, a gift card to a restaurant or whatever. Something that says, “When you have dinner tonight, think of us, that we can break bread too one day. Come home and share your story. We want to honor you. (Khloe Duran)*

These two basic tenets of returning to kindness and sharing in order to maintain connections socially and culturally are not difficult to uphold if they are carried out as a community via family, community programs, and Tribal Leadership. As students leave home to obtain a formal education, they leave behind their loved ones and usually into an environment that can be quiet daunting at times. They are away from the their cultures,

which consist of their language, cultural doings and Tiwa ways of knowing. They are making a huge sacrifice to obtain an education that they feel will not only assist them but will also benefit the community that they left behind. So, when educated tribal members return and we treat them like “shit” it creates a sense of acrimony between the tribal member and the Pueblo. In addition to not being able to pay them a competitive wage, they then have to deal with the treatment they receive on the cultural side of things, being that they most likely are not fluent in the tiwa language because they were away from the community, but this situation is also highly dependent on each individuals cultural foundation before they left to pursue higher education and whether or not they were able to maintain their connections while away for school.

Furthermore, maintaining personal contact with our tribal members who are away pursuing higher education should not be problematic considering that we have an entire division devoted to training and higher education (Taos Pueblo Education and Training Division). A new policy that that Pueblo might consider putting in place is requiring this division to check on students before the semester starts and after its completed to check on student’s progress and to see if the student is experiencing any difficulties with their studies. Every so often tribal leadership should make an effort to send student’s a card with word of encouragement and gift card.

When we tell our students to go off and get an education and COME BACK to help the people, we should embrace those that actually return home, especially the males who might be placed in a leadership role one day and the females who will provide significant support to those in leadership positions.

Brain Circulation

While the focus of this chapter has been primarily understanding the phenomenon of brain drain in Taos Pueblo, I would be remiss to not mention what brain circulation can teach us with regard to the migration patterns currently underway in the Pueblo.

The brain circulation piece of my study helped me to understand how individuals were treated when they decided to return home to Taos Pueblo and to establish if their experience “beyond the cattle guard” was useful to them and benefited them in anyway when they returned. I asked participants “if there was value in being away from home,” and their responses varied. Participants stated that there was value in leaving because you are able to get “an outside experience”, “you can learn a lot out there” and it brought a sense of clarity to some. Mason Cordova (BC), Professional Counselor, 61, states,

I definitely find value in leaving the community because I would not have had the experiences to be able to come back and help on a different level. Some lawyers go into the practice of law so they can be judges. That’s kind of their career path. That was never my goal. It was always to work with people and help people out. So, people would always ask me, “Why don’t you apply to be a judge down in Albuquerque?” I didn’t want to be a judge, it just didn’t interest me at all. But to be asked to be a [current employment position] at home, to me that’s a different matter, a totally different matter.

Thus, being asked to come back to Taos Pueblo to fulfill a specific tribal position was held in high regard by many of the participants. Several participants felt as though they had come full circle by accepting positions in Taos Pueblo.

Unexpectedly, another point that was made by participants was the notion of “taking things for granted.” Participants felt that tribal members who do not leave Taos Pueblo do not fully ultimately understand the value of living on Taos Pueblo tribal lands and being a Taos Pueblo tribal member. Makayla Lujan, Lawyer, 31, states,

I think that there's something to be said, when you're away from here...Community members who have never left home, they take things for granted. They don't realize how beautiful the land is that we live in. And how amazing it is here. When you've been in environments where you can't even have clean air, you don't see the stars or all you hear is cars day in and day out. And there is no hope in certain places. Or you go to school with other Native people who are from places where they're removed, they're not in their original home lands and that's why there's so much turmoil in their communities too. And you hear how they are fighting for land still in this kind of stuff. It really makes you appreciate like, our grandparents did good by us and our grandmothers.

Noah Suazo shares similar feelings about the value of leaving Taos Pueblo, even for a short time and at any age.

What I was going to say, though, about value of people leaving here? I think it would be cool if people could go, at any age but ideally if it were up to me I'd make people go at a young age, like college age, or high school age. They could go out in the world and see what's happening, have some things imprinted on them from the world while they're still young. Because an older person will go out there, and if they don't like it or they are intimidated, I feel they are less likely to adapt and learn, and more likely to retreat and go to what's comfortable. If you're young and strong, you have the ability to go out there and adapt and learn. Then you end up seeing what's out in the world, and you're like “Wow! We have everything at home. I need to go develop what I've already been gifted, which is this land, community, culture, religion.” We're born with all that here. But I feel like everybody else in the world (I know it's a generalization) but to me it isn't, they have to find all that. There are very few areas in world, spots in the world that have what we have here. So, I do believe that people could go out there and see how the world works, then they'll appreciate their home more and it will make them clean their fuckin' yards up and participate in the culture and help out their families however they can. Because then they're like, this IS life, this IS what it's about.

Contrary to those participants who believed there was value in leaving, there were some participants who felt that there was no value in leaving, because there is no support from the Pueblo, particularly the tribal programs. Certain individuals felt that, these positions are held by non-degreed individuals who have a lot of experience from just being in those positions for so long. Some positions are held by degreed individuals who are not from Taos Pueblo. Who, unfortunately, are in very great position of making change happen for a community in which they are not a part of and do not fully understand. Another participant felt that leaving the community was not ideal for some kids because they are ill prepared because they are so secluded in Taos Pueblo. Ava Concha, Agronomist, 46, expresses that here:

There are some kids who leave here who just aren't ready to leave, and they're told to go out and get an education. And they might not be ready for that world, because a lot of them are so secluded here. It happened to my ex's daughter. Full scholarship, doctorate program, everything. So proud of her. She only went to UNM, and it was so rough on her, she just quit. Who gives that up! It was just Albuquerque. She'd never been away from here. What was she going to do? She felt lonely, she felt lost, she didn't have that support, and she broke down. Then she also found that there were smarter kids than her. She was a very smart kid here, and she got there with all these silver-spoon kind of kids (excuse my language) but that was her challenge. She had zero idea how to deal with that. There was not much interaction when she went to town school. Sure, there were white kids, sure there were Spanish kids, a few black kids. There is not really a lot of diversity, and there is not a lot of interaction. There's a ton of segregation, and I don't think she was well-prepared for that experience. Everybody thought, "Oh, it's just right here, cool." Within a year, she came home. Opportunity gone. She's working as a server in a restaurant now. She could have been a surgeon. So that, for me, is like a "no." We need to better prepare our kids for what's out there if we want them to go out.

Noah Suazo, Conservation Scientist, 28, also felt that kids are too comfortable in their home environment and choose not to leave.

I know people who go off and succeed, but the ones that I see come back home? They are ... [thinking] too comfortable. They can't fly far from the nest, you know what I mean? That's just what it is. We have everything. The way our indigenous culture is (and this may be a generalization) but for Taos Pueblo and us, I know we're very family-oriented. There could be multiple generations living in one household, their homestead, or whatever. Even if it's one piece of land, there are multiple houses on it. Grandma lives over here; parents live over here; kids have a clubhouse, you know what I mean? Anyway, you get to grow up around all of that. And because you get to grow up around all of that, it's comfortable. It's cushioned because Mom or Dad work, while Grandma will get their disability or Social Security. And it's all in one household and the kids are just taken care of. There's no push for them to go out and get a job. Where out in America, each family it "to each their own." There's no comfort. That's why kids in America, they are forced to go out and get an education, to make something of themselves. Otherwise you end up seeing this huge homeless population, or whatever. Here I think it's just the comforts of home, kids knowing that they have land, they have parents, they have grandparents. They also know that they have this inheritance, too. I think that's why people – it's not like people are scared to go out, but I think when they go out, they just get uncomfortable and it's a tough thing to go to school and have a job and for an individual to figure out where the next meal is coming from, the next rent. You have to be dynamic, to think about your education, your life, your income, all your responsibilities, plus your home, where you come from. That's a lot of responsibility for an individual. And around here, there's not a lot of responsibility given to the young people."

I chose to include this section on brain circulation because I wanted to provide examples of brain circulation experiences and illustrate some of the perspectives that brain circulation participants have on the "value of leaving", what their perspective is on Taos Pueblo after leaving tribal lands for educational purposes, and to see what impacts that had on their perspective. Several of the participants kept referring to the "cattle guard". Years ago there used to be a cattle guard on the main road at the entrance to tribal lands (a cattle guard is a metal grid covering a ditch, allowing vehicles and pedestrians to pass over but not cattle and other animals). The "cattle guard" is commonly used by tribal members to signify the difference between tribal lands and the "outside" world. Thus, I asked participants if they saw value in leaving Taos Pueblo. I wanted to see if their

perspective had changed after being away from home. Participants made some remarkable comments as to how they viewed being “at home” and how they viewed it after being in the outside world. Mason, Makayla and Noah felt that there was extreme value in leaving and that it helped them to gain a whole new perspective and appreciation for Taos Pueblo. Being away helped them to realize just how special Taos Pueblo was and how lucky they were to be from Taos Pueblo. Makayla and Noah emphasized that those who do not leave do not fully and completely understand how extraordinary our land, people and culture are, hence came the notion of “taking things for granted”. Additionally, those who returned believed that they had come full circle in that they finally made it home and were actually doing what they set out to do when they first left Taos Pueblo.

In the subsequent section, I asked participants two essential questions that I felt were important in determining “why” they chose to return and why they “choose” to stay in Taos Pueblo.

Why did you choose to return to Taos Pueblo? What keeps you in Taos Pueblo?

Two of the most fundamental questions that I asked Brain Circulation participants were, “Why did you choose to return home?” and “What keeps you here?”. Study participants had numerous reasons for why they decided to return to Taos Pueblo. Noah Suazo came back because he had secured a position with Taos Pueblo and already had his own home on tribal lands. Jacob Archuleta had a job waiting for him, while Ryker Montoya had to come home for cultural obligations. Linnet Gomez was a young mother and wanted to raise her children in Taos Pueblo around their culture and family. Ethan Lucero was

called home to take care of his family's land and cattle. Jaxon Romero came home to be closer to family to participate in cultural doings, likewise Makayla Lujan returned to raise her daughter at home and to participate in cultural activities, and Mason Cordova was asked to come home and fulfil a tribal position, which he happily accepted.

Khloe Duran (BC), Therapist, 45, stated that she returned home after accepting a position with the Pueblo. When asked, "What keeps you in Taos Pueblo?" She stated,

A commitment. The need. There was a great need. They have been trying to fill this position for years. It's a position that is not easily fillable, only because the requirements and I guess the grit – you have to have grit to be in this position. You have to have, what is it? you have to a tough hide but a soft heart.

During the interview process she spoke about the perception that some community members had of her because of her disruptive behavior in the past. The community had mixed feelings about her return, but once they got reacquainted with her, they realized that she had changed for the good; she was now an educated and responsible person whom had devoted her life to her faith and her sobriety. She stated that in her current position you have to have compassion, sensitivity for the tribal members with whom one works. She explained that in her position she deals with many tribal members who are going through difficult life situations and that working with them is not always easy. And because of this, the position is hard to keep occupied. Khloe is very passionate about her work. She had the following to say about her position:

The clients that I deal with now, they are broken, and they are hurting. I'm not here to rub their nose in it, I'm not here to be superior or look down on them. I know

where they come from, and I want to be able to say, “I’m willing to walk with you, from the beginning to the end.” That’s something that is a reward for me, to help, that’s what I want to bring back to the Pueblo.

Thus, Khloe is committed to the work that she does for the tribe. She is thoroughly invested in the responsibilities of her position. She speaks from personal experience. The challenges that she faced in her past have shaped her into the person she is today. Her past has given her a unique perspective on her job. She learned from her mistakes and is using that knowledge to help others.

Logan Trujillo (BD), Lobbyist, 56, describes why he has chosen to stay close to Taos Pueblo:

There was one point in my life when I was a journalist where my goal wasn’t to work at a big newspaper in – well, actually, I could have been a regional reporter for the old Rocky Mountain News and roamed all over the West and stuff like that. But my actual ambition at that time was to get on with a news service and go be a correspondent somewhere else in the world. That was my actual dream. My intermediate step was to get on with the US State Department and be stationed somewhere, learn the language, learn the culture, get that training and then leave the State Department and get on with a news organization because I would have gotten all that training from the government and I could do my work better there. But then I thought about it, “Well, shit, what if my Dad gets sick? We have all these things we do around Christmas. What about going to Blue Lake?” I began to think about all these things and I thought “I don’t want to be away from that. I don’t want to be a citizen of the world while leaving all this behind. Maybe one day the culture will disappear, but I still want to do my part. As insignificant as my role is, as little as I know, I still want to be there to do that.” At least do my part. So, I felt that pull and that obligation – probably because they buried my umbilical cord there – and I just can’t leave...I can’t leave, it’s in my blood. I’m not like one of the hardcore dudes who knows everything, and does all the stuff you’re supposed to do, and has all the spiritual and cultural knowledge. But I still feel it, and I would feel weird if I was not attached to it.

Logan touches on some very significant points here. He speaks to the importance of family and cultural doings that are directly linked to place-Taos Pueblo. He knows that

in leaving he would not have access to family or traditional doings that are centered on the unique environment in which these people or activities can be found. He also mentions his “role” or his connection to culture and feels that whatever part he fulfills may be considered insignificant but he still feels obligated to be in Taos Pueblo. He explains that the reason for this is because his umbilical cord is buried in Taos Pueblo. From what I have heard, parents will bury a child’s umbilical cord at their place of origin to connect them to the land and ancestors. I feel that almost all of the educated tribal members that were part of this study feel this same pull that Logan has described here.

Based on the brain circulation responses, which speak directly to how people experience returning home and their compelling reasons for remaining in Taos Pueblo, we can gather that each of these individuals feels a sense of commitment and obligation to the Pueblo. Taos Pueblo is “home” to all of the study participants. This is where they feel a sense of belonging and connectedness. The care and maintenance of culture is of utmost importance to Taos Pueblo people, even if the role they play is considered minor according to our cultural structures.

Taos Pueblo Migration Theory

Based on my content analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, the results suggest that Taos Pueblo has a complex relationship with brain drain, and actually is one that cannot be compartmentalized as “yes, this is a problem” or “no, this is not a problem.” Clearly brain drain is occurring, but what we can see based on my research is a rather intricate design of migration patterns whereby tribal members leave Taos Pueblo

but *ultimately* return because of a distinct “pull” or “connection” that each tribal member has to Taos Pueblo.

This theory of “Taos Pueblo push and pull” is dynamic, but does have some constants albeit regulated by individuals and remains rooted through connections to *culture, people, and land*. Tribal members cannot simply “disconnect” themselves from the Pueblo. Taos Pueblo people have a distinct devotion to culture, family and community. Taos People take their responsibility and commitment to culture, family and community to heart. They show this by being hardworking, honest and humble. The return of each individual is unique and occurs when the time is right. Their timing is based upon their need to re-connect with various elements of Taos Pueblo. Participants have described Taos Pueblo as the “base” of their life. Returns happen on a daily, weekly, monthly or annual timeline. This theoretical framework suggest that we cannot end brain drain but we can do things to strengthen our connection to those who leave home.

One’s return can be based upon the way in which they left the community. Whether they left on good terms or bad terms. Individuals are most likely to return sooner if they leave on good terms. Furthermore, they are guaranteed to return if they left in a good way, if their departure was supported and if they were sent with blessings. This study revealed that educated tribal members feel a sense of obligation to come back and help their people and to genuinely make a positive impact on the community in any way possible.

There were four major themes in this study, these themes also contained sub-themes. The four major themes were Economic Stability, Physical Environment, Education, Community and Social Context. The subthemes include the importance of

language, connection to- culture, family, community and land, feelings of obligations, the need to give back and taking things for granted. The first question in this study ask participants if they think that Taos Pueblo has an issue with Brain Drain, the answers varied and were surprisingly interesting. In Jacob Archuleta's answer, he mentions that his supervisor has been working in his position for 15 years and only earns \$16 or \$17 dollars an hour, what we might want to think about is, first is his supervisor from Taos Pueblo and secondly, what kind of education does his supervisor have, if any, and what is it that keeps him in a low wage job? If his supervisor is from Taos Pueblo, maybe he has cultural obligations that keep him in Taos Pueblo or maybe he didn't have the opportunity to pursue higher education, therefore he has stayed in that position accumulating experience and slowly moving up the ladder because that is his only option. My reason for discussing this is because we all come from various backgrounds and experience and we all have a unique story that has led us to the places we find ourselves in today.

Based on the four major themes of Economic Stability, Physical Environment, Education, Community and Social Context. I was able to organize solutions and recommendations through my literary review and also through the study participant interview process:

Recommendations from Literature Review

1. Sponsor the return of people with badly needed skills
2. Provide Opportunities at Home
3. Provide Education Grants

4. Improve living conditions in Taos Pueblo

Recommendations from Study Participants

1. Conduct tribal wide job analysis
2. Maintaining personal contact with students
3. Revamp Taos Pueblo Scholarship Program
 - a) Agreement/contract with student
 - b) Tiered Scholarship System
 - c) Invest money into scholarship fund
4. Create list of educated tribal members for Human Resources
5. Create A “Pathways Program”

These solutions and recommendation were created in hopes that they would encourage tribal members to come home and to help the community to maintain strong connections to our tribal members who are pursuing higher education. The Core Values Paradigm encourages us to “maintain our connections to all of those who we encourage to go out and to get an education”. By bringing our educated tribal members home, “They will be part of the capacity of our communities, to create a kind of insulation, so that we can preserve and maintain the internal aspects that connect us to those core values” (Pecos, 2011).

Conclusion

Personally, and as of recently, I view myself actually as a reformed product of brain drain. I left the community for my own undergraduate and graduate education and

had become a formally educated Taos Pueblo woman who was not living in my community or directly employed by my Pueblo. I received my master degree in Community and Regional Planning in 2010 and since then I had been working for other tribes and for institutions outside of Taos Pueblo because there was not a professional planning position available (or positions related to my degree and qualifications). In addition, there were no housing options for me available on tribal lands. In November of 2016, I was invited to apply for the position of Community Development Planner for Taos Pueblo and chose to take the position, which brought me back home.

I have now been working for the Pueblo for exactly one year and four months. During this time of employment with the tribe, I have had to stay in hotels and stay with relatives because housing was not available, I depleted my savings account, trying to make ends meet and now I currently live paycheck to paycheck and last year, unfortunately, I was sexually harassed by a tribal leader. You may be curious as to why I have chosen to stay in Taos Pueblo. I stay because I get to hear the Tiwa language every day, I stay because I get to participate in cultural activities and I stay because being at home has helped me to strengthen my identity as a Taos Pueblo woman.

I realized that as people choose to leave home it places a “burden” on tribal members who choose to stay home to uphold and maintain our cultural practices on their own. And I realized that while I was away I was losing connections to family members, cultural practices, and language. As a tribal member I feel obligated to stay in Taos Pueblo to absorb as much of my culture as I possibly can so I can help carry on traditions and ease the load of those who have chosen to stay home to uphold our culture to this point.

My integration into cultural activities was not as smooth as I had hoped. I have dealt with older ladies yelling at me, I have had people whisper behind my back about me because they didn't know who I was. But it is my choice to endure all of this and to continue to remain in Taos Pueblo. We all have a "choice" to be here. People have different understandings of choice, and whereas an individual may "choose" to live elsewhere outside of the community and another may "choose" to return home, the way they employ the idea of choice in their lives is distinct. As a Taos Pueblo tribal member, I choose to remain at home to help protect our unique ways of being, traditional lifestyles, and the values we hold close to our identities as Taos Pueblo people.

While I was specifically interested in Taos Pueblo intellectual migration, the study can be significant beyond Taos Pueblo borders because the work presumes common threads between Indigenous peoples globally. As a result of this research worldview, my study inevitably connects the voices, memories, and experiences of Taos Pueblo tribal intellectuals with Taos Pueblo leadership and others who share and are concerned about brain drain and brain circulation.

CHAPTER III: POLICY PAPER- TAOS PUEBLOS NEED FOR BRAIN DRAIN AND BRAIN CIRCULATION POLICIES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

American Indian/Alaska Native communities and Indigenous communities worldwide are currently experiencing massive migration away from reservations, rural, and communities of origin and towards urbanized centers. In absolute levels, skilled migration is increasing (Gibson & McKenzie, 2011). Migration patterns such as these are commonly known as the phenomena of: Brain Drain and Brain Circulation. Brain drain is the migration of educated and skilled tribal members away from home who do not return (Bagdanavicius & Jodkoniene, 2008; Kwok & Leland, 1982; McKenzie et al., 2013) and brain circulation is the migration of educated and skilled tribal members away from home who ultimately do return home (Docquier, 2006; Boncea, 2013; Stark and Fan, 2007). Based on my preliminary observations of my community, I observed these phenomena occurring in Taos Pueblo.

In order for Taos Pueblo to create effective brain drain and brain circulation policies, I conducted in-depth research and completed a study that examined the experiences of formally educated Taos Pueblo migrants who left our community and either stayed elsewhere or returned home. I felt that this study was absolutely necessary to 1) determine if Taos Pueblo experience brain drain and to what extent and 2) to determine the type of support tribal members needed to return home. Data from my research was used to create a curriculum proposal for a college course focused on using Indigenous Planning concepts to reduce brain drain and support brain circulation. The

course will cover the overall history of Indigenous migration and include discussions on modern day migration trends. Lastly, I conclude with suggested solutions and recommendations for Taos Pueblo to use to address their unique migration patterns. Thus there are two intended audiences for this policy brief—Taos Pueblo leadership and Indigenous college/university students. This policy brief will provide suggested solutions and recommendations that were created based on my literary review and also through the study participant interview process.

In particular regarding tribal policy, Taos Pueblo tribal leadership needs to implement migration policies that will aid in the return of educated tribal members to Taos Pueblo. The return of educated tribal members is imperative to the endurance of the Taos Pueblo community in regards to capacity building and the continuance of traditional way of life. The policies herein will help to strengthen the relationship between current students and those who are currently residing and working outside of tribal lands. Furthermore, this policy paper includes a course proposal focused on Indigenous migration using Indigenous Planning Concepts and a Pueblo Core Value Paradigm which will be aimed at students (indigenous and non-indigenous) who will be working for or with Indigenous communities.

ISSUE DISCRPTION: BRAIN DRAIN AND BRAIN CIRCULATION

Leaders in Taos Pueblo are in agreement that something needs to be done as soon as possible to encourage brain circulation, which signals the return of our educated people. Tribal leadership appear to share the belief that Pueblo people need to be

provided opportunities and incentives for obtaining their education at home or returning to tribal lands after they receive their education. They also fear that without our educated Pueblo people coming back home, our community will continue to fall behind in today's technologies, educational systems, economic development opportunities, and health initiatives. Additionally, for Taos Pueblo where language (Tiwa) and cultural practices (including distinct ceremonial life) are critical to our identities as Pueblo people, the fear expressed by leadership is that while our people are away in other parts of the world, they and their children and future generations may be at risk of losing their connections to these things—the people at home (relatives), our language, our core values (how we function as a community), and our cultural practices.

Based on preliminary observations as a tribal member, my own experiences and professional work, and via exploration of the literature, I saw a critical need to explore the different ways that brain drain is impacting Taos Pueblo. Therefore, I chose to conduct a study using mixed methods to assess the migration patterns of educated Taos Pueblo tribal members. My study aimed to explore and first determine if Taos Pueblo does in fact have an issue with brain drain. Conversely, I also wanted to explore challenges that community members faced when they choose to return home after receiving postsecondary education. My research aspired to answer the following question: “What are the brain drain and brain circulation phenomena, and how do they impact our Indigenous communities?” I was more specifically interested in the following questions: Does Taos Pueblo have a brain drain Issue? What are the root cause of brain drain? What will it take for people to return to Taos Pueblo? Why do people choose to return to Taos Pueblo? What keeps people in Taos Pueblo?

My study had a total of nineteen participants. Of those nineteen, 10 were males and 9 were females. My participants ranged from age 24 through 64. The group gender composition was as follows: Brain Drain (9): 4 males, 5 females; Brain Circulation (10): 6 males, 4 females. Study participants achieved the following degrees, listed by highest degree completed: 10 had earned Bachelor's degrees, 6 had earned Masters degrees, and 3 had earned Doctorate degrees.

Brain Drain Participants Study Results

Brain Drain participants stated that they currently reside in the following states: New Mexico, Oregon and Oklahoma. Most of the participants stated that they return to Taos Pueblo, "All the time". Two of the nine said they return, "Sometimes" and one stated they return, "Every Once in A While". The questionnaire asked participants if they were planning to eventually return home. Seven of the nine participants said, "Yes". The two individuals who didn't respond to this question, gave the following responses to this question. One person stated that they return fairly often, so she feels like she has already made her return. The other individual is older and is content living outside of Taos Pueblo. She is interested in possibly coming back one day but feels that housing and employment would be an issue. When participants were asked when the last time they were in Taos Pueblo was, they stated the following: five participants said, "a few days ago", two participants said, "a few weeks ago" and two participants said, "a few months ago." The questionnaire posed the question, "What would it take for you to return to Taos Pueblo?" Participants stated that they would need employment opportunities in their specific field of expertise, housing, a job that pays well, consistent policies and

procedures to be followed by all employees in Tribal Government. Furthermore, participants want policies to be created for the following issues: fire at will, sexism and nepotism.

Brain Circulation Participants Study Results

The ten Brain Circulation participants stated that they reside in the following areas: El Prado, NM, Town of Taos, NM, Taos Pueblo, NM, Espanola, NM and Rio Rancho, NM. The participant that lives in Espanola commutes to Taos Pueblo on a daily basis for their job with Taos Pueblo. The participant that resides in Rio Rancho, works in Taos during the week day and then goes back to Rio Rancho on the weekends. It was determined that on average study participants were away from home between five and six years working on their degrees. Of the ten participants, seven are tribal employees. The purpose for including Brain Circulation participants in this study was to determine how individuals were treated when they decided to return home to Taos Pueblo and to establish if their experience “beyond the cattle guard” was useful to them and benefited them in anyway when they returned.

Based on my content analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, the results suggest that Taos Pueblo has a complex relationship with brain drain, and actually is one that cannot be compartmentalized as “yes, this is a problem” or “no, this is not a problem.” Clearly brain drain is occurring, but what we can see based on my research is a rather intricate design of migration patterns whereby tribal members leave Taos Pueblo but *ultimately* return because of a distinct “pull” or “connection” that each tribal member has to Taos Pueblo.

The “Taos Pueblo push and pull” is dynamic but does have some constants albeit regulated by individuals and remains rooted through connections to *culture, people, and land*. Tribal members cannot simply “disconnect” themselves from the Pueblo. Taos Pueblo people have a distinct devotion to culture, family and community. Taos People take their responsibility and commitment to culture, family and community to heart. They show this by being hardworking, honest and humble. The return of each individual is unique and occurs when the time is right. Their timing is based upon their need to re-connect with various elements of Taos Pueblo. Participants have described Taos Pueblo as the “base” of their life. Returns happen on a daily, weekly, monthly or annual timeline. This theoretical framework suggest that we cannot end brain drain but we can do things to strengthen our connection to those who leave home.

NEED FOR THE ISSUE: PUEBLO BRAIN DRAIN

This migration theory suggests that we cannot end brain drain but we can do things to strengthen our connection to those who leave home. What was revealed in the study was that tribal members are not choosing to completely return to Taos Pueblo because of the following reasons: lack of employment opportunities, not be paid what your education is “worth” (meaning salaries in the outside world for equivalent positions), being placed in a “menial position” (meaning a position that is actually not what one might have been trained to do and that does not leverage existing or potential talents), lack of housing (both modern and traditional), community’s view on western education, experiences with brain drain included the tensions placed on their relationships

with home, cultural reasons such as traditional initiation process for males and females, racism felt from the town of Taos, along with politics and nepotism.

Therefore, I recommend that we implement meaningful policies and incentives to strengthen the relationship with current students and those who we are currently categorized as “brain drain” individuals. The next section focuses on those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRIBAL LEADERSHIP

Throughout this research I was able to find solutions and recommendations through my literary review and also through the study participant interview process. I asked all nineteen participants what they thought we needed to do in Taos Pueblo to encourage educated tribal members to come home and to provide solutions or recommendations to end Brain Drain. My literature review provided some recommended strategies and incentives. Here I have modified the recommendations that I found in my literature review to better reflect how these suggested recommendations could be implemented in an indigenous community and provided the solutions and recommendation made by the study participants.

Recommendations from Literature Review:

1. Sponsor the return of people with badly needed skills

This could be accomplished by placing money in a special account that can only be accessed upon their return to Taos Pueblo.

2. Provide Opportunities at Home

Taos Pueblo needs to look into working collaboratively with UNM-Taos on providing education and training, as well as opportunities for career advancement and employment. This strategy would involve both tribal leadership's involvement as well as the Taos Pueblo Education and Training Division. By doing this, we would minimize the need for students at Taos Pueblo to leave the Taos area in the first place. If tribal members could get more of the education they desire while living on tribal lands, they might be more likely to remain on tribal lands and use that education to better the Taos Pueblo community.

3. Education Grants

Taos Pueblo could provide education grants for secondary and tertiary education, those grants would become repayable in the event of tribal member migration outside of Taos Pueblo.

4. Improve living conditions

Taos Pueblo should work on improving conditions that will provide greater incentives for the highly skilled and educated tribal members to stay. These may include better human rights, wages, changes in the political system, more modern health and education facilities as well as creating a more suitable environment for businesses.

Recommendations from Study Participants

1. Tribal wide job analysis

An analysis needs to be conducted that reviews all Taos Pueblo employment positions to determine if the individual in that position is capable of effectively fulfilling the job responsibilities and requirements. If the person is near retirement, this will allow the tribe to start preparing for a transition period between the senior employee and a new employee. This will also allow the Pueblo to determine if the person in the position needs more training or education in that specific field.

2. Maintaining personal contact with students

Maintain personal contact with all students throughout their educational journey. This can be done by periodically contacting them to check on them, to see if they need anything and to continuously encourage them to complete their chosen degree. This should especially be done by tribal leadership. The leadership should make an effort to support college students by upholding connections to the students and by occasionally sending them gift cards to help them buy a meal or purchase items that they may need.

3. Revamp of Scholarship Program

a) Agreement/contract with student

An agreement or contract should be put in place between the Taos Pueblo Education and Training Division and college students that states that they will receive funding only if they agree to come back and serve Taos Pueblo through some type of community service. This

could be done by students volunteering at community events, supporting our senior citizens, assisting with the Taos Day School Summer Program, etc.

b) Tiered Scholarship System

A tiered scholarship system needs to be developed to ensure that students who grew up in Taos Pueblo and plan to return receive guaranteed support before students who did not grow up in Taos Pueblo and who do not intend to come back to Taos Pueblo after they receive their degree.

c) Invest money into scholarship fund

Taos Pueblo needs to invest in the education of our tribal members. Our youth today, are the future for Taos Pueblo. We need to train and educate our youth to ensure that our Taos Pueblo community has well-informed tribal members with the expertise and experience needed to manage our community and take care of the people.

4. List of educated tribal members for Human Resources

An updated list of educated tribal members needs to be given to the Taos Pueblo Human Resources Department on a quarterly basis to ensure that educated tribal members are informed of job openings that are directly related to their degrees earned. Furthermore, a collaborative effort needs to be put in place between the Human Resources Department and the Taos Pueblo Education and Training Division that requires them to contact college students and see if they plan to return home, so they can prepare a position for them to fulfill when they return.

5. Creation of A “Pathways Program”

This would be a collaborative approach between the Pueblo and a college or university. This would allow a student to be trained or educated in a specific type of job that the Pueblo needs filled. The student would be strategically trained for that specific position. Therefore, upon graduation the student is guaranteed a job when they return.

Collectively, these are great recommendations for encouraging higher education, for ensuring that we stay connected to Taos Pueblo intellectuals and for promoting return migration. The recommendations from the literature review were very useful and can be applied to an Indigenous community. Recommendations provided by study participants were based on their personal experiences and what they genuinely feel will help the Pueblo. Sponsoring the return of educated tribal members is a useful idea and would be beneficial to the tribe. The suggestions for providing a *Pathways Program* and *Providing Opportunities at Home* is excellent idea for supporting those who cannot leave Taos Pueblo due to traditional obligations that require them to stay in Taos Pueblo. The recommendation for *Improving Living Conditions* would benefit all tribal members not just educated tribal members. *Maintaining personal contact with students* is a thoughtful idea that wouldn't require a lot of effort and would strengthen the connection between the Pueblo and the student.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDIGENOUS COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

1. Be aware of Indigenous protocols

Make sure that you ask about specific protocols that each community has so that you are aware of what is expected and accepted.

2. Be prepared to learn with an open mind and open heart

When working with tribal communities you will be exposed to a new language and a new way of life, which will most likely be different from your own. Be respectful of the differences between your life and theirs. Be considerate of views and courteous to all.

3. Learn about Native American history

It would be beneficial to learn about the history of Indigenous peoples so there are no misconceptions about the people you are working with. This will also better inform the work that you do and give you a better understanding of the role you will play in that community.

4. Do not assume all tribal communities are the same

Tribal communities are not all the same. Each community has its own beliefs, governing system, protocols and trends. Make sure that you are well informed of the environment and situation that you find yourself in, so that thoroughly understand how to navigate your surroundings.

5. Be patient when working with a tribal community

Tribal communities work at much slower speeds than the “outside” world. Major decisions are usually made by a tribal council. A tribal council consists of 10-50 men and women, depending on the tribe you are working for. Each decision is made with caution and only after all appropriate information has been presented and evaluated. Be patient with this process and always account for this additional

time in your work.

6. Be respectful of Indigenous World-view

You may have your own world-view based on your life experiences. This has shaped you into the person you are today. Indigenous communities share a world-view that has been shaped by the trials and tribulations of their own past and the historic experiences of their ancestors. Their world-view is the foundation of their culture, way of being and identity.

7. Determine what your own core values are

Your core values help you to make decisions on a daily basis. They have helped you to mold your life in life into its present state and will continue to do so into the future. Your core values are linked to who you are as an individual. Look to these for guidance when working with a tribal community.

8. Determine what you are contributing to your community or line of work

What is it that you are bringing to the table? Do you have a unique type of knowledge that could help your community or a community that you intend to work with? What knowledge are you contributing to future generations to inherit and carry with them?

These recommendations are for college/university students who plan to work for or with Indigenous communities. Below you will find a course proposal for a college course that requires students to work with a local Indigenous community. These recommendations will prepare them for that work.

COURSE PROPOSAL

I would like to propose a college course that is focused on Indigenous migration using Indigenous Planning Concepts and a Pueblo Core Value Paradigm. The motivation for this course is to teach college-age students about indigenous migration patterns and the impacts that it has on people, land, personal connections and cultural identity. My study encouraged me to want to share my knowledge and experience with others who are interested in preserving culture, ways of life and cultural identity.

According to Dr. Theodore Jojola (2008)³, Indigenous planning incorporates “traditional” knowledge and cultural identity. These are two important cultural considerations that must be addressed when analyzing migration trends. For example, Taos Pueblo people have a distinct worldview rooted in historical experiences, cultural knowledge (cultural/seasonal calendars) and traditional practices. These elements have been the guiding principles for planning in Taos Pueblo since time immemorial. These in turn have shaped the identities and lifestyles of Taos Pueblo people as a whole. These significant features of our lives are threatened with migration.

This course theorizes that Indigenous communities have an intricate design of migration patterns. Each indigenous community has its own story of migration. These migration patterns play a complex role on a community’s way of life. These modern-day migration patterns often times deter educated tribal members towards more urbanized

³ Professor Theodore S. Jojola, from Isleta Pueblo, teaches at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Dr. Jojola holds the rank of Distinguished Professor and Regents’ Professor in the Community and Regional Planning Program at The University of New Mexico in the field of Indigenous design and planning. He remains the Director of the Indigenous Design and Planning Institute.

centers thus moving them away from their home communities where they could be assisting their community on a much greater level.

Through this course students will become familiar with the phenomena of “brain drain” and “brain circulation”. This course seeks to teach students about historical and modern-day migration trends found in indigenous communities and how to address these patterns using an Indigenous Planning Paradigm. Moreover, students will learn about different methods of gathering knowledge from indigenous communities and how to create a community based strategic plan for implementing recommended solutions to aid in return migration.

Students will choose an Indigenous community to research and apply their understanding of Indigenous planning concepts towards solutions for ending brain drain and promoting brain circulation. The final project will incorporate a hands-on approach whereby students will break into teams and choose a local Indigenous community to assist in 1) determining if that community experiences brain drain and to what extent, 2) to collaboratively work with the community to create solutions and recommendations for the community, and 3) create a community based strategic plan to help the community implement solutions. In this course students will learn how to successfully use community engagement tools, become familiar with Indigenous community protocols, and learn how to apply indigenous planning concepts.

Here I provide a list of expected learning outcomes for students who choose to take the course.

Learning Outcomes

The class will explore Indigenous migration patterns from several Indigenous communities. Students will also learn about different community engagement tools and community based strategic planning. At the end of the semester students will be able to:

- a. An understanding of historical migration and modern-day migration patterns;
- b. The ability to critically examine the patterns of Indigenous migration
- c. The opportunity to become familiar with Indigenous community protocols
- d. To opportunity to develop a sense of appreciation and understanding of the indigenous world-view
- e. The capability to develop skills in community engagement and data gathering and analysis
- f. An opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of Indigenous planning
- g. To learn how to create a community based strategic plan

Required Text

Required text for this course will be:

1. Walker, Ryan, Ted Jojola, and David Natcher. (2013). Reclaiming Indigenous Planning, edited by Ryan Walker, et al., MQUP. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/lib/asulib-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3332617>.
2. Kapur, Devesh & McHale, John. (2005). Give us your best and brightest: the global hunt for talent and its impact on the developing world. Center for Global Development, Washington, D.C.
3. Grubel, Herbert G. (1977). The Brain Drain: Determinants, Measurement, and Welfare Effects. Published by Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
4. Kupfer, L., Hofman, K., Jarawan, R., McDermott, J., & Bridbord, K. (2004). Strategies to discourage brain drain. Bulletin of the World Health Organization, 82, 616–619.

5. Lichter, Daniel T., Diane K. McLaughlin, and Gretchen T. Cornwell. (1995). "Migration and the Loss of Human Resources in Rural America." In *Investing in People: The Human Capital Needs of Rural America*, eds. Lionel J. Beaulieu and David Mulkey. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
6. McKenzie, J., Jackson, A. P., Yazzie, R., Smith, S. A., Crotty, A. K., Baum, D. , Denny, A., Bah'lgai Eldridge, D. (2013). Career Dilemmas among Diné (Navajo) College Graduates: An Exploration of the Dinétah (Navajo Nation) Brain Drain. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 4(4). Retrieved from: <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/iipj/vol4/iss4/5> DOI: 10.18584/iipj.2013.4.4.5
7. Reichert, Christiane von, Cromartie, John B., Arthun, Ryan O. (2014) Impacts of Return Migration on Rural U.S. Communities. *Rural Sociology* 79 (2) pp. 200-226.

Courses such as this are far and in between. It is rare that students learn about problems that are close to home and problems that they might not know even exist in their own communities, Indigenous or not. The different theoretical frameworks that will be used to teach this course will allow students to look deep within themselves to learn about their personal core values and how they imagine applying those to their own field of work and how they may be able to apply knowledge gained in this course to their own community.

In the appendix you will find a syllabus for this course. The syllabus contains course information, learning outcomes, course objectives, required text and a course schedule outline.

CONCLUSION

These solutions and recommendation were created in hopes that they would encourage tribal members to come home and to help the community to maintain strong connections to our tribal members who are pursuing higher education. The Core Values Paradigm, which has guided my research, encourages us to "maintain our connections to

all of those who we encourage to go out and to get an education”. The paradigm also states that by bringing our educated tribal members home, “They will be part of the capacity of our communities, to create a kind of insulation, so that we can preserve and maintain the internal aspects that connect us to those core values. The Core Values Paradigm encourages our Pueblo communities to use our core values as the heart of our decision making and strategizing (Pecos, 2011).

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APPENDIX A

COURSE SYLLABUS

INDIGENOUS PLANNING CURRICULUM PROPOSAL: EXPLORATION OF
INDIGENOUS MIGRATION PATTERNS

Syllabus-Indigenous Planning: Exploration of Indigenous Migration Patterns

Fall 2019

Instructor Information

Instructor

Amanda J. Montoya

Email

amontoya@taospueblo.com

Office Location & Hours

CMS Bldg, 1:30-4:30pm, Mondays & Wednesdays

General Information

Description

This course theorizes that Indigenous communities have an intricate design of migration patterns. Each indigenous community has its own story of migration. These migration patterns play a complex role on a community's way of life. These modern-day migration patterns often times deter educated tribal members towards more urbanized centers thus moving them away from their home communities where they could be assisting their community on a much greater level. Through this course students will become familiar with the phenomena of "brain drain" and "brain circulation". This course seeks to teach students about historical and modern-day migration trends found in indigenous communities and how to address these patterns using an Indigenous Planning Paradigm and Core Values Paradigm. Moreover, students will learn about different methods of gathering knowledge from indigenous communities and how to create a community based strategic plan for implementing recommended solutions to aid in return migration.

Students will choose an Indigenous community to research and apply their understanding of Indigenous planning concepts towards solutions for ending brain drain and promoting brain circulation. The final project will incorporate a hands-on approach whereby students will break into teams and choose a local Indigenous community to assist in 1) determining if that community experiences brain drain and to what extent, 2) to collaboratively work with the community to create solutions and recommendations for the community, and 3) create a community based strategic plan to help the community implement solutions. In this course students will learn how to successfully use community engagement tools, become familiar with Indigenous community protocols, and learn how to apply indigenous planning concepts.

Course Materials

Learning Outcomes

The class will explore Indigenous migration patterns from several Indigenous communities. Students will also learn about different community engagement tools and community based strategic planning. At the end of the semester students will be able to:

- a. An understanding of historical migration and modern-day migration patterns;
- b. The ability to critically examine the patterns of Indigenous migration
- c. The opportunity to become familiar with Indigenous community protocols
- d. To opportunity to develop a sense of appreciation and understanding of the indigenous world-view
- e. The capability to develop skills in community engagement and data gathering and analysis
- f. An opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of Indigenous planning

- g. To learn how to create a community based strategic plan

Required Text

1. Walker, Ryan, Ted Jojola, and David Natcher. (2013). Reclaiming Indigenous Planning, edited by Ryan Walker, et al., MQUP. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/lib/asulib-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3332617>.
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Course Requirements and Evaluation

- 1) Qualitative and/or quantitative data derived from the field
- 2) Quantitative Data Set
- 3) Classroom engagement and participation

Technology Support

TBD

Classroom Policies

TBD

Course Reading and Schedule

All relevant course readings have been posted in Blackboard under the Course Information and Content folders. It is student responsibility to download the documents.

Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Reading	Exercises
Week 1	What is Indigenous Planning? Core values Paradigm	#1 See YouTube Video	Write 1 page essay on your core values
Week 2	Historic and Modern-Day Migration	#2, #3, #4, #6, #7 #8	Write a 2 page paper on the pros and cons of modern day migration from your perspective
Week 3	Intro to Data Gathering Methods/Tools	#9, #10, #11, #12	Determine what tools you are interested in and create draft of what that would look like, i.e. community survey
Week 4	Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis	1) Atlas.ti 2) Stata #5	Determine how you will analyze your data collection tool
Week 5	Indigenous Community		Choose a community to research
Week 6	Research Plan		Present how your research plan to class
Week 7	In class work session		Work on your research project
Week 8	Community Research Presentation		Midterm Presentations
Week 9	Local Indigenous Communities	#2	1) Split into 2 teams 2) Choose a local Indigenous community you are interested in working with as a group (Choose from list)
Week 10	Present Research Plan		Present how your group plans to engage with community
Week 11	Community Visit 1 st Community-All Students		Community Orientation
Week 12	Community Visit 2 nd Community-All Students		Community Orientation
Week 13	Community Visit (Each group goes their chosen community)		Data Collection

Week	Topic	Reading	Exercises
Week 14	No Class		Data Analysis
Week 15	No Class		Group Work Day
Week 16	Final Community Engagement Presentations		Final Presentations

Exam Schedule

Date	Subject
Date 1	Mid-term Presentation
Date 2	Final Presentation

APPENDIX B
TAOS PUEBLO MIGRATION MAP

Brain Drain Study Participant Locations

