Exploring the Use of Cultural Values in the Evaluation of Programs with Native American Tribes

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This dissertation is a qualitative study that explores the importance of including cultural values in evaluation and whether this would lead to an increase in utilization of evaluation results. It was first wondered whether Native American values are included when evaluations are completed for Indigenous Tribes. A review of evaluations revealed that evaluations in the published literature are including general Native American values, although a document review alone was found to be insufficient as a method to capture the nuances related to value expression. It is suggested that more research is needed in the area of metaevaluation to include culturally specific methods of inquiry which could lead to the development of a general approach to cultural metaevaluation. Next, culturally appropriate qualitative methods were utilized to determine what values are of most importance to an Ojibwe Tribe in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. A storytelling approach using Talking Circles (Brown & Di Lallo, 2020) and individual interviews were employed to gather information about values. It was found that the values of most significance to the tribal members who participated in the study are the same values that, through oral knowledge transmission, have been passed down over many generations and are referred to as the Seven Grandfather Teachings (Benton-Banai, 1988) of: Love, Honesty, Wisdom, Bravery, Humility, Respect, and Truth. Finally, tribal members were asked whether inclusion of their values in evaluations for their Tribe would be beneficial and would lead to greater use of evaluation results. Tribal members expressed a need for values to be included in evaluation, especially when values were written into the goals of a
Members of the Tribe felt that values research is extremely important in that it will increase all peoples’ understanding about Native American people.

**Keywords:** Values, Native Americans, Anishinaabe, Sovereignty, Historical Trauma, Relationality, Reciprocity, Seven Grandfathers, Indigenous Research Methods, Indigenous Evaluator, Culturally Responsive Evaluation, Decolonized Evaluation.
EXPLORING THE USE OF CULTURAL VALUES IN THE EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS WITH NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

by

Karen Lynn Alexander

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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First and foremost, I would like to say miigwetch (thank you) to Gitchi-Manidoo (Great Spirit/Creator) for my good life and for all the wonderful opportunities I have had in my life, such as this one to pursue a higher education. It has been a long and very interesting journey to attain my doctorate degree. I would also like to thank my grandmothers, and my ancestors for paving the way for me to succeed, especially Grama Toto (Angeline Williams) and Gram (Maria Boulley). I have felt your guidance, love, and support every step of the way. Grama Toto continues to inspire me through the courage that she demonstrated so many years ago when she traveled “where the clouds come from” with non-Native researchers to the University of North Carolina to tell stories in Anishinaabemowin (Anishinaabe Language) so that linguists could study our language and it could be written and translated in Grama Toto’s book, The Dog’s Children (Bloomfield & Nichols, 1991). Grama Toto only spoke Ojibwe and brought her granddaughter Virgina (Aunt Senie) as translator. I would also like to say miigwetch to my grandmother “Gram” for always being there and loving me unconditionally throughout my childhood. I can remember your loving smiling face and how you always had something fresh out of the oven to offer when I visited. Your nurturing love is what sustained me through some extremely difficult times. I always knew that you were proud of me and loved me no matter what.

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Boozhoo. Waabishkaa Mukwa Kwe ndizhnikaaaz, mukwa ndoodem, Baaweting ndoonjbaa, Ojibwe Anishinaabe ndaa. Aapji gchi-nendam, maapii yaa’aaah. Hello. My spirit name is White Bear Woman. I am Bear Clan. I am from The Place of the Rapids (Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan). I am from the Ojibwe Nation of the Original People. I am very happy to be here. This is how we begin in my culture. We introduce ourselves. We may also say who our human relations are, including our ancestors. In this way we remember and solidify our connections with one another. We may realize that someone is from the same clan or that we have an ancestor in common, adding another cousin to the pile (a little Native humor). We have many cousins. Humor is important to who we are; it is part of our resilience as a people. There are some other concepts important in my culture that must be mentioned early and are introduced in this section.

When I was telling my brother about the layout of my dissertation, and I started talking about the prologue, he said, “You’re not writing a book, you don’t need a prologue.” My first thought was, “Of course I do.” Relationality and storytelling are integral to understanding not only me, but my culture as an Indigenous person. My ways of knowing, learning, and teaching others rely on these concepts as they are integral to my worldview. I explain more about these concepts later, but for now the reader needs to know that I (and many other Native people) believe that everything is connected to and interacts with everything human and non-human (relationality), and it is through telling our stories that we build relationships and learn from each other. The way that I am communicating may seem casual and non-academic, but it is real and it is the way that people relate to each other in my culture. My writing style will reflect my culture throughout this paper, in that I will speak in the first person when it feels necessary and
appropriate. Although this will be a kind of one-sided relationship as you gain a better understanding of me, I welcome interaction and feedback from you, the reader.

I was reading Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations and Contexts (Kovach, 2009) and realized that writing about why I got into the field of evaluation and why I chose this particular topic for my dissertation is important to share because it helps you to understand my cultural background, gives you an understanding of my reasons for this study, and, most importantly, I hope it will encourage and inspire other Native Americans who are pursuing higher education to know that our voices are important and need to be heard and included with academia. I believe this is a part of our healing: to be known and acknowledged for who we really are. Everything in my present life, including working toward a doctoral degree, has been a journey of praxis, learning, and guidance. Without going into my whole life story, I will share a little about my history, so you know more about who I am and how I got to this point.

I grew up in an impoverished Native American community on Shunk Road in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. This is one of the places my people were “relocated” to when my mom was a teen. On Shunk Road, we had dirt roads and outhouses, and we lived on government commodity foods. We lived near what we called “the carbide,” a series of hills of industrial waste where we played in the summer and sledded in the winter. We came home covered in grey carbide soot, and this seemed perfectly normal. Another pollution-related issue I found out about later was that the high rate of impetigo in children in our neighborhood was due to the high water table and lack of indoor plumbing, which meant that we were basically living in sewage. Another sign of our poverty, and this used to be embarrassing to say, is that we had sponsors like in a third world country. We excitedly opened letters and received an occasional gift from middle-
class White strangers. Some of us had sponsors while others did not, which added another layer of unfairness to an already oppressive and seemingly miserable situation.

The Marquette Avenue/Shunk Road (Mar-Shunk) area was one of the places that Native people from Sugar Island were displaced to after the Indian Relocation Act of 1956. The sad and ironic thing about not having indoor plumbing or good roads was that we lived within the city limits of Sault Ste. Marie and no other community in the area lived in such desolation. It turned out that the city had funding for improvements (for years) but did not make upgrades until a group of tribal members got together and sued for our rights. At the time, I was unaware of what was happening politically and just accepted that this was how we lived. I was about 13 when we finally got an indoor toilet and paved roads. During our formative years, we attended Finlayson School, a segregated, open-concept school which I later found out came about due to the Open Education Reform Movement of the 1970s (Maling, 1990). At our school there was a lack of formal structure, which allowed kids to roam freely and decide what they would learn. Some were adaptable to this idea, and some were not. The kids who attended this school were mostly Natives from the Mar-Shunk area, Sugar Island, and those who lived in low-income housing (some who were non-Native). Many people never went far beyond grade school, possibly because of the lack of structure, but some excelled regardless of the barriers. These are some examples of how it was to be a Native American person when and where I grew up. I know this sounds kind of dismal—and it was to a certain extent—but there was hope for the future with grassroots efforts headed by tribal members to make things better for our people. At times we acquired large donations of clothes and other things for our community. One time we got a shipment of blue and white pinstriped fabric and it ended up as curtains, pillowcases, and clothes; it was everywhere. Whenever I see a similar fabric, it brings me back to that time and gives me a feeling of community. We were there for each other no
matter what the obstacles—and we found joy, too. One of my fondest memories is, after spending the night at my gram’s house, waking up in the morning to the wonderful sound of happy voices and laughter as the women in the neighborhood gathered to have coffee and visit. Much has changed over the years, but we are still connected and care deeply for one another. This is my community.

How did I end up pursuing my doctorate? I absolutely loved school and learning and found it to be an oasis from the chaos at home. I grew up in an abusive, alcoholic family and found refuge in school, church, and spending time with my grandmother. I excelled in school and was praised by teachers. I was even offered the chance to skip a grade but was too fearful of joining a higher grade, so I stayed put in 4th grade. Possibly because of genetics or socialization or both, I developed problems with alcohol and drugs and dropped out of school at age 16. I later achieved a GED and attended college, earning associate’s, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees. After my bachelor’s degree in psychology, I secured a one-year grant position with my Tribe as program planner. I was charged with completing a substance abuse needs assessment and strategic plan for our behavioral health department. As program planner, I delved into evaluation, and I loved it. Since it was a one-year project, I moved on to my second passion of helping others to recover from addiction and became a substance abuse counselor. By this time (2003) I had been sober for 10 years. I quickly found out that I would be in charge of a substance abuse prevention program as well. I was responsible for writing the prevention grant and facilitating the program in elementary schools. This is where I began thinking about evaluation and how mainstream programs and evaluation do not fit with Native Americans.

The programs we had to choose from then were promoted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as evidence-based and were mostly universal; meaning that they were not tested with a Native American population but were
meant to be used with any group. While facilitating the prevention program for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders, I found myself tweaking it to fit the tribal population. For example, the section of the program dealing with nonsmoking, in my opinion, was more than persuading kids not to smoke or chew tobacco; this was a chance to talk about tobacco being one of our sacred medicines. Adding a traditional teaching changes the fidelity of the program, but is necessary to make it culturally appropriate. So, I took issue with using a universal program with a specific population. This was the first problem. Next was the problem with the method of evaluating the program. There was a pre- and post-evaluation survey that children had to complete. Right off the bat, I noticed that children were having a hard time completing the survey when it was just handed to them to do on their own, so the method was not useful, and as with the implementation of the program, I adjusted the evaluation protocol by reading it aloud. Another aspect of the protocol was to not explain any terms to the children, so if an unfamiliar word came up, I would just tell the children that I could not explain, and they would have to figure it out. I knew that the evaluation was not giving an accurate picture of the success of the program. The bottom line was that I wanted programs and evaluation methods that were appropriate for Native Americans. Thankfully, there are some programs and evaluation approaches now that have been developed by Native people for use with Native populations. While studying for my Master of Social Work degree, I started to think more about evaluation, and I heard about the doctoral program at Western Michigan University, so I applied and was accepted. While in the PhD program, I thought about what my dissertation study would be, and I knew that I wanted to find a way to make evaluation more useful for Native American people, but I had to think about what that would look like. What was missing? There were other evaluation models and approaches that were certainly more Native friendly and some that are Native specific, but there was still something missing. I thought about what it is that
defines us as Native Americans. The core of who we are is our values, and Native American values are quite different than those of the dominant race. The core of who we are as Native people was not being addressed and was not of primary importance to any evaluation approach. From this point on, the study of values was at the forefront of my mind and that is how my study began.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is the intention of this study to add to the knowledge base of the evaluation field in the area of cultural competence by studying and then providing a better understanding of the inclusion of cultural values in evaluation. This will be accomplished by defining values in a local culture specific context and examining whether the inclusion of cultural values in evaluation would be beneficial to this specific tribal group and lead to greater utilization of evaluation. This will in turn expand the evaluation field’s understanding of cultural competency when working with diverse populations by gaining more knowledge regarding the importance of including specific values in evaluation (Wehipeihana & McKegg, 2018; Gomez Isa, 2019; Canadian Evaluation Society, Ontario Chapter, 2020). If we, as evaluators, are to conduct evaluations in a culturally appropriate manner, values must be given attention since values are essential to the core meaning of culture (SenGupta et al., 2004; Kirkhart, 2010). The American Evaluation Association’s Statement on Cultural Competence states, “… all evaluation reflects culturally influenced norms, values, and ways of knowing—making cultural competence integral to ethical, high-quality evaluation” (Hall et al., 2011). Hood et al. (2015) agree, stating that Culturally Responsive Evaluation (CRE) “…recognizes that culturally defined values and beliefs lie at the heart of any evaluative effort” (p. 283). In addition, the idea of attending to culture and values in evaluation is embedded in many of the program evaluation standards of the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (JCSEE). The JCSEE states that for evaluation to have a high level of utility, “Evaluations should clarify and specify the individual and cultural values underpinning purposes, processes, and judgments” (Yarbrough et al., 2011, p.3).
This study seeks to explore the inclusion of cultural values in the evaluation of programs for Native Americans by first examining in general what has already been accomplished in regard to attention to cultural values by evaluators who evaluate programs with Native American Tribes, and then by exploring the values of a specific tribal population through the use of culturally appropriate methods. This study is beneficial in gaining an understanding of whether including specific cultural values in evaluation is, or could be, a viable approach to evaluating programs for cultural groups. This first chapter contains an introduction to terminology, the background of the problem, the statement of the problem, the purpose of this study, the questions this study hopes to answer, theoretical considerations, the significance of this study to the evaluation field, the scope and delimitations of this study, and an outline of the remaining chapters. The practice of culturally competent evaluation is essential to good evaluation because, “…culture is central to economic, political, and social systems as well as individual identity” (Hall et al., 2011). The American Evaluation Association’s statement regarding values is utilized due to being well-established in the evaluation field.

**Terminology**

**Native Americans**

This term is used to represent the Indigenous people of North America and is used interchangeably with American Indians, Natives, Indigenous people, Native people, First Nations, Tribes, Indian Country, and tribal community. These terms are capitalized because Indigenous Tribes are a separate nation within a nation and are respected as such. The term tribal will follow current writing customs by not being capitalized unless it is part of a formal title or name.
Anishinaabe(k)

This means “original people” (singular/plural) and is what some Tribes including the Ojibwe use to describe themselves. This can be used interchangeably with Ojibwe, Ojibwe Nation, and Indian Country. Note: Chippewa was the term used to describe Ojibwe people by non-Native people.

Anishinaabemowin

This is the language of the Anishinaabek. Some Ojibwe words are used in this study and will be translated (when possible) and it is recommended that the reader use a source such as The Ojibwe People’s Dictionary (Ojibwe.lib.umn.edu) when seeking more information, such as the meaning and correct pronunciation of words.

Historical Trauma

This is a term used to represent and describe the effects of compounded trauma suffered by Native Americans post-contact with Europeans due to the multitude of atrocities Native people were subjected to over many generations. A similar and interchangeable term is inter-generational trauma.

Colonialization

This is a term used to describe how life was changed for Native Americans when non-Native settlers arrived and denied, removed, and replaced much of what Native people held as important to their cultural ways of being such as language, customs, spiritual practices, homelands, self-sustaining practices (hunting, gathering), etc. In attempts at assimilation, Native people were required to adopt or adapt to the ways of the Europeans which were foreign and vastly different from how Native people lived their lives.
Decolonialization

This term could be used to cover a variety of subject matter, but in this study, it is used to describe the process of changing research and evaluation to make it more appropriate to working with cultural groups by moving from of a Western, positivistic, linear approach to more of a circular, inclusive, qualitative approach that is more suitable to the Native American relational worldview. The opposite of decolonization is colonization, where “…European American thought, knowledge, and power structures dominate present-day society in the United States” (Brayboy, 2005, p. 430).

Sovereignty

There is acknowledgement by the federal government that Native American Tribes are separate nations from the United States, and this is evidenced by the many treaties held between the U.S. and Native American Tribes. As distinct nations within a nation, Tribes have the fundamental right to self-determination including self-governance.

Interconnectedness (Relationality)(Gidinawendimin)

It is believed in Ojibwe culture and other Native American cultures that we are all connected (related). This interconnection includes human beings, animals, plants, water, the earth, moon, spirit beings: everything and everyone is connected now and beyond the present time. We are all related. As Anishinaabek, we always think about how our decisions and actions will affect each other and the next seven generations.

In a Good Way

It is commonly said that if something is done in a way that is beneficial to the individual and all our relations (gidinawendimin), then it is done in a good way. Therefore, living one’s life in a good way is important in everything we do each day because it is the right thing to do, and it affects everyone else.
Smudging

A common practice in my community, smudging is a process of clearing negative energy from ourselves and the area around us. This is done by burning one or a combination of sacred medicines (sage, cedar, and sweetgrass) and smudging with the smoke. Smudging is done by pulling or fanning the smoke toward one’s body with the use of either the hands or a feather. This can be done at any time and is always done as part of traditional ceremonies. During a ceremony, the smudge is offered to all who are in attendance. I always thank the medicines for their assistance, as gratitude and respect are important to me.

Worldview

The specific way a person or people perceive and interact with the world and society around them which is based on and influenced by values, beliefs, and culture.

Values

The concept of values is described by an Ojibwe elder who said, when referring to the Seven Grandfather teachings of Love, Honesty, Humility, Respect, Bravery, Truth, and Wisdom: “It’s all we need to live our lives in a good way” (Ojibwe elder, Sault Ste. Marie, MI., October 2019, personal communication). Schwartz (1999) with different words expressed the same sentiment when he said, “…values are trans-situational criteria or goals ordered by importance as guiding principles in life” (p. 25).

Background of the Problem

Although there have been evaluations that have included some values in general, there has not been a study assessing the values that are of importance to an individual Native American Tribe and including those values in an evaluation for that Tribe. Lack of research in the area of Tribe-specific cultural values is part of a large gap that must be addressed before engaging in evaluation work with Native American Tribes. To narrow this gap, there is a
significant amount of background knowledge that must be acquired regarding Native Americans, both generally and specifically to a Tribe. Evaluators must consider and increase their knowledge concerning many factors that affect working productively with Native American Tribes including Native American history, historical trauma, tribal sovereignty, Native American worldviews, and understanding Indigenous values. Another factor important to Indigenous people that should be considered is the lack of tribally specific data creation and ownership (Prussing, 2018; Rodriguez-Lonebear, 2016; Bowman, 2020; Hayward et al., 2021). Although ownership of data by Tribes is being addressed through the adoption of the Data Governance Framework (British Columbia First Nation’s Data Governance Initiative, 2018), more research and evaluation must be endorsed and conducted by Tribes for their own use and ownership.

Evaluators must first gain a thorough understanding of all aspects of Native American culture including values in order to conduct evaluations that are meaningful, useful, and multiculturally valid (Kirkhart, 2010; LaFrance et al., 2012). Learning more about Native American culture both generally and specific to the Tribe of interest in an evaluation is of paramount importance (Bowman et al., 2015; Waapalaneexkweew, 2018). To better appreciate best practices for working with Native Americans, evaluators must begin by taking time to understand the Native American experience, history, and values that make up the Native American worldview. According to LaFrance (2004), a culturally responsive evaluator should learn as much as possible about a Native American population’s history, resources, composition, governance, and context. Learning all that one can about a Tribe cannot happen through reading books and articles alone but must be done by developing and nurturing relationships between people. Building relationships with people takes time and effort.
Statement of the Problem

Although evaluators have made strides in a positive direction to provide culturally competent evaluation, little is known about whether cultural values have been given sufficient importance in evaluations for specific cultural groups and more specifically for evaluations of programs for Native American Tribes due to the paucity of studies that incorporate specific tribal values in evaluation. Some of the mainstream efforts to conduct research and evaluation by using evaluation methods that are responsive to the needs of cultural groups are: Participatory Evaluation (Cousins & Earl, 1992); Deliberative Democratic Evaluation (House & Howe, 2000); Responsive Evaluation (Stake, 2003); Utilization Focused Evaluation (Patton, 2015); and Fourth-Generation Evaluation (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). There are also evaluation approaches and designs that give consideration to values, such as: Culturally Responsive Evaluation (Acree & Chouinard 2020), Community Based Participatory Research (Burhansstipano et al., 2005; LaVeaux & Christopher, 2009; Novins et al., 2010), Tribal Participatory Research (Fisher & Ball, 2003), Indigenous Evaluation Framework (LaFrance & Nichols, 2009), Culturally Responsive Indigenous Evaluation (Bowman et al., 2015), Tribally-Driven Participatory Research (Mariella et al., 2009), and the Medicine Wheel Evaluation Framework (Atlantic Council for International Cooperation, 2021). However, these approaches incorporate general Native American values instead of utilizing values specific to a Tribe. To date, a values-based evaluation approach has not yet been proposed nor studied for specific cultural groups, although there are values-based approaches being utilized in other fields.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory study is to understand how inclusion of local values in evaluation could contribute to greater acceptance and utilization of evaluation in tribal communities. To attain this purpose, this study will focus on understanding how evaluations of
programs for Native Americans have been conducted in culturally appropriate ways and have incorporated the values held by Native Americans participating in social programs. This study will also explore and determine the values for members of a specific tribal population and explore whether inclusion of these values in evaluation could possibly lead to greater acceptance and utilization of evaluation results among this tribal group. Since values are fundamental to the meaning of culture, values should be integral to every aspect of the evaluation process, because “When we fail to appreciate and account for the influence of culture and values in program planning, implementation, and evaluation, we risk being ineffective or even doing damage” (Gill et al., 2016, p. 5).

**Research Questions**

The Research Questions for this study are:

1. How, if at all, are Native American values included when evaluating programs for Native American Nations?

2. What values are important to Native Americans in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, primarily people from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians?

3. How, if at all, might a values-based approach to evaluation lead to an increase in utilization of evaluation results by people from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians?

**Theoretical Frameworks**

The theoretical frameworks that provide guidance in this study are Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit, TCT) (Brayboy, 2005), the Relational Worldview Model (RWM) (Cross, 1997), and Utilization Theory (Weiss, 1972; Rich, 1977; Patton, 1978). TCT (Brayboy, 2005) is founded on the tenets of Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993) with the addition of aspects and terms specific to Native American cultural experience such as colonialization, self-
determination, sovereignty, and Indigenous ways of knowing and being (Brayboy, 2005). The Relational Worldview Model (Cross, 1997) was developed in the 1980s by the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) to provide technical support to communities regarding child welfare issues. Cross (1997) contrasts the linear Western worldview with the circular interconnected relational worldview of Native people and demonstrates how utilizing the relational worldview model works better in Native American communities. Finally, I will use Utilization Theory to examine how inclusion of cultural values in evaluation could increase the use of evaluation results. These theoretical models will provide a framework that will ensure that this study is done in a good way that includes the Native American concepts of relationality and Indigenous epistemology and decolonializes the evaluation approach by adhering to Native American research methods and traditional practices while examining factors affecting utilization.

**Significance of the Study**

There are multiple areas of significance to this study. First, the evaluation field will be enriched through increased knowledge about Native American culture, including the historical roots that have grown into the experience and worldview of Native people today. It is through understanding the past that we can know and function effectively and usefully in the present and future. Next, insight gained by exploring and understanding Native American values and the inclusion of these values in evaluations for Native populations will be added to the evaluation literature to provide for a greater understanding of the importance of the relationship between values and evaluation for cultural groups. This in turn will help to build cultural competence for evaluators working with cultural groups in general and especially for work with Native American Tribes. In addition, more information will be gained for the purpose of understanding whether a values-based approach to evaluation would be beneficial.
not only for Indigenous Tribes but for other cultural groups. The findings of this study can be used to enrich the evaluation field, to provide professional development, to improve evaluation policies and evidence-based policies, and to improve the way we think about evaluation. Further studies may include examining methods to explore and discover cultural values in culturally appropriate ways.

**Scope and Delimitations**

This study will first provide a scan of published literature for references to the incorporation of values in evaluation for Native American Tribes. This examination will include five evaluation reports from the past five years, which will offer a glimpse into how cultural values have been given attention in evaluation. To answer the next question, Talking Circles and interviews will facilitate the discovery of values of the people of a tribal group. This study is limited in number of participants, in order to represent a specific group. Finally, interviews with tribal leaders will be conducted to gather information regarding the usefulness of a value-based approach to evaluation. The results of this study may in some ways be generalizable to other Tribes throughout the United States, if there is a similarity in the values of the people. The methods utilized, such as Talking Circles and storytelling, are part of the culture of many Tribes, though the protocols employed may be different. Results will yield values that may be consistent with the values of other Tribes, but we must remember that although there are similarities in worldviews of Native people, there are many differences as well due to the large number of Tribes, different historical events and lived experiences, etc. This study will provide information about values that are specific to the tribal group involved in interviews and talking circles.
Outline of Remaining Chapters

Chapter Two will provide a review of the literature including: research associated with values; Native American contextual factors (sovereignty, history, etc.); worldviews and values (mainstream, Indigenous, Anishinaabe); research on the inclusion of values in other fields and in program evaluation; how values have been and are being included in evaluation of programs for cultural groups such as Native Americans; and theoretical considerations that are foundational to this study. Chapter Three will specify the methods used in this study, including cultural considerations that make this study culturally responsive. Chapter Four presents the findings of the study and is organized by the three research questions. Chapter Five presents a summary of findings and conclusions, discussion, suggestions for future research, and an overall conclusion.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

As a researcher and evaluator working on my doctorate in evaluation, I tried very hard until recently to maintain objectivity and distance from what I am writing; trying to keep strictly to the facts, using information that is written in books and published articles, and to not to speak from the “I” position. This is how I was taught in school to approach research. I also tried to minimize and use sparingly my own and other Native peoples’ cultural knowledge because it has been acquired and imparted in “non-academic” ways. Some of the ways Native people gain and share knowledge is by oral transmission, observation, and praxis. As Indigenous people, we have always gained knowledge and understanding by listening to others (including people, animals, plants, water, spirits, mother earth, grandmother moon, dreams, visions, etc.), by observing the world around us, and by practicing, evaluating, and refining what we know. Because of the subject matter and because I am an Anishinaabe person from the Tribe I am writing about, I changed my mind about using my own cultural knowledge in my research rather quickly. Who better to write about my culture than me? I am an expert when it comes to writing about my culture from my perspective. According to another Ojibwe woman, Marge Anderson (1999), “The vast majority of non-Indians do not understand how Indians view the world, what they value, what motivates them. It is time for Indian voices to tell Indian stories” (p. 633). If there are things that I do not know or need more information about regarding Ojibwe culture, I can ask my elders and spiritual teachers. Storytelling is integral to my research and to who I am as an Anishinaabe person, so at times during my dissertation I will speak in the first person, especially when speaking about my culture. Using a storytelling approach not only as an Indigenous research method, but as a framework for how I tell the story of this study, honors my culture and our ways of knowing, learning, doing, and sharing.
I also came to realize that to write about doing evaluation with Native American Tribes, I would have to be a teacher as well as a researcher. That was not my original intention. I intended to keep it scholarly and add a little about American Indian culture to give the reader a basic understanding of “Us,” but I found that to be impossible and contrary to the holistic and relational worldview of my people. Everything is connected and nothing is compartmentalized. I found that when I would start to write about one cultural topic, more detail would have to be given to help the reader to understand the bigger picture. There are so many examples of this, such as when talking about the lack of trust Native American people express when it comes to researchers. In these conversations, I have to explain historical instances of negative research experiences, which leads to discussions of historical trauma, which leads to a discussion on Native American history that includes many instances of loss and mistreatment. A lot of information must be unpacked to get to discussions of conducting evaluation in culturally competent ways with Native people; there is a level of complexity involved that is too important to be glossed over. It is crucial to have a certain depth of cultural understanding as a starting point for working in Indian Country, and I will do my best to share my knowledge of Native American culture from my cultural perspective.

They Don’t Know Us

It makes sense that learning about and getting to know another’s culture would be advantageous to any endeavor involving different cultural groups. Although there are books about Ojibwe culture in general, there are none specific to my Tribe and our current daily lived experiences and values. I had a startling insight one day as I was sitting at my kitchen table writing. This profound thought came to me loud, clear, and one word at a time, “They…don’t…know…us.” I was astonished and had to take a moment to grasp the full meaning. How could this be? We live in the United States. We have been here all along. Yet we
are living a separate existence which began as forced separation brought on by governmental policies of extermination, assimilation, and removal from our families and homelands, and it continues today with institutional racism and finds expression also through self-segregation (Shotton et al., 2013). How can we know each other when we live in different spaces? Some Native Americans live on reservations, and some do not and are living in cities, but many are living in a self-segregated environment of their own choosing. People from many different cultural groups, including Native Americans (DuBray, 1983) choose self-segregation (Anicich et al., 2021) and associate primarily with people like themselves because they feel more comfortable, accepted, and safe (Schmader & Sedikides, 2018). The majority of reservations were (are) situated far away from cities, which adds another layer to the separation of people from different backgrounds. If non-Indigenous evaluators are going to work with Native American populations, they must first get to know us, and this includes knowing our worldview, values, and contexts. I will do my best to be a cultural liaison and teacher, utilizing my Native ways of knowing, learning, and sharing to assist the reader in understanding more about my Anishinaabe culture. I will also rely on the wisdom and knowledge of Anishinaabe elders and others to supplement my knowledge, especially when it comes to values. I will begin by describing two very important concepts: relationality and reciprocity.

**Relationality is Essential**

Relationality is of primary importance in understanding and working with Indigenous cultures (Cross, 1997: Wilson, 2008). The word that describes relationality in my culture is **gidinawendimin**, which means “all my relations” and includes people, animals, plants, water, spirits, mother earth, grandmother moon, dreams, visions; *all that is*. Relationality is evident in many, if not all, Native American tribal cultures (Wilson, 2008). Wilson explains that, as researchers, we must be mindful of how our research is affecting everyone and that we have
“relational accountability,” so that, “What is more important and meaningful is fulfilling a role and obligations in the research relationship—that is, being accountable to your relations” (p. 77). It is a much larger perspective than we may be used to when doing research. We must think about how this research will affect not only the current people or stakeholders, but the next generations as well. In Indian Country, we often hear people talk about the “next seven generations” and how everything we do is done with them in mind. Our words and deeds live on. It is very humbling to consider that what I do today, whether it is positive or negative, will affect my descendants. I strive to do things, including research, in a good way. I want to be able to look back and forward and see that what I am doing now is helping my people now and in the future. Relationality knows no bounds in space or time; we are all connected.

Previous values studies provide evidence that Indigenous people hold a relational view of their connection to the world around them. The first values study to include Native Americans was that of Kluckhohn and Strodteck (1961), who found that when examining the values of five cultural groups (Texans, Mormons, Spanish Americans, Zuni, and Navajo), the two tribal groups included in the study were most alike in the relational orientation (collaterality) sphere. Collaterality is similar to relationality in that it refers to relating to everyone else in the group as being of equal importance. This was also found to be true by others who used Kluckhohn’s methodology and included Native Americans in their studies (Zintz, 1963; Bryde, 1972; Culbertson, 1977). DuBray (1983) a Lakota scholar, also utilized the Kluckhohn method in her dissertation research on the values of Native American and non-Indigenous social workers and found relationality (collaterality) to be significantly greater for the Indigenous participants. It is important to note that DuBray’s (1983) sample included 36 people from 28 different Tribes which speaks to the importance of this concept across Indigenous Tribes.
In Anishinaabek culture, interconnectedness (relationality) is very important to our worldview. Interconnectedness is inherent to how we live our lives; everything is connected to everything else, both in the physical world and the spirit realm. We are connected to our family, our Tribe, and our ancestors. What is here in physicality is no more real than what is present in the spirit world. Crossing over to the spirit world is merely a transition into another way of being. We are eternal. An example of our connection to the spirit world is when we receive guidance from ancestors and spirit helpers in dreams and ceremonies. This is a daily experience for many Anishinaabek. I recently had such an experience. The time was approaching to bring my granddaughter to the medicine man to receive her spirit name. Her other grandmother and I both had dreams related to her name a few nights before the ceremony. In my dream my front door was open and a few birds walked in, then two eagles walked in. I was amazed and was telling people, “Look at the eagles!” but no one seemed at all surprised. I opened the back door, and I could see many people gathered for a ceremony. It was as if the birds had come to join the ceremony. The other grandmother was told in her dream, “It is the grandparents who name the grandchildren.” A few days later my granddaughter received her name of Waabishkaa Manidoo Bineshiinh (White Spirit Bird) and her clan is Migizii (Eagle). We both put down tobacco (prayed with tobacco) to give thanks to the spirits for the dreams and her name.

Since relationality is a major tenet in tribal worldviews, it must be integrated in any research or evaluation that is done with Indigenous people. Relatedness (relationality) as described by Deloria (1999) is a profound and useful concept, in that it is the way Native people understand and study the world around them and it must be included as part of the methods of research used with Indigenous people. Deloria states:
…the major principle of relatedness always remained as the critical interpretive method of understanding phenomena. Reality for tribal peoples, as opposed to the reality sought by Western scientists was the experience of the moment coupled with the interpretive scheme that had been woven together over the generations (p.38) …when taken as a methodological tool for obtaining knowledge this means that we observe the natural world by looking for relationships between various things in it. That is to say, everything in the natural world has relationships with every other thing and the total set of relationships makes up the natural world as we experience it. This concept is simply the relativity concept as applied to a universe that people experience as alive and not as dead or inert. (p. 34)

About Reciprocity

In my culture, and that of many other Native American Tribes, reciprocity is important. It is about giving and receiving and has sometimes been about survival. I can remember hearing from my grandmother about when she was younger and living on Sugar Island, that when someone killed a deer it was shared with the community. That way no one went hungry. This still happens today. During hunting season this year, two Tribal Council members were asking people for donations of venison that they would process and distribute to tribal members. Sharing is reciprocal and is something we learn from an early age. We always share whatever we have with our family and community. In my culture, it has always been customary when someone visits your home, to offer them something to eat and drink. We take care of each other. Today, when someone is in need, we have fundraisers to help out and this always includes sharing a meal with others.

Reciprocity is also demonstrated in our use of asema (tobacco), one of our sacred medicines. Tobacco is used in a few ways: as an offering during prayer, to give thanks, and to
show respect. We hold the tobacco while we pray, and it is then placed on Mother Earth or in a fire and carries our prayers to the Creator. When Anishinaabek pray, it is about giving thanks to all of Creation. When I was a child and went to church, I remember prayers being different from how we pray as Anishinaabe. Since learning more about my culture, my prayers have changed to being mostly about giving thanks. While attending ceremonies, you can hear and feel the gratitude present when people pray. It is all about giving thanks for everything and using tobacco with our prayers. Reciprocity is also demonstrated when we give to others and we receive gifts: when we ask anything of another, for example, and especially an elder, we give tobacco. They give us some of their wisdom and they receive tobacco. We also say a prayer with tobacco before hunting or fishing, to show respect and to give to those beings who will be giving of themselves for our survival. Another way we practice reciprocity is by having a give-away at gatherings and ceremonies. For instance, at a pow wow, it is customary to have a give-away near the end to thank those in attendance. It is usually the person or people having the gathering or ceremony that give gifts to show appreciation. Giving to others is a way of giving back for the good life (mino-bimaadiziwin) we have.

**Why Study Values?**

Understanding people of cultures other than our own is important in every discipline including evaluation because what one culture defines as a “value” is often not the same for other groups of people. To truly know and understand people at a deeper level, we have to learn about the values they consider most important because, “Values are central to human thought, emotions and behaviour. They are cross-culturally relevant and valid…” (p. 3, Hills, 2002). Culture is formed by values surrounded by symbols, heroes, and rituals which is “…like the layers of an onion around a core that consists of values” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 20). There has
been an ongoing curiosity surrounding values throughout the centuries. According to Kluckhohn (1958), philosophers have proposed theories on the concept and “problem” of values:

... there have been four main approaches to the problem of value: the Platonic view that values are “eternal objects”; the position of subjectivism or of radical ethical relativity; the assumption held in common by certain Marxists, logical positivists, and “linguistic” philosophers that judgments of value are merely “emotional” or “verbal” assertions altogether removed from the categories of truth and falsity; the naturalistic approach which holds that values are accessible to the same methods of enquiry and canons of validity applied to all forms of empirical knowledge. (p. 469)

This current study posits that values can be known through both quantitative and qualitative inquiry (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961; DuBray, 1983; Bond 1988; LaVelle et al., 2022). Before studying values, we first need to define values, and although there are many definitions of values, they all have the common thread of being something we utilize to make decisions in how we live our lives. Values are prescriptive in that they guide us in how to make choices between alternative scenarios (Hare, 1952; Hofstede, et al., 2005). Rokeach (1979) agrees, adding that a value is “…an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence” (p. 5). According to Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961): “A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of actions” (p. 395). The idea of values is summed up by an Ojibwe elder who said, when referring to the Seven Grandfather teachings of Love, Honesty, Humility, Respect, Bravery, Truth, and Wisdom: “It’s all we need to live our lives in a good way” (Ojibwe elder, October 2019). We
practice these values every day through our actions in relation to other beings and how we
treat them, and this includes treating ourselves in a good way.

We are guided by our values in all that we do, and the choices that we make are value
 driven, whether they are seemingly insignificant decisions like what to wear or whether they
deal with major life changes like choosing a life partner. Since people are guided in their
decision making based on their value systems, it is important to the evaluation field to
understand other cultures’ value systems and to know how people of another culture can be
supported in the best way. This greater understanding of values will assist evaluators in
working with cultural groups most effectively. This study seeks to gain a better understanding
of the values of a specific Indigenous cultural group and to add to the published literature on
this subject as most Native American Tribes have been largely overlooked by values research in
the past.

More About Values

When looking to the evaluation field, we find that the original understanding of the
term “value” as it relates to evaluation, according to Michael Scriven, is based on judging the
worth of something with the evaluator as the expert in making judgements (Alkin, 2004). This
is a different understanding of “value” than what was presented in the previous section, but it is
important to look at this concept from other angles to gain insight, especially as this relates to
the history of evaluation. Among other evaluation concepts, Scriven developed the Logic of
Valuing, which is a series of steps involved in making a values statement. The four steps are:
“select criteria of merit, set standards of performance, measure performance, and synthesize
results into a value statement” (Shadish Cook, & Leviton, 1991, p. 73).

In Evaluation Roots, we see another evaluator (Elliot Eisner) who, like Scriven,
promoted the idea of evaluator as “expert,” but took a different stance in proposing that the
ability to evaluate effectively was based on “connoisseurship and criticism” according to one’s expertise in the subject matter and the ability to examine a program critically (Alkin, 2004). Another approach advocated on the value branch of the evaluation tree is Adversary Evaluation, which looks at different aspects of a program, with evaluators taking opposing views in an effort to reduce bias and arrive at the best judgement of value. It was largely not until the development of Responsive Evaluation by Robert Stake that the values of stakeholders were taken into consideration, and Stake used case studies to represent “…the beliefs and values of stakeholders…” because “…stakeholder perspectives need to be represented with the evaluation” (Alkin, 2004, p. 37-38). Ernest House, like Scriven, was concerned with making a judgment about value, but his assessment of value was based on social justice in support of the less fortunate. The final evaluators mentioned by Alkin (2004) are Ebon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln, who held to a constructivist paradigm and viewed “…stakeholders as the primary individuals involved in placing value” (p. 42). We can see a definite shift in the way that valuing and values are described and utilized over time, with later theorists placing more of an emphasis on stakeholder values and the need for them to make their own value judgments.

Generally, values are prescriptive in that they guide us in making choices between alternative scenarios (Hare, 1952). Hofstede (2001) adds more dimension to this description by explaining values as having other attributes such as an order of importance, intensity, and direction. Schwartz (2012) agrees with Hofstede that societies and individuals have many values that form a hierarchy of which values are more important, and these values can be contradictory, such as “equality and freedom” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 5). Hofstede describes intensity and direction as other attributes of values. We may assign a level of significance to a value (intensity), and a value can be seen as good or bad (direction). Hofstede gives the example of wealth being greatly desired (intensity) in some cultures, while being viewed in a negative
light by other cultures (direction), depending on the value system of a particular society. Hofstede describes another feature of values as the “desired and the desirable: what individual people actually desire versus what they think they ought to desire,” which can cause conflict because an individual may desire to express a value which would cause them to behave in a way that goes against the communal norms of their culture. The incongruity between acting in a way that one desires instead of what is socially desired can be reconciled in some cultures. “In Catholicism, the practice of confessing can be seen as a device for coping with both discrepancies…” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 17).

Schwartz (2012), in his Values Theory, explains six attributes of values in more detail as: (a) values are beliefs that are laden with emotion when stimulated; (b) people are motivated by their values and see them as goals; (c) values are the same regardless of the situation; (d) values provide standards to judge other things against; (e) values have a hierarchy of importance; and (f) action is guided by the relative importance of a value in relation to other values. An example of the last attribute explained by Schwartz is that hedonism and stimulation might take a backseat to tradition and conformity when a person attends a religious service, although all four values are important. Rokeach (1979) provides more detail about values by explaining that values can be terminal or instrumental. Terminal values are concerned with what is perceived as preferable for the individual or society. He gives the example of the concept of terminal values as it relates to peace: valuing “inner peace” is personal, and valuing “world peace” is for the betterment of society. The other type of value category, instrumental, is based on morality and competence. For example, valuing intelligence is based on competence, while valuing honesty may be based on ideas of morality. This study does not seek to distinguish between any of the facets of values and merely provides this distinction for clarification, although I would argue that living one’s life in a good way,
according to Ojibwe teachings, represents both terminal and instrumental values because having the best interest of everyone, including self, while doing what feels right, embodies both types.

**Common Problems**

The work of anthropologists Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict in the early 20th century laid the groundwork for future values research by promoting the hypothesis that there is a limited number of problems common to all human societies (Hills, 2002). From this perspective researchers began to explore what those specific problems are. This led to studies on the ways groups of people solved those problems, which naturally progressed to the study of attitudes and then values (Hofstede et al., 2005). Although early research focused on attitudes, this progressed to the study of values because attitudes were seen as changeable, while values persist over time (Hills, 2002). We learn values at an early age from our parents, who in turn learned values from their parents, and while there may be changes in our environment, there is “considerable stability in the basic values of a society” (Hofstede et al., 2005, p. 13).

Early research examined that limited number of problems common to all societies. Alex Inkeles and Daniel Levinson (1954) published their study on national culture which named the three common problems societies face as (a) relation to authority (b) conception of self, and (c) ways of dealing with conflict. Others added their ideas to these universal problem areas including (a) relation to nature, (b) time orientation, (c) activity orientation, (d) relation to others, (e) human nature (Kluckhohn & Strodbeck, 1961); (f) power distance, (g) masculinity vs. femininity, (h) uncertainty avoidance, (i) long-term vs. short-term orientation, (j) indulgence vs. self-restraint (Hofstede, 2001); (k) space, (l) work, (m) gender, and (n) relationship between state and the individual (Hills, 2002). Some researchers have sought to arrive at universal human values (Rokeach, 1979; Schwartz, 2006), while others, such as Kluckhohn and
Strodtbeck (1961), have focused on examining the value orientations of people of distinct cultures.

**Values Research Methods**

One of the earliest methods utilized to study values was the Study of Values (SOV), a survey developed by Vernon and Allport (1931) which was based on Spranger’s (1928) six ideal value types related to theoretical, economic, political, aesthetic, social, and religious values. Allport (1961) postulated that the choices a person makes about the kind of future they aspire to can tell us about their values. The original SOV questions were based on scenarios with different choices that a respondent could make, such as, “If you were a university professor and had the necessary ability, would you prefer to teach (a) poetry, or (b) chemistry and physics?” (Kopelman et al., 2003, p. 204). The SOV was highly utilized by social scientists until it fell out of use due its outdated language and content and the emergence of other instruments, such as the Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) and the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS) (Kopelman et al., 2003). The RVS had respondents rank ordering two lists of instrumental and terminal values. Schwartz (2012) utilized his Schwartz Value Survey (SVS) and Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) with people from 82 countries to develop the Schwartz Theory of Basic Values, which states that all societies contain values in varying degrees from the value categories of power, achievement, stimulation, self-direction, hedonism, benevolence, universalism, tradition, security, and conformity.

In another study, International Business Machines (IBM), a leading US computer manufacturer, collected data regarding workplace values on employees in over 50 countries. In 1970, researcher Geert Hofstede analyzed data from the IBM questionnaires and found that there were common problems that all people face, but the solutions were culture-specific: groups from the same countries were similar. The data revealed four specific areas of interest:
social inequality and relationship with authority; relationships between individuals/groups; masculinity/femininity and the implications of being either gender; and ways of dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity (Hofstede et al., 2005). As a result of this and other studies, the authors refined these groupings calling them Dimensions of Culture, which means “an aspect of a culture that can be measured relative to other cultures” (p.23). These dimensions are (a) power distance, (b) collectivism versus individualism, (c) femininity versus masculinity, and (d) uncertainty avoidance. Hofstede later added time orientation as the fifth dimension, labeling it long-term versus short-term orientation (Hofstede et al., 2005). Although the IBM data included a large number of respondents, it may speak more to the corporate culture of IBM from a mainly male perspective due to the lack of female employees in the earlier studies (Orr & Hauser, 2008). The IBM questionnaire was improved and became the Values Survey Modules (VSM) and was implemented with other types of participants (e.g., consumers, pilots, civil servants, bank employees, etc.) in more countries with similar results.

**Cultural Groups Values Research**

Realizing that not all cultures are the same when it comes to values research, Bond (1988) developed the Chinese Value Survey (CVS) as a research method that was not based on Western values. This began by Bond using the Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) and finding similar dimensions to those found in the IBM survey (VSM). Since both the RVS and VSM are different assessment instruments, this gave support to the dimensions described by Hofstede. Bond and Hofstede surmised that although the results were promising, there was an issue of Western bias. Most of the values surveys were culturally biased because they were developed by Western scholars, and the questions may not have been appropriate for other cultural groups. With this information, Bond, a Canadian working at a university in China, purposely developed a Chinese-biased values survey with the assistance of social scientists from Hong
Kong and Taiwan. The Chinese Value Survey (CVS) was based on 10 values of importance to Chinese people. The CVS was implemented with 100 Chinese students and revealed similar dimensions to the previous values surveys, with one exception. The dimension of uncertainty avoidance was seemingly not important in Chinese culture and was replaced with time orientation as this was more relevant to the value system of the respondents.

Several other values surveys have been published focusing on various groups and cultures. See Table 1 for a list of values research tools and theories.

**Table 1. Values Research Surveys & Theories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Researcher(s)(year)</th>
<th>Theory/Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study of Values (SOV)</td>
<td>Vernon &amp; Allport (1931)</td>
<td>Personality Trait Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values Orientation Method (VOM)</td>
<td>Kluckhohn &amp; Strodteck (1961)</td>
<td>Values Orientation Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBM Questionnaire</td>
<td>International Business Machines (1967)</td>
<td>Note: analyzed and studied by Hofstede</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rokeach Value Survey (RVS)</td>
<td>Rokeach (1973)</td>
<td>Theory of Cognitive and Behavioral Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Value Survey (CVS)</td>
<td>Bond (1988)</td>
<td>Note: includes Chinese cultural values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values Survey Module (VSM)</td>
<td>Hofstede (1994)</td>
<td>Dimensions of Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Values Survey (WVS)</td>
<td>Inglehart (1981)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Values Surveys (EVS)</td>
<td>Inglehart (1981)</td>
<td>Generational Replacement Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schwartz Value Survey (SVS)</td>
<td>Schwartz (1992)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ)</td>
<td>Schwartz et al. (2001)</td>
<td>Theory of Basic Values</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Native American Values Research

One of the earliest and most significant values studies in the literature that specifically included Indigenous Tribes is Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck’s (1961) study on variations in value orientations which includes both Zuni and Navajo Indian Tribes. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) were groundbreaking in the area of cultural values research with their study of the value orientations of five cultural groups in the Southwestern United States (Texans, Mormons, Spanish Americans, Zuni, and Navajo). Although other researchers have included Native people in their values research after this important study, no research has been focused explicitly on the values of a specific Tribe of Native Americans. For this reason, an in-depth description of the Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck study follows. Their Values Orientation Theory is built on three assumptions:

• …there is a limited number of common human problems for which all peoples at all times must find some solution…

• …while there is variability in solutions of all the problems, it is neither limitless nor random but is definitely variable within a range of possible solutions.”

• …all alternatives of all solutions are present in all societies at all times but are differentially preferred. (p.10)

Values Orientation Theory

Values Orientation Theory surmises that in each culture there is a dominant value profile, but that each society allows for variations in value orientations which leads to a rank ordering of value orientations from most preferred to least preferred (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). To test their theory, the researchers developed and utilized the Values Orientation Method which includes four orientation areas with value subsections of (a) time orientation (past, present, future), (b) activity orientation (being, being-in-becoming, doing), (c) relational
orientation (lineality, collaterality, individualism), and (d) man-nature orientation (subjugation-to-nature, harmony-with-nature, mastery-over-nature). Another category proposed but not used in this study was human-nature orientation (evil, neutral, good-and-evil, good) due to the complexity involved in the orientation category. An example of how value orientation ranking is concluded in the time orientation category is this: if most individuals in a cultural group prefer “present” as their time orientation, and a smaller number prefer “past” orientation, while still fewer prefer the “future” orientation, the results would include a rank order for time orientation for this specific cultural group of present-past-future. The researchers were interested in value orientations and not values themselves because a culture’s value orientation would speak to what values were most important to them (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). An example of how value orientation categories relate to values is this: if a cultural group scores high on collaterality and has great respect for elders in their community; collaterality is the value orientation while respect for elders may be a value related to collaterality.

The VOM contained 22 questions (some from each of the value orientations categories) with different scenarios regarding how the participant thinks someone should act in each situation. The researchers asked each participant what a person would do in a given situation as this would be perceived as less intrusive and would still portray what action the participant would take, thus giving an accurate depiction of the individual’s value orientation. The questions were translated and read aloud in the language of the participant. One question, for example, asks about child rearing and gives choices of: (a) teaching children the traditions of the past (past orientation), (b) the necessity of children learning new ways that are best for adapting to what is occurring now (present orientation), or (c) not teaching about the past and teaching in a way that prepares children for the future (future orientation) (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961).
Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) went to great lengths to make their research culturally appropriate (i.e., specific to culture and language) by adhering to each culture’s norms, translating the questions into the languages of the people (when necessary), and relying on cultural guides. Kluckhohn’s team had been well accepted by the communities due to having spent time in these communities for previous research and having built friendships with many people. The researchers were familiar with cultural norms and included these in their research procedures. For example, when working with the Navajo people, since time and clocks were of little importance to the Navajo Tribe, the researchers could plan an interview for “tomorrow” or “three tomorrows from now” and were similarly adaptive to each culture’s ways of doing things.

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) found similarities between the Native American Tribes (Navajo and Zuni) as they both had a primary focus on collateral relationships, present time, harmony with nature, and doing. The Navajo did show some variations in subgroups that researchers attributed to acculturation. For instance, older men chose future as their second order choice because of “the realistic perception of the need to adapt to the white man’s world—more particularly, the school” (p. 327). As stated earlier, there are variations in each culture’s value orientation, and “deviations from a variant subculture represent a going toward the patterns of the dominant culture” (p. 365). This is likely the case with the Navajo Tribe moving toward the value orientations of the dominant culture:

The Navajo are in a period of forced transition. On the time orientation, they are under pressure to change to the future. On the relational orientation they are being instigated in an individualistic direction. On the man-nature orientation the with-Nature attitude is already being altered in the technological and medical spheres to the over-Nature position (p. 336).
Applications of Values Orientation Theory

Values Orientation Theory has been put to practical use by the Lummi Tribe of Washington State. Tribal leaders and non-Natives have had many business transactions with each other and have found it beneficial to use Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck’s values questionnaire to understand each other’s values which has allowed them to have effective business negotiations for decades (Russo & Hills, 1984). Another example of how Values Orientation Theory has been utilized is to assess changes in peoples’ values as a result of migration. Hills (1977) wanted to know whether people who migrated from the South Pacific to New Zealand in the 1960s and 1970s held on to their cultural values or became more acculturated to the dominant culture’s value system. Of those who migrated, researchers attributed the greatest degree of disparity in values to modern technology. Youth had access to radio and television which led to a greater degree of acculturation compared to their parents, who had less exposure to technology and held more to their original cultural values.

The VOM has been used in a variety of ways to improve interaction between different cultural groups. Brink (1984) used the VOM to understand cultural values and reduce conflict in clinical settings. In particular, the VOM helped to improve relations between Canada’s Indigenous First Nations people and modern medical institutions (Brink 1984). Brink also applied the VOM to medical treatment among the Annang of Nigeria. Her research has provided the foundation for more sensitive cross-cultural medical treatment. For example, medical professionals trained using the VOM have been better able to respond to the medical needs of Indigenous people by being aware of such norms as having a family member present during decision making about treatment, or even about having a shaman present during treatment (Russo, 2000).
Worldviews and Values

Values combine in formation of an individual’s and a society’s worldview. Native Americans have a worldview that is very different from the worldview of the dominant society. Native people are “…inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment” and “have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live” (United Nations, 2017, p. 1). The Western worldview is unlike the Native American worldview and has concepts like egocentrism and materialism from which the basis of a person’s quality of life is formed (Merchant, 2012) as well as skepticism, direct criticism, aggressiveness, compartmentalized religion, competitiveness, individual emphasis, and conquest over nature, among others (Sebastian, 2003). These concepts are alien to the Native American worldview. Even what some have called “universal human values” such as material wealth, social power, and self-reliance (Struch et al., 2002) do not fit with the worldview of Native Americans. A combination of values described by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), DuBray (1983), and Sue (1981) in Table 2 depict how values are different between Native Americans and Western or Anglo-Americans.

Table 2. Comparison of Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contemporary Anglo-American Values</th>
<th>Traditional Native American Values</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition of wealth</td>
<td>Sharing freely</td>
<td>Sue (1981)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytic</td>
<td>Holistic</td>
<td>Sue (1981)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition with others</td>
<td>Cooperation with others</td>
<td>Sue (1981)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Value</td>
<td>Cultural Value</td>
<td>Source(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fame, recognition</td>
<td>Anonymity, humility</td>
<td>Sue (1981)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future, progress, change</td>
<td>Present, following the old ways</td>
<td>DuBray (1985), Kluckhohn &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualistic</td>
<td>Collateral (relational)</td>
<td>DuBray (1985), Kluckhohn &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery over nature</td>
<td>Harmony with nature</td>
<td>DuBray (1985), Kluckhohn &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliance on experts</td>
<td>Reliance on extended family</td>
<td>Sue (1981)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal expression</td>
<td>Keeping to oneself</td>
<td>Sue (1981)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

because the dominant society’s worldview is different from the worldview of Native Americans, it is important to learn about each other’s worldviews. This is relevant in all areas of life and especially in research, because “…to view one perspective as truth is to negate and potentially pathologize other perspectives and worldviews” (Yeh et al., 2004, p. 412). Research from a Western perspective contains many concepts and understandings that are foreign to the Native American worldview and value system. Smith (2012) clearly and concisely sums this up by saying:

From an Indigenous perspective Western research is more than just research that is located in a positivist tradition. It is research which brings to bear, on any study of Indigenous peoples, a cultural orientation, a set of values, a different conceptualization of such things as time, space and subjectivity, different and competing theories of knowledge, highly specialized forms of language, and structures of power. (p. 44)
Native American Worldview

We must understand the values of the people who are members of a cultural group and this, in turn, works with other aspects (e.g., beliefs, traditions, etc.) to shape the individual and collective worldview of a people (Cajete & Bear, 2000). Although there are many similarities among the values that make up the worldview of Tribal groups in certain geographic areas, there are many differences as well. These differences are due in part to the diversity among the 574 federally recognized Tribes in the U.S. (National Congress of American Indians, 2023). There are many common core values that form the general worldview of Native people (Oswalt & Oswalt, 1966; DuBray, 1985; Heinrich et al., 1990; Sue et al., 1992; Peregoy, 1993) and these values are not a salient part of the Western worldview. Some values and beliefs that are important among Native American Tribes are interconnectedness (relationality), animism, respect for mother earth, connectedness to the environment, (Badwound & Tierney, 1988; Cajete & Bear, 2000; Gratani, et al., 2016; Stern, et al., 1999) as well as respect for elders, relationships with family and community, and the centrality of spirituality (Stokes, 1997; Weaver, 1999), cooperation, generosity, group emphasis, modesty, and orientation to the present (Sebastian, 2003). These are all important values in the Native American worldview and have persisted over many generations, which may be due, in part, to forced separation by the dominant society, but also due to self-segregation by American Indian Tribes (DuBray, 1983). To speak of one of these concepts includes all the others. For example, if we believe that all of Creation is alive and is connected to everything else, we naturally respect and take care of everything (and everyone) and have feelings of reverence for all. We show respect to all of the different life forms who share the earth as their home.
Anishinaabek Worldview

To begin to understand the Anishinaabek worldview, we must first look at Anishinaabemowin (language). As with everything else in the Anishinaabe culture, our language is filled with relationality. Our words describe a thing or being in relation to something or someone. Ojibwe words have so much more meaning and description than what can be conveyed in English and they cannot always be translated. Language gives a glimpse into my worldview as an Ojibwe person. For example, in Anishinaabemowin, when we talk about colors, we do not simply say that something is blue. There are specific words for different colors of blue which describe the color in more detail than one word can transmit. If I say that the color of something is miinaande, I’m saying that it is the color of the blueberry. Something that is the color of the blue sky on a sunny day would have a completely different word. Another example, the word waawaashkeshi, according to an Ojibwe elder, describes the movement of the deer as it is going through the forest and how you can see the white of its tail. The descriptive nature of Anishinaabemowin conveys how a thing looks, how it is made, or what it does, and the relation it has to other things and beings. Something else that was explained by one of my language teachers is that Anishinaabemowin is a “sound-based” language. Each sound has meaning; they are not just words on paper. For example, whenever you hear the sound “aa” it speaks of the spirit or life force within and this is a common sound in our language. There is life force in everything. Our language is highly descriptive of the attributes of the world around us and speaks to the way we see the world with all the nuances and meaning and connection each being provides to the whole of Creation.

The concepts of animate and inanimate are embedded in our language and our culture. While some languages are based on feminine/masculine, Anishinaabemowin is based on whether something is alive (animate) or not alive (inanimate). Many “things” such as trees,
rocks, rivers, sun, moon, and earth may be seen by mainstream culture as inanimate things, but Anishinaabe people see them as living beings. So, when interacting with a Native American Tribe, one must consider with respect all that they hold as relevant and important. All beings are alive and are important parts of Creation, and everything we do affects all of them. Humans are no more important than any other beings. This brings us to the relational ways in which we understand Creation. Not only are we connected to humans and animals, but we are also connected to all other beings including Aakii (mother earth) and beings in the spirit world (Maaniidoo). Everything is connected to everything else and thanks is given for all of Creation; everything is sacred and has meaning and life. According to Ojibwe elder Marge Anderson (1999):

In our tradition, there is no mastery. There is no conquering. Instead, there is kinship among all creation—humans, animals, birds, plants, even rocks. We are all part of the sacred hoop of the world, and we must all live in harmony with each other if that hoop is to remain unbroken. When you begin to see the world this way—through Indian eyes—you will begin to understand our view of land, and treaties, very differently. You will begin to understand that when we speak of Father Sun and Mother Earth, these are not new-age catchwords—they are very real terms of respect for very real beings. (p. 633)

Spirituality is an important part of daily life for most people in my culture. Although this is much too vast a topic to discuss here, some essential concepts are warranted if one is to have a basic understanding of Anishinaabek culture. Two very important concepts are prayer and living one’s life “in a good way.” Of course, I can only speak for myself in describing these concepts, but I know that these are important to many other Anishinaabe people. I try to begin each day by giving thanks and using tobacco with my prayers. I hold the tobacco in my left
hand, pray, and either place the tobacco on the ground or it is smoked or placed in a fire. The prayers then go to the spirit realm (Creator). As I stated earlier, in my culture, prayer is mainly about giving thanks. I give thanks for the new day, the sun, moon, mother earth, the four directions, my ancestors, my spirit helpers, my family, and my good life, and I ask for guidance to live my life in a good way. Throughout the day I give thanks and try to keep an attitude of appreciation. There is something to be thankful for in each moment and in each circumstance. When I say “in a good way” this means that I try to do what feels like the right thing to do in each situation. Living in a good way to me means doing what feels right and is not harmful to anyone else including all of Creation. That sounds like a tall order, but it is basically living by the Golden Rule. The main difference is that “in a good way” includes all beings. In my culture “all beings” include many other beings that the dominant culture considers non-living. Showing respect for a tree, a lake, or a rock may seem strange to some, but in my culture these beings are just as important and worthy of love and respect as are humans. They are living beings. During my lifetime, the most important lesson I have learned regarding spirituality is about intentionality. My underlying intention is what is perceived by other beings, much more than the words I speak. As humans we have the choice to do or say whatever we choose, but our intention is what is transmitted to those around us, including those in the spirit realm.

**Values Specific to the Anishinaabek**

Living our lives in a good way is important to Anishinaabe people. Bédard (2008) agrees, adding, “The Elders speak of the concept of mino-bimaadiziwin which speaks of a ‘good mind,’ a ‘good way,’ or a ‘good path’ that an individual takes to live a healthy and well-rounded life as an Anishinaabe” (p. 190). In Anishinaabek culture there are important teachings about values that are passed down orally through the generations. These values provide guidance for individuals and groups to live their lives in a good way or according to these teachings. Some of
those intergenerational teachings are the Seven Grandfathers which are Truth, Wisdom, Bravery, Humility, Respect, Love, and Honesty (Benton-Banai, 1988; Bouchard & Martin, 2009). In *The Mishomis Book*, the author tells the story of how the earth’s people were having major difficulties and needed assistance in learning a better way to live so the Creator gave them the Seven Grandfathers so they could “live in harmony with Creation” (Benton-Banai, 1988, p. 60). The author goes on to say that children need to be instructed about the teachings from the time they are very young because they are fully aware from birth and can understand us even if we cannot understand them. The Seven Grandfathers are “…teachings they will need to guide them in their later lives.” (Benton-Banai, 1988, p. 61). Storytelling is a way that values and beliefs are passed on to the younger generations, and this way of passing on information “taught people about every aspect of the world and also showed the right way to behave” (Bruchac, 2003, p. 37).

**Values-based Approaches**

**General Values-based Approaches**

There are values-based approaches being utilized in some fields, but most are grounded in the belief that there is a collective set of values that all cultures adopt as central to their way of being (McLachlan et al., 2017). For instance, two values-based behavioral health treatments regularly being employed are Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) (Hayes, 2004) and Motivational Interviewing (MI) (Miller, 1983) which use the client’s values as a means of strengthening commitment to therapy. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy uses a variety of tools and exercises to assist the client in clarifying values, while Motivational Interviewing utilizes the Values Card Sort (Miller, 1983) to assist the client in choosing which values are most important to the client. Both approaches, however, use predetermined dominant-culture values.
Other fields that have studied and are using values-based approaches include energy development (Gratani et al., 2016; Necefer et al., 2015; Mouter et al., 2018), climate change (O’Brien & Wolf, 2010), cybersecurity (Kharlamov & Pogrebna 2019), transformational leadership (Joseph, 2015), employee recruitment (Ritchie et al., 2018), medicine (McGonagle et al., 2015) and psychiatry (Fulford, 2008). Some approaches that are specific to Indigenous values are cultural heritage preservation (Jerome, 2014), education (Tippeconnic & Tippeconnic Fox, 2012), and justice (Deloria, 1999). See Table 3 for a list of values-based approaches.

The common element in most of the values-based approaches in the literature appears to be using values for decision making, whether they are the values of the people utilizing programs or services or the values of those in positions of authority. In the physical and mental health fields it has been important to incorporate values into evidence-based approaches due to “…the emergence of a model of patient-centered practice in which the values of individual patients are central to evidence-based clinical decision-making” (Fulford, 2008, p. 20) because “all medical decisions are a mix of evidence and values” (Godbold & Lees, 2013, p. 554).

Another approach mentioned in the medical literature is Values-Based Practice (VBP), which states that all those working with mental health patients should aspire to a minimum set of shared values (McGonagle et al., 2015).

In making decisions related to climate change adaptation, O’Brien and Wolf (2010) propose a values-based approach that includes consideration of the values of people affected by the changes in climate and not just the values of those with authority who may make decisions based on economics and material gain. People, including scientists, politicians, and cultural groups see climate change according to their own values and worldviews which makes it important to consider the values of all stakeholders when making plans and decisions about what to do, or not do, about climate change. Another field that is beginning to take into
consideration the values of various groups of people in developing approaches to regulation is cybersecurity because “…human values lie at the core of the human risk-taking behavior in the digital space, which, in turn has a direct impact on the way in which the digital domain is regulated” (Kharlamov & Pogrebna, 2021, p. 720).

**Indigenous Values-based Approaches**

Approaches that incorporate Indigenous values include education (Tippeconnic & Tippeconnic Fox, 2012), cultural-heritage preservation (Jerome, 2014), and justice (Deloria, 1999). Many Indigenous educational institutions at both the primary and secondary levels are utilizing Native American tribal values “to provide a culturally relevant experience for Native American students” (Tippeconnic & Tippeconnic Fox, 2012, p. 851). The importance of acknowledgment and adherence to tribal values is evident at many tribal colleges. Of the “75 campuses of tribal colleges in 16 states serving more than 230 Indian Tribes” (AIHEC, 2018), most refer to tribal cultural values as guiding principles for their administration which is expressed in their Mission/Vision/Value statements. In many regions where there is a predominate Ojibwe (Chippewa) population, the specific values of the Seven Grandfather Teachings of Truth, Wisdom, Bravery, Humility, Respect, Love, and Honesty guide the operation of tribal colleges such as Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, White Earth Tribal & Community College, Turtle Mountain Community College, Red Lake Nation College, and Leech Lake Tribal College. On their website, regarding the Seven Grandfather Teachings, Red Lake Nation College (2021) states,

> Our Anishinaabe values and principles for living our lives are timeless and have been the foundation of our resilience through intense challenges in our tribal history. They were handed down through generations and represent a continuation of our history and way of life. (www.rlnc.edu/equity-and-inclusivity)
Cultural heritage preservation is another field that is changing to incorporate Indigenous values in the way it operates. According to Jerome (2014), cultural heritage preservation has usually been relegated to experts to make decisions about which sites are worthy of preservation, but that is undergoing transformation in some countries. The Burra Charter was developed in 1979 in Australia to be a values-based approach to cultural heritage preservation that includes Indigenous people and their values in decision making about preservation. This values-based approach is based on the premise that “…significance is dependent on the culture identifying it” and its application has also “exposed additional social values and, sometimes spiritual values, that might not otherwise have been revealed” (Jerome, 2014, p. 5).

Another field utilizing Indigenous values is the justice field, where Deloria (1999) says: “Jurisprudence is examining new kinds of mediation techniques and different victim compensation theories for minor offenses to replace retribution as the theoretical basis for criminal law…” (p. 41). Deloria also explains that “Many approaches are being taken to incorporate tribal values and knowledge into Western thought systems…” (p. 41). Incorporating values into judicial solutions is important because, according to Chief Justice James Allsop, “Law, at its very foundation, is conceived and derived from values… These values find their expression not only in the formal law, but also in societal expectations, behaviour and actions…” (Allsop 2017, p. 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Values-based Approaches</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fields with values-based approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental Health: Motivational Interviewing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acceptance and Commitment Therapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justice</td>
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<td>Psychiatry</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>Cultural Heritage Preservation</td>
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<td>Medicine</td>
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<td>Transformational Leadership</td>
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<td>Cybersecurity</td>
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Although there are values-based approaches and research on this topic in many other fields, the evaluation field has, thus far, no apparent studies in the evaluation literature that are particular to the incorporation of specific tribal values in evaluation. This study hopes to assist in adding knowledge about the importance of incorporating specific Native American values in evaluation efforts.

**Inclusion of Values in Evaluation**

Some evaluation models promote an approach to evaluation that incorporates values, and this is important since “…values must be accorded a central place in human study because they come closer to the core of humanness than most other characteristics of people,” and “Values provide the basis for ascribing meaning and reaching understanding…” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 102). One of the models that includes values is Deliberative Democratic Evaluation, which states that evaluation is conducted “…from an explicit democratic framework and places a responsibility on evaluators to uphold democratic values” (House & Howe, 2000, p. 410). In Responsive Evaluation, Stake (2003) also recognizes and incorporates values and states, “…the different value-perspectives present are referred to in reporting the success of the program” (p. 2). Another model relying on values is Utilization Focused
Evaluation, which aims to involve intended evaluation users by making sure that their values frame the evaluation (Ramirez et al., 2013) and again when making evaluative judgements, by being clear about the values that undergird judgements (MacDonald, 2013). Other evaluators who consider values essential are Wallerstein and Duran (2006), who suggest that, when using Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR), “the most important values to utilize are integrity and humility, which underlie our process with communities” (p. 321) because the focus is on “relationships between research partners and goals of societal transformation” (p. 313).

Those evaluators who practice evaluation that is culturally responsive subscribe to several modalities that can be placed under the umbrella of Culturally Responsive Indigenous Evaluation (CRIE) (Bowman et al., 2015). CRIE provides guidance for evaluation with Indigenous peoples. In this comprehensive framework, many Indigenous concepts are embedded into the evaluation or research design, including adherence to traditional ways and values that are salient to a specific Tribe. In CRIE, many things in addition to values are taken into account regarding the context in which the evaluation will take place, including a Tribe’s history, cultural protocols, legal jurisdiction (federal, state, tribal), funding sources (grants, tribal), sovereignty, self-determination, and ownership of data generated through the evaluation of programs (Bowman et al., 2015). Under the CRIE umbrella, some of the other approaches to evaluation and research with Native Americans that give attention to values are the Indigenous Evaluation Framework (LaFrance & Nichols, 2009), Tribal Participatory Research (Fisher & Ball, 2003), and Tribally-Driven Participatory Research (Mariella et al., 2009). LaFrance and Nichols (2008) developed the Indigenous Evaluation Framework out of knowledge generated through conducting focus groups with tribal members from four regions in the U.S. to better understand which “traditions, terms, practices, values and concepts, and protocols might be appropriately used to ‘frame’ an Indigenous peoples’ concept of evaluation,
particularly as related to education” (p. 16). In Tribal Participatory Research, the community is involved in every step of the research process, and general tribal concepts and values such as demonstrating respect, sharing meals, and building relationships are incorporated into the evaluation (Fisher & Ball, 2003). Tribally-Driven Participatory Research shares similar tenets with Community Based Participatory Research, such as recognition of community goals and values, building partnerships between researcher and communities, community participation in the evaluation process, and building the research capacity of the community. The main difference in Tribally-Driven Participatory Research is that the Tribe is the main “driver” of the evaluation and assumes control of the project through tribal research codes, tribal oversight, inclusion of community members in the process, and ownership of the data produced, as well as the ability to give permission for publication of the results. These Indigenous research and evaluation approaches all give credence to the importance of inclusion of cultural values, but none of them formally examine the specific values of a single Tribe.

Each of these evaluation approaches, whether mainstream or culturally responsive, take into consideration, in some way, the values of the stakeholders involved. However, there are other factors to consider when contemplating values and evaluation, such as whose values are most prevalent. Those who create evaluation models and those who implement those models all have value systems that may be very different from the values of the people for whom the evaluation is being completed, because “society is pluralistically valued” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 102). Therefore, “Evaluators, guided consciously or unconsciously by their own values, select which facts are to be determined and once obtained, what they mean” (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, p. 218). The values of all those involved in an evaluation, both before and during an evaluative effort, must be taken into consideration, especially if we are aspiring to attain a high level of multicultural validity (Kirkhart, 2010).
Native American Contextual Factors

Native America as Sovereign

First and foremost, when interacting with and evaluating programs for Native American Tribes, evaluators must understand the concept of sovereignty and what it means to be a nation within a nation (Bowman-Farrell, 2019; Bowman, 2020). Native American Tribes are not just another cultural group within the United States: they are considered independent nations as is evidenced by countless treaties created and enacted through a government-to-government process over many years. Although Native American Tribes may willingly follow federal or state laws, they have, “the right to form their own governments; to make and enforce laws, both civil and criminal; to tax; to establish and determine membership.” (United States Department of the Interior, 2023). As sovereign nations, Tribes have the right to self-determination or “ways of being as a people” based on their own beliefs, customs, and values (UNDRIP, 2019). An important part of being sovereign is a Tribe’s ability and right to specific data creation, ownership, and sharing. Many tribal leaders and staff do not trust outside data sources at the national and state level (Rodriguez-Lonebear, 2015). Upon gaining this elementary yet paramount understanding, evaluators can move forward by learning more about Tribes, including their histories and worldviews, which will assist with interacting in a positive and productive manner.

Native American History, Historical Trauma, and Distrust

Indigenous Tribes each have a local history that is specific to their region, and this must be understood, but there is also the larger nationwide Native American history that is fraught with negative experiences that must be acknowledged and understood. Perceptions of research are affected by events of the past. Researchers and evaluators may be unaware of the fact that there is a distrust of outsiders by Indigenous people that has been prevalent throughout
modern history and continues today. History provides reasons for this distrust because, according to Duran and Duran (1995), “For over five hundred years Europeans have attempted to subjugate, exterminate, assimilate, and oppress Native American people” (p. 28). Thornton (1987) attests to there once being a population of over 72 million American Indians in the Western hemispheres before colonization, with that number dropping to 150,000 by the year 1900. Some of the many government policies such as the Civilization Fund Act of 1819, the Indian Removal Act of 1830, the Dawes Act of 1887, and the Indian Relocation Act of 1956 were focused on assimilation, removal, relocation, and forced attendance at boarding schools where many children were abused and died. This is not a distant memory for Native people, as some of these schools were open until the mid-1980s (www.thecirclegenews.org). The multigenerational trauma suffered by Native Americans, which is a direct result of termination policies, has led to what has been called “historical trauma” or “inter-generational trauma,” which is similar to what holocaust survivors have experienced (Braveheart & DeBruyn, 1998). Since Native American people pass down knowledge and experience through storytelling (Battiste & Youngblood, 2000; Castellano, 2000; Delgado, 1989; Deloria, 1969; Thurman et al., 2004), stories of trauma are also passed down, making it hard to trust anyone seen as having authority, including researchers and evaluators.

Distrust of researchers has been an issue for decades. Some of the studies on, not with, Native Americans have had ruinous outcomes, and this has added to the already prevalent distrust and fear of outsiders (Thurman et al., 2004). According to Norton and Manson (1996) some of the negative effects of previous research have been no ownership of research by the tribal group, lack of confidentiality, and improper dissemination of findings resulting in damage to a tribal group’s image and livelihood. For example, the results of a study in 1979 involving a survey of substance abuse among tribal members in Alaska were leaked and published in major
newspapers in the U.S. declaring a high rate of alcoholism among a certain tribal group which created a great deal of conflict including the inability to secure funding for programs (Norton & Manson, 1996). Another example, which led to legal action, involved a researcher at Arizona State University giving DNA samples of Havasupai tribal members to other researchers for other studies for which the participants were not informed. Along with violating the principles of informed consent, this went against the Tribe’s cultural beliefs (Garrison, 2013). According to Smith (2012), research has not always been done in culturally appropriate ways and has utilized methods that “…regard the values and beliefs, practices and customs of communities as ‘barriers’ to research or as exotic customs with which researchers need to be familiar in order to carry out their work without causing offense” (Shotton et al., 2013, p. 15).

**Theoretical Considerations**

The Relational Worldview Model and Critical Race Theory (specifically TribalCrit) guide my choices in making sure that every aspect of this study is done in a good way that honors Indigenous ways of knowing and conducting research. Equally important to this study is Utilization Theory due to the hope that including cultural values in evaluation will lead to an increase in evaluation use by Tribes.

**Relational Worldview Model**

The Relational Worldview Model (RWM) is based on Native American concepts and the connection between the many factors and people in a person’s life. This model was developed in response to the need for culturally appropriate services for Native American children involved in out-of-home placement, such as foster care (Cross, 1997). Cross knew that a model was needed that was based on the worldview of Native Americans. In RWM, for example, instead of seeing a problem in a linear fashion with a problem and a solution, RWM is strengths-based and seeks to understand what can be changed to create balance for a person or
family by examining all factors, whether they are physical, spiritual, mental, or emotional. Everything and everyone is interconnected, and this interconnection affects each aspect in a person’s life (Cross, 1997). In RWM, special emphasis is placed on Indigenous ways of knowing and communicating. According to Cross, “Storytelling is, perhaps, our greatest teaching resource for communicating identity, values, and life skills” (p. 7). Although the Relational Worldview Model will not be utilized in this study as it was originally intended, it is the concept on which it is based—relationality—that is of importance to my current study, as this is the web that underlies the Native American worldview. This study seeks to utilize understanding the values of Native Americans through this relational lens by paying attention to interconnectedness during all aspects of this study and employing storytelling through interviews and Talking Circles as methods of data gathering. The Relational Worldview Model provides the overarching model of relationality, while Wilson (2008) provides guidance for understanding and incorporating relationality and relational accountability in a research setting. I will remain mindful of my relations (past, present, and future) and conduct this study in a way that is respectful and with the hope that my research will have positive benefits for all my relations now and in the coming generations.

**Tribal Critical Race Theory**

The other theory proving guidance for this study is TribalCrit (Brayboy, 2005) which is a subset of Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993). Critical Race Theory was originally developed in response to issues related to the civil rights violations suffered by African Americans and is based on the premise that racism is so widespread in society that it often goes unseen (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993). Over time, other subtheories of Critical Race Theory such as LatCrit, AsianCrit, and TribalCrit were developed to address issues specific to
Latina/Latino, Asian, and Native American tribal cultures. Tribal Critical Race Theory is based on nine tenets:

1. Colonization is endemic to society.

2. U.S. policies toward Indigenous peoples are rooted in imperialism, White supremacy, and a desire for material gain.

3. Indigenous peoples occupy a liminal space that accounts for both the political and racialized natures of our identities.

4. Indigenous peoples have a desire to obtain and forge Tribal sovereignty, Tribal autonomy, self-determination, and self-identification.

5. The concepts of culture, knowledge, and power take on new meaning when examined through an Indigenous lens.

6. Governmental policies and educational policies toward Indigenous peoples are intimately linked around the problematic goal of assimilation.

7. Tribal philosophies, beliefs, customs, traditions, and visions for the future are central to understanding the lived realities of Indigenous peoples, but they also illustrate the differences and adaptability among individuals and groups.

8. Stories are not separate from theory; they make up theory and are, therefore, real and legitimate sources of data and ways of being.

9. Theory and practice are connected in deep and explicit ways such that scholars must work towards social change. (Brayboy, 2005, pp. 429-30)

Tribal Critical Race Theory seeks to decolonialize because quite often in the past, “The epistemologies of most peoples of the world, whether Indigenous, or excluded on the basis of race, gender or sexuality are missing” (Hall & Tandon, 2017, p. 7). TribalCrit (with an emphasis on tenets 5, 7, & 8) will be utilized for guidance in decolonizing this study to reflect
the Native American culture as much as possible. This will be done by incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and doing research in a Native way by acknowledging and using tribal concepts, ceremonies, and methods. Although, utilizing some tenets of TribalCrit is a first step in decolonizing this study, Bowman-Farrell (2019) calls for an even greater systems change by incorporating TribalCrit tenets into Tribal Critical Systems Theory, a nation-to-nation approach to evaluation to address issues of colonization at the policy, institution, and government levels.

**Evaluation Utilization Theory**

Ultimately, it is anticipated that information gained as the result of an evaluation will be utilized by stakeholders. Whether or not including values in evaluation will lead to an increase in utilization of results by a Tribe is one of the questions this study hopes to answer. In this current study, Utilization Theory is not providing guidance as far as how the research is conducted, but this theory will come into focus during the analysis and interpretation of results as the study progresses. Whether those interviewed see the inclusion of values as beneficial to the Tribe, and perhaps in what ways this is so, will be better understood.

Researchers have studied the topic of evaluation utilization for many decades, and this has provided considerable information to the evaluation literature that includes utilization categories and ways that evaluation information is used. One of the early researchers on this topic, Weiss (1972) found that even though many federally funded programs were mandated to complete evaluations, there was a level of non-use of evaluation information. Other research on evaluation utilization categorized the various types of use as instrumental, process, conceptual, enlightenment, and symbolic (Cousins & Leithwood, 1986; Patton, 2002; Fleischer & Christie, 2009). Some of the many ways that results of an evaluation may be utilized are for making decisions for program improvements, compliance to funding mandates, or for organizational
learning and capacity building (Weiss, 1998; Neuman et al., 2013). Although all types of utilization are important, instrumental and process use may be most directly applicable when cultural values are included in an evaluation for a Native American Tribe.

Instrumental use, according to Neuman et al. (2013), involves the “direct use of an evaluation’s findings” for decision making, while process use “…is the more in-depth use that occurs when individuals or organizations are affected by the evaluation because they were partners in the process” (p. 65). If an evaluation conducted with a Native American Tribe includes cultural values, tribal stakeholders may have more of a sense of ownership of the evaluation and partnership with the evaluator, resulting in utilization of the findings in decision making. This can also contribute to individual and organizational learning, leading to a variety of changes such as a greater acceptance of evaluation and of research and researchers in general. If the value of respect, for example, is important to a Tribe, then the incorporation of this value into each step of the evaluation could possibly lead to tribal leaders and other stakeholders feeling respected and this would in-turn create a feeling of respect for the evaluators and the findings of the evaluation, because “respect is reciprocal,” according to an Ojibwe elder (personal communication, 2022). This could have a great impact long after an evaluation is complete, as there would be a memory in the tribal community of being treated with respect, and future evaluations with this evaluator (or team) would likely be accepted with a level of trust that has often been missing when it comes to outsiders wanting to study Indigenous people.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to add to the knowledge base of the evaluation field in the area of cultural competence by understanding the values of a Tribe and whether the inclusion of culture-specific values in evaluation would lead to greater utilization of evaluation results by a Tribe. Until now, there has been a scarcity of research in this topic area, although there is movement in a positive direction as far as understanding the intersection of personal values and evaluation (LaVelle et al., 2022). To achieve the main purpose of this study, I first examined the evaluation literature to find out whether attention has been paid to Indigenous values when evaluations were conducted with Native American Tribes. This was done because values are at the core of what makes up the worldview of a cultural group (Hofstede, 2001); therefore, it makes sense that values would be given consideration in evaluations for Native people. I then utilized culturally appropriate methods to gather information about the values of a specific Native American Tribe to understand what values are most important to people from this Tribe and whether including their values in evaluation is seen as being beneficial to the Tribe. The questions that I expected to answer were:

1. How, if at all, are Native American values included when evaluating programs for Native American Nations?
2. What values are important to Native Americans in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, primarily people from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians?
3. How, if at all, might a values-based approach to evaluation lead to an increase in utilization of evaluation results by people from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians?
I pursued each research question with a different research method such as document reviews, Talking Circles, and interviews. Culturally appropriate qualitative methods were used, including Talking Circles that are based on Indigenous ways of sharing, learning, and knowing specific to my culture. I also followed a relational theoretical approach to research and decolonize this study as much as possible. I also utilized my values when I conducted this study because these are at the core of who I am as a Native person, and therefore are a part of all that I do, including research. My values include the Seven Grandfather teachings of Love, Honesty, Humility, Respect, Bravery, Truth, and Wisdom as well as other values. Another Ojibwe researcher, Masta (2018), utilizes the Seven Grandfathers to guide her research and posits, “To know wisdom as a Native scholar means relying on Native knowledge and culture when designing and implementing research studies” (p. 845). Smith (2012) agrees, stating,

Indigenous methodologies tend to approach cultural protocols, values and behaviours as an integral part of methodology. They are “factors” to be built into research explicitly, to be thought about reflexively, to be declared openly as part of the research design, to be discussed as part of the final results of a study and to be disseminated back to the people in culturally appropriate ways and in a language that can be understood. (p. 15-16)

Inclusion of Values

As an Anishinaabe researcher, incorporating my values means that every aspect of the research process reflects my values. For example, I always do my best to treat participants with respect and gratitude, and these values are naturally included in how Indigenous ceremonies such as Talking Circles are conducted. During a Talking Circle, respect is shown by paying attention and listening when someone is speaking. We all respectfully pay attention, because only the person holding the feather or talking stick speaks, and there are no interruptions.
Another way that respect is shown during a Talking Circle is by allowing participants another chance to share after everyone has had the opportunity to share. I show gratitude by gifting participants with tobacco and a small incentive for their participation, which also displays reciprocity because participants are gifting me with their knowledge and wisdom. It is a great honor to be able to be a part of the process of gathering information from my people and I treat this responsibility with the upmost respect and reverence. They are sharing a part of their story with me, which is great gift, and I am thankful for this. Other authors are in agreement that respect, reciprocity, and responsibility are most important when doing research with Indigenous people (Weber-Pillwax 1999; Wilson, 2008).

Relational Approach

I utilized a relational approach to research because, like my values, this is inherent to who I am as a Native American person. Relationality as a theoretical approach means being cognizant of the connections and inter-relatedness present in all aspects of a study, and demonstrating respect, reciprocity, and gratitude to all beings involved in the study. This is achieved by treating every being with respect and showing gratitude through giving to others for what they give to us. It is a mindset of noticing, acknowledging, and making sense of the intersections between people and information, and knowing that each aspect influences other aspects. This may sound elusive, but it is imperative because the Native American way of understanding reality and knowledge is based on relationships: relationships among people, the natural world, the spirit world, everything that exists (Cross, 1997; Wilson, 2008). If we are aware of it, we can feel and know our connection to all of Creation. For example, I recently attended a full moon ceremony and it had been more than a year (due to the pandemic) since I had done so. During this ceremony, women pray together, and we offer our prayers to Nokomis Giizis, and this strengthens our connection to her. We give to her, and she reciprocates with a
feeling of connection that goes beyond what words can describe. All the next day after the ceremony I had a deep sense of connection and feelings of comfort and peace. This is something that I will continue to do monthly as it reminds me and demonstrates the very real connection that I share with all that is.

A relational epistemology and ontology informs everything we know and how we learn about the world around us (Wilson, 2008). Native people have always had their own ways of knowing and making sense of and studying the world around them. It is through paying close attention to what is happening around us that Native people gain knowledge about current experiences and future events that require adaptation (Cross, 1997). It is part of the reason for our resilience and survival. For example, watching the geese practicing for their departure a month earlier than usual along with seeing an overabundance of berries on the cedar trees could mean an earlier and perhaps harsher winter than the previous year. We gain knowledge and wisdom by observing the physical world, but there is also a spiritual connection to all things seen and unseen. The spirit or “life force” in all things is acknowledged and included in research protocols (Cram & Mertens, 2016; Weber-Pillwax, 1999). We acknowledge the spirit world by showing respect in all we do, including research. Honoring the life force is done through prayer and smudging, which are integral to this study and are a part of my research protocols.

Relationality also means being mindful of all our relations both past and present when we conduct research so that we can have relational accountability (Wilson, 2008). Everything we do as researchers has a ripple effect that impacts many others. When we think about all our relations as our “family,” this makes research more personal, and of course we would want to conduct research in a way that is beneficial for everyone. To have relationality at the forefront when doing research with Native Americans means being thoughtful in our selection of topics,
methods of data collection, forms of analysis, and the way in which information is presented (Wilson, 2008). It is my intention do this study in a good way that is respectful and beneficial to all my relations and the next seven generations.

**Decolonizing Research**

Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit) has been a guiding force in all my work as an Indigenous researcher. By following the tenets set forth by Brayboy (2005), I have decolonized this study in many ways. I have been able to incorporate Brayboy’s TribalCrit, specifically tenets 5, 7, and 8, in the way that my study has been written and conducted. The way that I have decolonized this study using TribalCrit’s tenet 5 (“The concepts of culture, knowledge, and power take on new meaning when examined through an Indigenous lens”) and 7 (“Tribal philosophies, beliefs, customs, traditions, and visions for the future are central to understanding the lived realities of Indigenous peoples, but they also illustrate the differences and adaptability among individuals and groups”) is by utilizing Indigenous research methods and by sharing aspects of my culture in an effort to assist the reader in viewing my research from an Indigenous perspective. I have included Anishinaabek stories, views, thoughts, experiences, values, tribal customs, ceremonies, and worldview, giving the reader an understanding of my culture and my perspective as a Native person and researcher. The reader gets to experience my study from a Native lens, because it is important to learn about Native people from a Native person (Anderson, 1999). I utilized storytelling during Talking Circles and interviews to gather information, as this is a Native-specific way that knowledge is shared with others, and it is a culturally appropriate way to do research in Indian Country. Tenet 8 refers to storytelling as being important to research because, “Stories are not separate from theory; they make up theory and are, therefore, real and legitimate sources of data and ways of being” (Brayboy, 2005, pp. 429-30).
I am hoping that this study has positive effects for Indigenous people by revealing to the research community the importance of including Native ways of knowing and doing research and incorporating cultural values in evaluation and research. I am optimistic that research completed by a Native researcher will help people of cultures other than my own to “know us” on a deeper level and I believe that the inclusion of values will become commonplace in evaluation and research done with Indigenous cultures.

**Indigenous Methods**

**Talking Circles and Storytelling**

The Indigenous method of sharing information adapted for use in this study is a Talking Circle format with a focus on storytelling. Although similar to a focus group, where a group of people are sharing information on a topic, a Talking Circle is much more than a method to collect data: it is a ceremony. In fact, the idea of “collecting data” for research as part of utilizing a Talking Circle as a research method is different from the usual ceremonial protocol, in that in the ceremonial context, information is typically shared and not gathered to be used later. A Talking Circle is normally conducted for reasons other than research, such as during a spiritual gathering, naming ceremony, etc. During a spiritual gathering, for instance, the purpose of the Talking Circle is for people to share what is in their hearts with each other in a spiritually supportive setting. For this study, I use a Talking Circle because it is appropriate in my culture as an acceptable way of sharing information, and I have been approved by elders to do so. In the early stages of method development, I consulted with a traditional healer and tribal elders to ascertain the best method of conducting a Talking Circle that would be most effective and culturally appropriate in gathering the desired information, and my Talking Circle protocol was approved by tribal elders. The whole process of research
contains ceremony, including the analysis and writing, in that I include prayer and guidance from elders and ancestors each step of the way.

Storytelling is a way that Native Americans communicate with each other to share information for a variety of reasons, such as for teaching each other and the younger generations about our history, our sacred teachings, and how to live our lives in a good way, and this is one of the ways that we preserve our Indigenous culture. Our stories not only teach, but are entertaining and often include humor. Storytelling in a Talking Circle can serve any of these purposes. The way that I am using the Talking Circle is very close to how it would be used in a non-research setting. The main differences are that there was a specific topic of discussion (values), information was collected (and later analyzed), and the Talking Circle was facilitated in a building at the local university instead of in a waabano lodge. My protocol for the Talking Circle includes the same basic elements that are included in non-research settings (e.g., a welcoming, offering tobacco, prayer, smudging, etc.).

More about Talking Circles

I have been to many Talking Circles, which are always an important part of spiritual gatherings that my Tribe holds each season. Talking Circles often take place outside in a waabano lodge, which is a large round tent-like structure with a fire in the middle. My favorite Talking Circles were those facilitated by Nowaten, a highly respected elder and one of my spiritual teachers who crossed over to the spirit world years ago. I remember sitting and listening to Nowaten for many hours, enjoying every word of wisdom he shared. Back then everyone would share and listen all morning, have a feast at lunchtime, and do the same again, usually until late afternoon. The comfort of hearing Nowaten and others share their stories and the smell of the sacred fire are something I remember fondly. We still have these kinds of gatherings.
My protocol for conducting a Talking Circle is presented below, and it is important to note that there is much more happening during a Talking Circle beyond what may be perceived with the physical senses. For instance, when a prayer is said at the beginning, it includes giving thanks to all of Creation and asking our ancestors and spirit helpers to be with us in the Talking Circle to guide us so that we will speak from our hearts in a good way. We believe that our manidoosag (spirit helpers) are with us during the Talking Circle, assisting us in speaking our truth. Also, when tobacco and a gift card are given to participants, it is more than what it seems. This is a traditional custom called a giveaway and is based on respect, gratitude, and reciprocity. We always share and give to one another as an act of generosity and kindness.

**Storytelling at Ceremonies**

While participating in a Talking Circle, we share and learn from others through storytelling. During a Talking Circle that is part of a spiritual gathering ceremony, there is oftentimes someone chosen to represent and speak for each of the sacred directions (East, South, West, and North). There are many important teachings given this way. After the speakers have shared from the directions, then everyone else around the circle is also given a chance to share. People take turns and speak from the heart. There is never a time limit, and many stories are told. Storytelling is an important aspect of a Talking Circle and is a way that Indigenous teachings, including teachings about values, have been passed down through the generations. Another aspect of storytelling in my culture is that traditional stories are shared mainly in the winter months, and this has always been done orally from memory. We now have many books with Anishinaabek stories as well. Storytelling in this instance, for research, is utilized orally in both a Talking Circle format and in individual interviews. Tribal members will talk about their values and share their stories. As stated by Wilson (2008) research is
ceremony, and storytelling itself is a form of ceremony where healing takes place. According to Anishinaabe elder Eva Petoskey,

I believe that all sound is spirit so the voice is the expression of our moving wind or breath. Our voice is a spiritual tool that expresses our sacred breath in the form of words. All words are powerful but when our words emerge from a place of truth and love, from our heart or our seed of life, they have the healing power of love. (In Manuelito, 2015, p. 124).

**Institutional Review Board Approval**

This study was presented to and approved by Western Michigan University (WMU) Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB). This approval is a requirement for the attainment of a PhD. The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians (Sault Tribe) has no tribal research protocols or tribal IRB; therefore, tribal leaders were consulted prior to the commencement of any research activities. I attended a Tribal Board of Directors meeting to inform the Tribal Board of every aspect of this study and to invite them to participate. I began my talk with them by introducing myself in Anishinaabemowin, smudging with sage, saying a prayer, and gifting them with tobacco. I then explained my study and how this would be of benefit to our Tribe and the evaluation field. They gave their approval for this study as well as approval for the future use of material related to this study, such as publishing in the evaluation literature. After approval was given by tribal leaders, consultations were made with tribal elders and a traditional healer for cultural input. Two elders served as cultural experts (wisdom keepers) throughout the duration of the study and were interviewed regarding what values they deem most important in their culture. As is the custom with this Tribe, tobacco was given to tribal leaders, members, consultants, and participants as an offering when seeking advice or asking for help.
Participant Selection

People selected for participation in this study consisted of adult tribal members of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, specifically those who reside in the seven-county service area (Alger, Chippewa, Delta, Luce, Mackinac, Marquette, and Schoolcraft) of the Tribe. The Talking Circles and interviews were restricted to Sault Tribe members only, to get an understanding of the values of people from this specific Tribe and, for some, their views regarding the benefit of including tribal values in evaluation. Adult men and women of a variety of ages were recruited as participants, which offered a wide range of views. The number of participants recruited varied, depending on the question being answered and the purpose of the interviews or Talking Circles. People were chosen by snowball method for each of three talking circles and individual interviews. An initial group of eight people selected by the researcher were contacted by email to ask if they would like to participate in the study. Those who agreed to participate were each given three recruitment letters to distribute to others who they thought would also like to participate. People who participated in the first and second Talking Circles were each given three recruitment letters to give to other tribal members. The researcher also attended the monthly tribal elders’ meeting one time and handed out recruitment letters. The recruitment letters described the study and stated that a person could choose to participate in an individual interview instead of a Talking Circle if that was their personal preference. The letter also gave my contact information for people to email me if they wanted to participate. A total of 11 interviews with tribal members were conducted in addition to 21 people who participated in the Talking Circles. Of participants, 24 were female, while eight were male. Eleven were elders. People were asked during initial Talking Circles and interviews if they would like to be interviewed for question three; four people agreed to a second interview.
**Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians**

This is the largest Tribe east of the Mississippi River, and was federally recognized on September 7, 1972, by administrative order with the Sault Tribe Constitution enacted on November 13, 1975. The Sault Tribe is a confederation of six historical bands (Sugar Island, Sault Ste. Marie, Drummond Island, Garden River, Grand Island, and Point Iroquois). The people of the Sault Tribe or “Anishinabek at Bahweting” descend from the Indigenous people who have resided in the seven eastern-most counties of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan since time immemorial. Of the more than 44,000 tribal members, one third live in the seven-county service area in the Upper Peninsula, one third live in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan, and one third live outside of Michigan. Also, according to Chairperson Payment, “Tribes are unique political entities that predate the United States and as memorialized in the U.S. Constitution and judicial precedence. Tribal citizenship also may entail a sense of race, ethnicity, cultural membership, traditional spirituality, and Native American identity as impacted by centuries of assimilation and cultural revitalization.” (A. A. Payment, Tribal Chairperson, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, personal communication, November 21, 2018).

Figure 1. Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians (Service Area)
The setting for the Talking Circles and interviews for this study was the Native American Center (Eskoonwid Endaad) at Lake Superior State University in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. I was given permission by the Native American Student Support Advisor to utilize space in this building to facilitate Talking Circles and interviews with tribal members. Talking Circles and interviews were scheduled during times when students were not expected to use the building, such as during evenings and on weekends, which afforded a level of privacy for participants. The building is large with many meeting rooms to use. I utilized a large meeting room downstairs in the Native American Center. To gain access to the building I would call campus security and give them my name, as they had a list of people with permission to access the building. An officer would come to the Native American Center to let me in. I would then lock the door after I was finished using the building.

Before each Talking Circle, I arrived at the building at least 30 minutes before any participants were expected to arrive. I prepared for participants’ arrival by utilizing a large room in which chairs were placed in a circle with an opening space in the Eastern direction. The Eastern direction is sacred and represents the new day, new beginnings, and new life (to name a few things). In advance, I prepared tobacco ties (a small portion of tobacco wrapped in cloth) which were placed in a basket on a nearby table and would be given to participants at the beginning of the ceremony. Tobacco is one of the four sacred medicines (tobacco, cedar, sage, sweetgrass) used by Native Americans during ceremonies (Buhner, 2006). I also brought sage, a large abalone shell (to hold the smudge), matches, a large feather (for use in fanning the smudge, and for passing from speaker to speaker during the Talking Circle), copies of consent forms and values lists, a copy of a summary of the story *The Legend of the Beaver’s Tail* (Shaw, 2015), an electronic voice recorder, and gift cards which were placed on the table for use as needed during the ceremony.
Document Review Protocol/Procedure

The setting for this part of the study was my home office. Document reviews were conducted on program evaluations completed for Tribes in an effort to answer question one.

- How, if at all, are Native American values included when evaluating programs for Native American Nations?

Five evaluation studies published as journal articles were selected for document review to examine and discern whether attention was paid to Native American cultural values. Articles were selected based on being “evaluations conducted with Indigenous Tribes” because this was the focus in this part of the study. This was an exploratory effort to understand what has occurred regarding evaluations conducted with Native Tribes and does not reflect the many evaluations for Tribes that are not published in the evaluation literature. This was a literature scan and the search engine used for the article search was the Western Michigan University online library due to accessibility. The terms “Native Americans” and “program evaluation” were placed in the search window to find articles that contained these words. The first five journal articles that contained these terms and that had been published in the past five years were chosen to be included for document review. After five journal articles were selected, each article was read and searched for values (interconnectedness, generosity, reciprocity, and respect) that are cited as general Native American values in the literature (Cajete & Bear, 2000). The five journal articles were examined to see if attention to interconnectedness, generosity, reciprocity, and respect were included as part of the process when evaluating programs for Native American Tribes.
Talking Circle Protocol/Procedure

The participants were welcomed, and they and I (facilitator) entered the Talking Circle through the “Eastern door” and sat wherever we preferred around the circle. Upon entering the Talking Circle, I gave each participant a tobacco tie as an offering of gratitude. Before going any further with the Talking Circle ceremony, I went over the Consent to Participate, answered questions, received signatures signifying consent, and explained the purpose of the study. I explained that the study was being conducted to gain a better understanding of tribal values and whether inclusion of tribal values in program evaluation would be beneficial to the Sault Tribe. It was clarified that this part of the research was focused on discovering the values of Sault Tribe members and that they would be asked to talk about their values.

I then used the matches to light the sage and it was placed in the large shell. Holding the shell, I used the feather to fan the smoke to smudge the area within the circle. While still holding the shell, I then offered smudge (smoke from the sage) to the participants, and they smudged themselves, as did I. The process of smudging is done by fanning the smoke of the sage toward one’s face and or/body. Note: The word “smudge” is used as both a noun and a verb, and each person may smudge in a similar or different way, depending on their own teachings.

I then introduced myself in Anishinaabemowin, as is the custom in my culture. My introduction included my spirit name and clan, where I am from, and my Tribe. I then opened the Talking Circle by reciting a prayer, which consisted of giving thanks to participants and to all of Creation and asking our ancestors and spirit helpers to join us and to provide guidance and support. As part of the protocol, and because not everyone may have previously participated in a Talking Circle, I explained the following general aspects of the Talking Circle.
• An object (in this case a feather,) will be handed to and held by whomever volunteers to speak first, and this item will then be passed to the left to the next speaker. This process will continue until everyone has shared.

• While one person is speaking, there will be no interruptions or comments made by any other people in the circle.

• After everyone in the Talking Circle has shared once, there will be an opportunity for participants to share once more in the same manner as before.

• Out of respect for everyone’s privacy, participants were asked not to share anything said in the Talking Circle with anyone outside of the circle.

After explaining the general tenets of a Talking Circle, a definition of values was explained to participants as “…an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence” (Rokeach, 1979, p. 5). I then talked about how, in the Anishinaabek culture, values are sometimes passed down through storytelling. At this time I read aloud a summary of the traditional Ojibwe story of The Legend of the Beaver’s Tail (Shaw, 2015) as an example of a traditional story. It was then explained that it may sometimes be hard for us to think of exactly what values are most important to each of us, so a printed copy of values from the Personal Values Card Sort (Miller et al., 2001) and The Seven Grandfather Teachings (Benton-Banai, 1988) was given to participants. Participants were given five minutes to look at the values lists and were told that they did not have to talk about any of these values per se, but this was just a prompt to get them to think about values. I started audio recording the conversation and asked the open-ended question of interest:

• Please tell me what values are of most importance to you.
I then asked if someone in the circle would like to begin sharing. Someone agreed to speak first, at which point they were given the feather to hold while speaking. The first person spoke for however long they wanted to share, after which time they indicated that they were finished, and they passed the feather to the person on their left. This continued until everyone had shared once. Each person typically shared for five to 10 minutes. I then explained that sometimes when we are sharing and listening in a Talking Circle, we might hear something that will prompt us to want to share something more, therefore we would go around the circle one more time. Since not everyone may have something they wanted to share, participants were informed that they could just say “pass” and the feather would move to the next person. Most people did have something they wanted to share during the second round. During the Talking Circle, I took notes as much as possible, although I was more interested in paying attention to what was shared. To close the Talking Circle, I said a closing prayer and thanked everyone for their participation, including our ancestors and spirit helpers. Participants then exited the circle, were given a gift card, and left the Native American Center.

**Interview Protocol/Procedure**

The same basic protocol and procedure were used for interviews as for the Talking Circles. Each individual participant was welcomed, seated, and given a tobacco tie. I then read the Consent to Participate, asked if they understood, answered questions as necessary, and the participant signed the consent. I lit the smudge, and it was offered to the participant, after which, I smudged myself. I introduced myself in Anishinaabemowin and said a prayer to give thanks and to ask our ancestors and spirit helpers for guidance. The main difference between the interview and Talking Circle protocols was that the person being interviewed sat in a chair or on a sofa, while I sat nearby in a chair. The furniture in the room at the Native American Center where interviews took place consisted of a sofa and two armchairs, so participants had a
choice of where to sit. Also, since there was only one person sharing, a feather was held by the person, but not as a way to identify whose turn it was to speak. In my culture, a feather is sacred and helps us to “speak from the heart.” The same question was asked as during the Talking Circles (Please tell me what values are of most importance to you) when the purpose of the interview was to gain information regarding personal values. If, on the other hand, the question of interest during the interview, was whether a values-based approach to evaluation would lead to an increase in utilization, the question asked was,

- Do you think that including tribal values in evaluation would lead to greater use of evaluation results by your Tribe?

The audio recorder was turned on just before I asked the question of interest. The interviewee then shared for as long as they wanted, and I took notes sporadically, as I was more interested in paying attention to what the participant was sharing. Each interview lasted for an hour or less. After the participant was finished sharing, they were thanked for their participation and given a gift card for sharing their knowledge and wisdom. The participant then left the Native American Center.

**Data Processing & Analysis**

**Document Review**

This and every part of my research included ceremony, in that I prayed with tobacco to my spirit helpers for guidance each step of the way. For the document review, each journal article was read first to see if a value of interest (interconnectedness, generosity, reciprocity, respect) was stated in the article. If a value word was included in an article, it was quantified and listed in a word document. After counting the number of times a value was mentioned, each article was then read again to see if reference to the terms in descriptive form was used. For
example, if there was mention of how “someone gave something to someone in return for something,” this was inferred to be describing reciprocity according to the description of this term as it is provided by The Ojibwe Peoples Dictionary (Livesay & Nichols, 2021) and by consulting fluent Ojibwe speakers (Ojibwe Elders). Definitions for interconnectedness, generosity, reciprocity, and respect are provided in the results section of this report. References to the descriptive form of the specified values was also quantified and added to the word document. After all articles were examined and the number of times a value was written and/or an inference to the value was made was quantified, a table was created to depict this information in a manner that showed the results of all five articles. An article could receive a total score of eight if each of the four terms was both literally mentioned and a description of the action related to the term was given. If a term was mentioned or inferred more than once in an article, it could only receive a maximum score of two points for each value term. The point of the examination was not to measure the strength of the effect, only whether or not the value was mentioned and/or demonstrated through action in an article. The table and description of the results is provided in Chapter Five.

**Talking Circles and Interviews**

The information gathered through Talking Circles and interviews was analyzed according to qualitative analytic methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This was completed by first transcribing, sorting, and categorizing data, and then by exploring and defining themes, identifying values, creating value categories, quantifying values, and compiling a final list of values and emergent themes for discussion. Several member checks were conducted after Talking Circles and interviews to ascertain whether the true meaning of what was shared was being accurately depicted.
All data collected through interviews and Talking Circles was first downloaded in audio form and saved to an electronic file in a secure location on my computer. Audio files for each Talking Circle and interview were then transferred into written form utilizing the Sonix audio transcription program (www.sonix.ai) and again saved as word documents and labeled as Talking Circle 1, 2, 3, or Interview 1, 2, 3, etc. The Sonix program was especially useful in that it delineated each Talking Circle by individual speakers, keeping with confidentiality by providing labels such as “speaker one,” “speaker two,” etc. The names of speakers were then changed and labeled as either E for elder or T for tribal member and given a number. The distinction of E was made out of respect for elders, which is important in my culture, and I wanted to make sure that elders’ voices were known as such.

I also used my written notes to check that the audio was transcribed accurately, and corrections were made as needed. A common correction I made was to adjust the spelling when a word was spoken in Anishinaabemowin. The transcription program did not understand this Native language and would print something phonetically similar. I made sure all words were correctly spelled. I know and understand the Ojibwe words, having learned words and phrases in Anishinaabemowin through language classes in the community and through completion of a one-year Ojibwe language course at Bay Mills Community College.

The data was then explored inductively using logical analysis (Patton, 2015) to find the patterns and ideas that emerged which were then represented by categories, themes, and individual values. Some themes became apparent, as is often the case in qualitative research using an approach that identifies patterns, trends, and relationships among the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, Patton, 2015). Themes that surfaced were values acquisition, the Seven Grandfather Teachings, living by good values, identity, purpose, and the effect of historical
trauma. These topics are included for discussion as are some of the values of importance to tribal members.

I then went through each written transcript and highlighted all words that depicted values or value descriptions. When a word was a known value word such as bravery, wisdom, or honesty, it was highlighted. Sometimes a value was described without the use of a specific value word and was highlighted, further examined and delineated, and given a value label. For example, if someone said that “helping elders with their cooking and cleaning” was important to them, “helping others” was the value listed. After all the values were identified and listed individually, they were then placed into value categories. All values related to Love, for example, were placed in that value category. Love is distinct from any values in this study in that it contains both derivatives and actions related to love. For instance, some derivatives of love are kindness, gentleness, and compassion, while some ways that people demonstrate love are through nurturing, helping, and caring for others. Values were only included in this discussion if they met the threshold of being mentioned at least five times verbally or demonstrated through actions that depict the value. A limit was placed because there were many values that were mentioned only once or twice by an individual, and including all of these would have created an unnecessarily long list. It was more important to find out, as a group, what values were most important to tribal members. After analysis of the data, a table was then created to depict the values that members find most meaningful, and this is presented, along with a discussion of the results, in Chapter Five of this report.

Information was verified through member checking with several participants to make sure that the researcher had a clear understanding of the connotations inherent in the information that was gathered through Talking Circles and interviews. Another important reason for member checking was to assure that this study adhered to standards of cultural
appropriateness. Finally, charts and a report of the relevant information were shared with tribal leaders, a traditional healer, and elders for their approval before anything was to be published outside of the Tribe. This last step builds trust and reciprocity between the researcher and Tribe. With approval of the Tribe, this study was completed and will be published in evaluation journals and presented at evaluation conferences and meetings.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

The results of this research are presented in the order of the research questions and include a discussion of the implications of the results. This research started with a general approach by examining published evaluation articles to determine whether values were included in evaluations for Native American Tribes. Then Talking Circles and Interviews with tribal members were utilized in answering questions two and three to find out first, what values are of importance to this Tribe, and whether inclusion of values in evaluations would be useful to the Tribe. The research questions in this study are:

1. How, if at all, are Native American values included when evaluating programs for Native American Nations?
2. What values are important to Native Americans in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, primarily people from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians?
3. How, if at all, would a values-based approach to evaluation lead to an increase in utilization of evaluation results by people from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians?

Results of Article Reviews

Question One

To explore the literature in hopes of answering the first research question, I began by utilizing Western Michigan University’s library database and searched for the terms “Native Americans” and “program evaluation” to locate published evaluation articles to use in this part of my study. Articles used were those that were published within the past five years. I examined the first five evaluation articles meeting these criteria to assess whether attention to values was included in the evaluations to answer the first research question:
1. How, if at all, are Native American values included when evaluating programs for Native American Nations?

The articles varied in the types of evaluation approaches utilized and ranged from qualitative to quantitative, while the types of programs evaluated included mammography screening promotion (Tolma et al., 2019), community health representative (Lalla et al., 2020), diabetes prevention (Rosas et al., 2016), sexual assault prevention (Siller et al., 2021), and peer recovery support (Kelley et al., 2021). Specific evaluation models or approaches mentioned included Medicine Wheel Evaluation Framework (Kelley et al., 2021), Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) (Tolma et al., 2019), a randomized controlled trial (Rosas et al., 2016), a qualitative study utilizing a descriptive approach (Lalla et al., 2020), and a process evaluation (Siller et al., 2021).

Answering this research question was not as straightforward as it might seem and was a multiple-step process. I began by searching each article for values described in the literature by Cajete and Bear (2000) as important to Native Americans: interconnectedness, generosity, reciprocity, and respect. I then searched each article for forms of the terms, such as when looking for “respect” I also searched for “respected” and “respectful.” After finding limited mentions of these four terms in the articles, I then read each article again carefully to find instances of inference to the meaning of the terms. For the purpose of delineating the meaning of each term, definitions were utilized according to those provided by The Ojibwe Peoples Dictionary (Livesay & Nichols, 2021):

- **Interconnectedness**—The connections and interactions between human beings, animals, plants, water, the earth, moon, spirit beings, etc.; everything and everyone is connected now and beyond the present time.

- **Generosity**—To be kind and giving to others.
• Reciprocity—Giving to others and receiving from others.

• Respect—To be treated as being important and of value.

Although not stated as such by Cajete and Bear, (2000), according to the definitions provided by The Ojibwe Peoples Dictionary, generosity appears to be a subset of reciprocity; therefore, when reciprocity was found, generosity was counted as well. Also, because values are often expressed in actions, instances of behavior related to these values were examined in the articles and noted. For example, the term “interconnectedness” may not always be used, but it is inferred when many people from a variety of groups were included in an evaluation or when a variety of connecting aspects of a program are measured in the evaluation. Another way that interconnectedness found expression was in the use of a specific evaluation model. For instance, the Medicine Wheel Evaluation Framework (Atlantic Council for International Cooperation, 2021) was employed by Kelley et al. (2021) and is based on the Native American medicine wheel, which is a symbol of the connections between all of creation and, in this instance, measured change in the areas of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual growth in the individual as a result of taking part in programming. The number of times a value was mentioned or inferred was not counted; whether it was mentioned or inferred (through action) was noted as “yes” or “no” in Table 4. A discussion of how each value was included in evaluations for Native American Tribes follows.

Table 4. Value Terms: Stated Directly or Inferred

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Article 1 (Kelley et al., 2021)</th>
<th>Article 2 (Siller et al., 2021)</th>
<th>Article 3 (Rosas et al., 2016)</th>
<th>Article 4 (Lalla et al., 2020)</th>
<th>Article 5 (Tolma et al., 2019)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interconnectedness</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generosity</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect - Directly Inferred</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interconnectedness**

The Medicine Wheel Evaluation Framework (Atlantic Council for International Cooperation, 2021) was utilized by Kelley et al. (2021) to measure whether a person has balance in their recovery program, and this was accomplished by measuring the amount of recovery capital (White, 2009) of participants in the areas of emotional health, physical health, spiritual health, and mental health. The medicine wheel itself is a holistic approach to evaluation that embodies interconnectedness (Kelley et al., 2021) and is utilized in health care promotion and disease prevention (Dapice, 2006). In Lalla et al. (2020), interconnectedness was implied because family members of program participants were encouraged to participate in the evaluation, and the term was mentioned specifically with the phrase, “Participants were able to pull from traditional knowledge to create their own tailored illness management practices, which often included traditional teachings, spiritual ceremonies or rituals, artistic endeavors, and interconnectedness with family and community” (p. 11). In the other articles, interconnectedness was surmised by reference to interviews with participants and community members (Siller et al., 2021), the inclusion of inter-generational focus groups (Tolma et al., 2019), as well as utilization of the Community-Based Participatory Research model that included many stakeholders in the evaluation process (Rosas et al., 2016).

**Reciprocity and Generosity**

As stated previously, for the purpose of this study, generosity is being considered as a subset of reciprocity due to the definitions of both terms including the act of giving. The definition provided for generosity includes kindness, and this seems to be implied in the act of giving, so this would also be implied in the act of giving and receiving, so reciprocity therefore
seems to include kindness. Reciprocity goes further than giving alone, in that each party receives something from the other. A common practice that was examined in the articles was the use of incentives for participation, which is both generous and demonstrates the reciprocal nature of the relationship between evaluators and participants. Participants give information and receive a gift, while evaluators receive the gift of information gained through an individual’s participation in a study. In some evaluations gift cards were given to participants (Lalla et al., 2020), while another included the gift of a bracelet for completion of a mammogram (Tolma et al., 2019) as part of the programming; other evaluations included monetary gifts (Rosas et al., 2016) or inclusion in a drawing (Siller et al., 2021). Although there is no mention of generosity or reciprocity in one of the evaluations, the reciprocal and generous nature of the relationship between the evaluators and the community may be evidenced by the involvement and commitment of tribal leaders and community members (Kelley et al., 2021).

Respect

Respect was a part of each of the evaluations but was not always written in the evaluation article as such and was sometimes inferred through action. The words “respectful” and “respected” were used three times in the Lalla et al. article (2020) and in one instance, the authors discussed how clients were more comfortable with service providers who were respectful of traditional ways. Respect was shown in another evaluation by the involvement of community members in the evaluation process “…so that the investigators assured that the process was responsive and respectful to the communities” (Tolma, et al., 2019, p. 54).

Although respect is not mentioned in some of the evaluations, it is inferred due to the inclusion of members of the tribal community and the use of culturally appropriate evaluation methods. For example, because the CBPR process included many stakeholders, including tribal members, it is inferred that respect was shown due to their inclusion in the evaluation (Rosas et al., 2016).
Another evaluation demonstrated respect in the same way through the “high level of community and tribal involvement in the evaluation process” and is also evidenced by the use of a culturally appropriate evaluation framework (Kelley et al., 2021, p. 6). Siller et al. (2021) completed their evaluation in a respectful way by making sure that approval to evaluate the program and publish an article was secured by the Tribal IRB, the Tribal Council, and the president of the Tribe.

Discussion

The answer to research question one is positive, in that it appears that evaluators are adhering to cultural values when conducting evaluations with Tribes, but there are limitations in answering this question. Even though there are instances in the written evaluation articles where a value was specified, (e.g., respect and interconnectedness) and there are times when inferences to the values were made in each evaluation, a published evaluation article by itself lacks information that would be useful to this form of metaevaluation. The term “metaevaluation” is attributed to Scriven in Stufflebeam (2001) and described by Stufflebeam as an evaluation of an evaluation. Metaevaluation is one way to ascertain whether an evaluation adheres to the Program Evaluation Standards (Yarbrough et al., 2011) and to assess the quality of the process and outcome of a single or multiple evaluations (Cooksy & Caracelli, 2005). This study employs a form of metaevaluation that utilizes cultural values as criteria to find out if the evaluations were done in a good way that adheres to cultural values and is therefore a form of cultural metaevaluation.

This type of document review is useful but limited in scope to what is written in a published evaluation article, and therefore it cannot tell the whole story of how the evaluation was conducted. Also, since only the WMU library database was used, this is perhaps only a subset of what is actually available in the evaluation literature. Another limitation is that the
full context of an evaluation cannot be known unless there is dialog with evaluators and stakeholders who were involved with the evaluation, as only so much can be written in a journal article. Methods for conducting a cultural metaevaluation should be explored more thoroughly and methods for conducting this type of metaevaluation should include methods that are culturally appropriate to the Indigenous people for whom the original evaluation was completed. For example, holding a Talking Circle with Anishinaabe stakeholders of a program that was evaluated and written up for a journal would yield a great deal of information about whether an evaluation included Anishinaabek cultural values, and this level of detail is lacking when only reviewing evaluation literature.

Results of Talking Circles and Interviews

The primary focus of this study is finding out what values are of importance to a cultural group, specifically the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, and then examining whether including cultural values in evaluation for this Tribe would increase utilization of results. Talking Circles and interviews with tribal members were utilized to answer the remaining two research questions:

2. What values are important to Native Americans in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, primarily people from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians?
3. How, if at all, would a values-based approach to evaluation lead to an increase in utilization of evaluation results by people from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians?

Question Two

To answer question number two, Talking Circles and interviews were conducted according to the prescribed protocols. After completing qualitative analysis of the data, a table was created to depict the values that are important to Sault Tribe members who took part in
this study. Only those values that were mentioned at least five times were included in Table 5 for manageability of results, as there were many values that were mentioned only once or twice by individuals. Values are listed in order of highest to lower number of times they were mentioned specifically or inferred through actions. In addition to quantification of values, some themes emerged, such as how and from whom people learned their values, as well as the importance of traditional tribal values, and living one’s life according to mino-bimaadiziwin.

Other important topics discussed were identity as a Native person and how historical oppression affected the daily lives of Anishinaabe people and the expression of their values.

Table 5. Values of Importance to Tribal Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Values of Importance to Sault Tribe Members</th>
<th># Times Stated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Derivatives (kindness, gentleness, compassion)</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Actions (helping others, caring for others, etc.)</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truth</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humility</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bravery</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisdom</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer (spirituality)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generosity</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Simplicity 7
Acceptance 6
Contribution 6
Gratitude 6
Hope 6
Responsibility 6
Relationality 5
Justice 5

Totals
Love (including derivatives and actions) 164
Seven Grandfathers (including love) 351
Other Values 160

Tribal Values

As stated earlier, values are generally unspoken and are not usually a topic of conversation, unless one is receiving a direct verbal teaching on a values such as respect. It does not seem that tribal members discuss values unless there is a specific reason to do so. From this research, and from personal experience as a Sault Tribe member, it appears that tribal members are more expressive of values through their actions that demonstrate their values than they are in verbal expression of values. It is through praxis that values are fostered and then shared with others. Much of the discussion shared by tribal members for this study was about how people learn their values (and from whom) and how their values are expressed through action in their everyday lives. We can see from Table 5 that there is an array of values that are important to those Sault Tribe members who participated in interviews and Talking Circles for this study. Although many values were discussed, the most notable was the value of
love. It was interesting to find that love was not just spoken of as a concept, such as when someone says that they love someone or something. Love was almost always described in ways that demonstrated expressions of love. It was also interesting to find that the traditional Ojibwe values of the Seven Grandfather Teachings are important to Sault Tribe members and are practiced in their daily lives. A discussion on the emergent themes as well as the Seven Grandfathers as important to tribal members, including specific examples and quotes by some participants, follows, along with discussions of some of the values that stood out as important to tribal members. The values expressed as most important to tribal members were love, respect, honesty, humility, bravery, wisdom, truth, prayer, purpose, family, faith, identity, and generosity. The implications to the evaluation field with regards to the findings on values and how these can be incorporated or utilized within the evaluation field will be discussed in Chapter V.

**Emergent Themes**

**Values Acquisition**

It was interesting to discover, during the interviews and Talking Circles, that when tribal members talked about their values, they discussed the source of values acquisition, the place of values acquisition, and the action of self or others related to values acquisition and practice. People were eager to share how they acquired their values and who taught them values. The sources of values acquisition include grandparents, parents, spiritual teachers, traditional healers, spirits, dreams, books, and through storytelling. The places that values were passed down include at home, at relatives’ homes, at the dinner table, at ceremonies, in the woods, and at church. The actions involved in values acquisition includes talking to others, listening to stories, learning from others talking about their experiences, and observing the behavior of others. In the text that follows are accounts by participants of their experiences of
how they learned the values that are important to them now, who their teachers were, and how
they practice their values in their daily lives. To protect the confidentiality of participants, they
are referred to as elder (E) or tribal member (T) followed by a designated number, i.e., E1, E2,
T1, T2, etc. The designation of Elder is given out of respect, as is appropriate in my culture.
When a sentence begins with Tribal Member or Elder, it will be spelled out; otherwise only E
or T and the associated number will be used for brevity.

Elder 1 conveyed how he was raised by his grandmother and learned lessons and values
through stories told by her and others in Anishinaabemowin because “everyone spoke the
language back then.” He said that the adults would gather at night at his grandmother’s home
and tell stories in Anishinaabemowin and he would sit nearby listening to them. Occasionally,
they would say a word that he didn’t understand so he would interrupt to ask what they meant.
They would stop their conversation and explain the word in detail until he understood. He
explained that they were very kind and loving in their approach to teaching him the meaning of
words and stories. Elder1 stated, “Every one of our stories is a lesson, and in each story there’s
more than just one lesson.” He talked about the stories that were told about the Windigo and
how each story seemed to be about one topic, but that it was also open to the understanding
and interpretation of the listener. Elder 1’s interpretation of the Windigo story is:

If you start running away from something, it gets bigger and bigger until it finally
consumes you. But if you turn and meet it head on, face it right now, you find that most
of the time it’s about worry and how worry can grow and grow. It’s all in our minds.
That is what I take away from that story. The Windigo got so big, the more people he
ate, the bigger he got. Pretty much all of our stories are like that, there’s a lesson. (E1)

The Windigo stories, according to E1, are about having the courage to face problems
immediately by not allowing problems a chance to snowball into something that has the ability
to overwhelm us. The other implicit teaching in this example is how the elders demonstrated respect, love, kindness, and patience in their behavior toward the elder (as a boy) when he interrupted their conversation to ask for clarification. Elder 1 told a few more stories that taught him about values.

Stories are a way that values are taught to Native people, and these stories are handed down orally through the generations. Many of the traditional stories told by the Anishinaabek include teachings from the animals because, according to E1, “the Creator made all the animals and told us that each one had a gift for us, things we can learn.” Elder 1 told a story about a snake who was continually rejected by the community because he was seen as not being as good as everyone else and people were afraid of him. The story ends with the snake retaliating against humans. This story taught E1 about treating people with respect and seeing their worth even if they do not seem worthy of respect. Each one of us has intrinsic worth and gifts to share with one another. Elder 1 said that he learned values through this and other stories “from my great grandmother, who probably heard it from her great grandmother, and on and on.”

Tribal Member 2 also learned values from his grandmother. He does not remember her ever using the term “Seven Grandfathers” specifically, but she taught him many values, including “generosity, love, and respect” through her actions and examples. He also learned from observing others and through hearing traditional stories. He continues to practice these values and to learn about values from others. Lately, T2 has been learning “a lot more about love and respect, not just to the outside world, but for myself.” He explained that learning to love and respect ourselves allows us to love and respect others from a space of knowing those values at a deeper level. Tribal Member 2 shared that the meanings of some values may be different in mainstream culture than in our Native culture, and he gave this example:
The meaning of humility in some cultures might be to make yourself small, but in our traditions it’s not necessarily to make ourselves small. Instead, it’s to take up the right amount of space. Don’t make yourself too small. Don’t make yourself too big. We all have gifts and the responsibility to share those gifts with creation. We need to make ourselves just the right size. (T2)

Elder 8 learned most of her values from her grandmother through stories, while T1 learned values from sitting with elders who gave her teachings. Elder 2 learned from her mom and dad. She said, “the teachings were not specifically referred to as the Seven Grandfathers, but they taught us about being truthful. Of all the things, truth was a big one.”

**Seven Grandfather Teachings**

A common theme presented was the Seven Grandfather Teachings (Seven Grandfathers, Teachings) and how tribal members were eager to talk about their understanding of the Teachings and how they use them in their daily lives. Tribal Member 3 explains these Teachings as “basically a path that was created for Anishinaabe people to live a good life,” while E5 describes the Seven Grandfathers as “guiding principles.” Elder 3 always strives “to incorporate those teachings in my life as I am walking with creation.” The Seven Grandfathers have been passed down from generation to generation for as long as people can remember. The Seven Grandfather Teachings are Respect, Honesty, Humility, Bravery, Love, Wisdom, and Truth. Personally, I did not know how prevalent and important the Seven Grandfathers were to other tribal members before conducting interviews and Talking Circles. What I discovered through talking to others and listening to their stories is that the Seven Grandfather Teachings are inherent to who we are and how we live, and that we do not generally talk about them specifically unless we are in a setting such as a Talking Circle or an interview and the topic is values. These are values that many people who participated in this
study try to live by in their daily lives. The Seven Grandfather Teachings are very much alive and well in my community. After thousands of years, we still live by these values, and we teach them to our children and grandchildren. We teach and learn our values in many ways, and much of this happens through our interactions with and observations of the behaviors of others.

Elder 1 stated that the Seven Grandfather Teachings are a simple way to live. “According to my beliefs, these are just as important as the Ten Commandments,” he said, and added with a chuckle, “but we only got seven.” He went on to explain his understanding of some of the Teachings. He said, “Honesty is about always being upfront,” while bravery is about “having the courage to step up” and humility means “don’t be afraid when someone scolds you.” He talked about how wisdom takes a long time to acquire and “comes almost at the end of your journey.” The most important of these to E1 is truth, because “giving someone your word is the most valuable thing you got, so you should not give it out unless you are willing and ready to stand behind it.” Tribal Member 1 agreed with E1, saying “when I give somebody my word that I'm going to do something, I do it. That's all I have to fall back on is my word.” The Seven Grandfathers are important to Anishinaabe people. They provide us with guidance throughout our lives, and learning these values starts when we are young. Tribal Member 4 said, “We give these teachings early to our kids, but we also set that example from the beginning when the baby is born. We show them how to live.” Tribal Member 13 said, “I believe in the Seven Grandfather teachings, and I try to live by them and I teach them to my children. I see these values as just living a good life...being a good human being.”

**Love is Most Important**

Of all the Seven Grandfathers, more people talked about love than any other of the Teachings. Some specifically stated the word “love” as an important value, while some described other words and phrases that can be considered subcategories of love such as caring,
nurturing, kindness, and helping. Elder 2 talked about how she demonstrates love through actions like cooking for people, sewing, or helping in some way. Elder 2 said, “I think all of that is just my way of showing love to other human beings,” and “To me values are what you do every single day. It’s about the love you put into your food when you’re cooking, the love you put into something you’re sewing. It’s my ideal way of living.” The act of preparing food this way is common in my culture, especially when it comes to preparing feasts. We pray and think good thoughts while we cook, and that is how love is put into the food. Certain people are chosen to cook for a feast because they are gifted in this way. Showing love for others through cooking and sharing food is common among my Tribe. Tribal Member 7 described how she would visit her grandmother who always gave her a cookie or other food, and “It was offered as a way to say, I’m nourishing you and I’m here for you.” Elder 4 shows love to others by trying “to be good to people and to be kind and generous.” Elder 9 remembers being taught “to treat people the way I wanted to be treated.”

**Love as Helping**

Love expressed through helping and caring for others was a major finding in this study. As a tribal member, I know how helpful and caring we are to each other, but I was surprised at the extent to which this is true. Showing love to others through helping is very important to many tribal members. Tribal Member 7 explains that love is one of her “higher values,” and helping others is how she shows her love to others. Tribal Member 7 was told by an elder, “This is the last instruction that Creator gives us before we get here: to help one another. So, I try to live by that the best way that I can.” Helping others is also important to T6, and she is “happy that I can do small things to help in my community.” Tribal Member 4 agrees that helping is important: “If we see somebody who needs something, we help them. If we see somebody struggling, we help them.” When he was a young boy, T3 remembers telling himself,
“When I grow up, I’m going to help whoever needs help.” Tribal Member 3 does indeed help many people in his profession and in his personal life.

The concept of caring for one another as being important to Native Americans is supported by the research of Horse (1980) who describes the Extended Family Systems model to reflect the interactions of Native American families throughout their life cycles. Within this model the life phases are: 1. being cared for, 2. preparing to care for, and 3. assuming care for. This model explains the interdependence of Indigenous family systems and how we care for each other at each stage of life; and although there is a certain level of self-reliance, there is always a sense of caring for each other and relying on relatives (and those we have adopted as relatives). Another salient point made by Horse (1980) is that interdependence is in contrast to the nuclear family model of some non-Indigenous cultures, where independence and self-reliance are the goals to reach in one’s life. In many Indigenous cultures, becoming an elder and transmitting knowledge and wisdom to the next generation is an important part of the life cycle.

Other Values of Importance

Other values that tribal members talked about are humility, respect, truth, and bravery. Although T7 cannot remember where she learned about humility, she knows that she expresses this value by “sticking to myself, doing my own thing, and not being boastful.” However, she finds this can be a detriment when doing things like interviewing for a job where she needs to “market myself because it goes against my inside value.” Another important value to tribal members is respect, and it is expressed to all of creation, “including humans, plants, and animals because we are respecting the life cycle of all” (T13). We are all connected, and each person’s opinions, values, and strengths are respected because “we all have our own role and place in the whole system, whether the system is the family unit or the community” (T7). It is
important to teach respect to our children because “when you’re teaching them to be respectful of their elders, they are also learning to respect themselves” (T4). Of all the Seven Grandfather teachings, T9 said, “Truth is the one that is most important to me. The word for truth in our language includes the ‘bwe’ sound, which is your heart. So, from my understanding, truth means following the sound of your heart. That’s what truth is.” Tribal Member 2 agreed that “Truth comes from my heart” and that is why “there can be multiple truths in the world. We all have our own stories; we have our own truth that our hearts know” (T2). Truth and bravery are important and connected because, according to T9, “Courage is a strength of heart, and I think that it takes courage to follow your heart, because of the unknown.”

**Living by Good Values**

People gave examples of how they live their lives in a good way according to the Seven Grandfather teachings. Elder 2 expresses her good values through her words, prayers, actions, and intentions to be loving toward others. She knows the power of her thoughts and how words can affect others, so she is careful with her words and is gentle toward others. She never intends to hurt anyone’s feelings and treats everyone with respect and kindness. Elder 3 also treats people with courtesy and tries to be “kind and gentle and compassionate.” Elder 2 was taught by her father to greet people with a gentle handshake because “we’re showing love and gentleness toward each other when we do that.” Prayer is important to E2 and is something that is integrated into her daily activities. Even a mundane task can be a time to think of and pray for others. “Just think of those who are struggling and even when you’re washing dishes you could be having a little prayer for that person, as you’re doing those things. So, everything can be a prayer. All of our tasks can be that way” (E2). Elder 6 agrees with E2 that our intentions are most important because:
The animals are going to hear what you’re saying through intent. The plants are going to know what you’re saying with intent. Intentions are what is at the core of our values, and that is why we intend to be kind to each other and to everyone around us. (E6)

**Identity and Purpose**

Identity and purpose go together, according to T6. “If you’re brought up in a family where you have your name and you know your clan, you know your purpose from the beginning; they explain that to you.” Elder 4 agreed with T6, adding, “You know what your responsibility is.” Tribal Member 7 explained that “giving back to your community is a part of that responsibility.” Helping other tribal members to know who they are is important to T10, who helps them to do research into their ancestry. Tribal Member 4 believes that his purpose is to help youth to know who they are, and part of this is leading by example by living his life in a good way. We each have a purpose, according to T4:

I believe that our Creator has put us here for a reason. I believe that, you know, each of us has a medicine inside that we were given, to do good for our people. We were brought to this place by the Creator to take care of it and to take care of our people.

(T4)

Elder 11 was raised to know who she is as a Native person, even though she grew up in a large city. She remembers her grandmother putting food out for the animals and the spirits and “hearing stories of her father picking medicines in the fall and relatives coming over to visit and to smoke kinikinik.” Elder 11 also learned more about her identity through “teachings from attending women’s gatherings, cultural gatherings, and visiting with the medicine man.” Tribal Member 3 remembers being taught at an early age “to know who we are as a people,” and one of the things he learned was “to be in tune with myself and my spirit.” Knowing who we are “as an Anishinaabe person is knowing the purpose of self” (T3). Elder 4 sums up the importance of
identity and purpose by saying, “I think that’s something that we have to make sure all of our kids get, their name and their clan, so they can start knowing what their purpose in life is.” Ultimately, once we know our purpose, we can live in a way that fulfills our destiny. Tribal Member 1 wants to make sure “that I’m a good human and that my spirit is here on this planet doing what it’s meant to do…that original teaching that I was given before I came down here.” She believes that her purpose in this lifetime is to help others, and she demonstrates this value through volunteering and “helping people who do not have others to help them with cooking or cleaning, or anything they need me to do.” Tribal Member 1 said, “I want to make sure that when I go back to Creator that my spirit did what it was supposed to do here. That’s really what it comes down to for me.”

**Historical Trauma**

Another theme that emerged was the need for people to talk about historical trauma and how this affected their values and their ability to express their values openly. One thing that is fresh in many people’s memory is either attending a Christian boarding school or experiencing the effects of having a parent or grandparent who attended a boarding school. As mentioned earlier in this report, many children were forcibly removed from their homes and sent to boarding schools. Some of those children never returned and are instead buried on the grounds of the schools. One tribal member, T4, said:

> Boarding schools really destroyed our people, not the school itself, not the religion itself, but the people that were working in the name of that religion really destroyed our people. You know, my grandparents, my aunts and uncles, my older aunts and uncles, you know, went through that. And that has created generational trauma for many communities. That’s why we see so much alcoholism and substance abuse. In turn, you see that same kind of abuse among family members. And it’s something that, you know,
we’ve not healed from. And so, we have to return to our core belief systems. We have to return to our core of loving each other and supporting each other and being respectful. And I think our Indigenous way is what truly will heal us. (T4)

Until 1978, when the Freedom of Religion Act was passed, Native People had to hide their ceremonies and their values behind closed doors for fear of retribution by the dominant society because it was against the law to practice Native American ceremonies. Elder 3 remembered, “We had to put black cloth on the basement windows and practice ceremonies in hiding.” Another tribal member (T13) said, “I can remember one ceremony that was done to help all of the people in our community when we had a drought, but we had to hide to do it.” Helping others is one of the most important values of the Anishinaabek. Our ceremonies and our values are alive today because of the people who had the courage to risk everything to practice our sacred ways of life.

Many of our Anishinaabe stories which imparted lessons and values used to be told exclusively in Anishinaabemowin. Until 1978, it was against the law for Natives to speak their cultural languages so many people stopped speaking Ojibwe. Out of fear of punishment, there was a period of time when grandparents and parents did not teach the language or other ceremonies to the younger generations. This was a way to protect the children from harm. Elder 2 remembers going to college to learn Anishinaabemowin and after sharing some of these new words with her parents, she found out that they were fluent in the language. She said she felt angry at first that her parents did not teach her until her father explained his reasons. Her father told her that he was punished in school for speaking Ojibwe and did not want his children to experience the maltreatment he suffered.
Discussion

Our values have endured and are still true to who we are and important to us as Anishinaabe people. Despite sometimes seemingly insurmountable circumstances, our values have survived over many generations. I am specifically referring to the values referred to as the Seven Grandfather Teachings of Love, Honesty, Humility, Respect, Bravery, Truth, and Wisdom. It appears that these values are passed on through the generations from grandparents and parents through storytelling and through how we treat one another. Some people learned these values at the dinner table or by hearing traditional stories, but mostly, it seems, that values are demonstrated through actions. This is shown through our interactions with others and how we show love to other tribal members, through helping, cooking, sewing, listening, and many other ways. In my opinion, regardless of outside influences, the good values of my Tribe will continue to persist, and we will always strive to live our lives in a good way.

The significance of understanding the values of importance to Sault Tribe members and how this intersects with the evaluation field is, in my view, profound. Although this study is a small snapshot into tribal values, it is huge in its affirmation that Indigenous people have values and worldviews that are in stark contrast to those of the dominant society. Since most of the evaluation models have been developed by the dominant society and are therefore based on their values and worldview, there is a massive gap that must be reconciled if the evaluation field wants to conduct evaluations that are meaningful to Indigenous people. Chapter V contains a more in-depth discussion on values and other topics and how these can be utilized by the evaluation field to increase cultural competency when working with Indigenous Tribes.

Question Three

In answering question three, two tribal leaders (TL1, TL2) and two elders (E5, E11) were interviewed to find out their thoughts about whether the inclusion of cultural values
would be important to evaluations with the Sault Tribe and to answer the final research question:

3. How, if at all, might a values-based approach to evaluation lead to an increase in utilization of evaluation results by people from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians?

The question was posed in this way to participants:

Do you think that including tribal values in evaluation would lead to greater use of evaluation results by your Tribe?

The answers to this question varied according to the participant, with the focus being on the inclusion of tribal values in both programming and evaluation, the benefit of including values in evaluation, and the importance of values research. Whether the inclusion of values in evaluation would lead to greater utilization of evaluation results did not seem to be of greatest interest or concern to tribal members participating in this discussion.

Elder 11 has worked for several Tribes and, “In my experience, many of the social programs instituted into tribal programs have been created for and by the majority population” and even those that are “made for Native people include generic words or phrases to make them sound culturally relevant” when they are not. According to Elder 11, there is sometimes “a dynamic of suspicion and ambivalence about interventions, programming, and evaluations.” In this situation, “The program doesn’t truly feel like it was made for us” and people may be “just going through the motions when it comes time to do the evaluation” (E11).

Tribal Leader 1, when discussing health programs, had a different view of programming and evaluation, stating that evaluation must include the values of the Sault Tribe because, “Our services are steeped in our values.” He gave this example regarding “respect,”: “Our programs
are based on respecting our bodies so evaluation should include the question of, ‘how well are we respecting our bodies?’

Tribal Leader 1 went on to say, “You have to understand our culture and include our values because not including our values is superficial and is expecting people to conform to the dominant culture’s way of doing things.” Tribal Leader 1 gave another reason for inclusion of tribal values in evaluation: “It has to be based on people’s values if you want commitment, and you cannot assume to know their values because some Natives are traditional and some are Catholic.” Even though people may have different values, when working with Native people, “respect always has to be part of evaluation because we are all connected” (TL1).

Participants were not asked specifically what they thought about research on values, but they shared their thoughts on the subject. Some had comments regarding the importance of this area of research. Tribal Leader 2 stated:

Anishinaabek people are different than other ethnic groups and it would be valuable to research that, document it, and express that to others, especially educational institutions where this can help them to think differently about things, and maybe they could see the importance of our values. Dominant society has documented and written about and believes mainly what is valid to them. (TL2)

Tribal Leader 2 shared that it is important to “express the findings to others so that they not only understand it but validate it” because we are now in a unique place in time where “we can now express, and we can validate our beliefs. It’s also a time when people are more accepting of differences. I think this research is really important for our people.” Elder 5 believes that including values in evaluation “to me seems like common sense, like of course it would be important,” and “this research is very important to Indian people, and valuable to us
as a whole” due to helping others to understand the importance of knowing and including our tribal values.

We have intrinsic values as a people and innate values as a people and we have to be understood and we have to have a voice. There was a big span of time through the boarding schools era when our grandparents’ and parents’ generations, that they didn’t have a voice. We are important and what we say is important. (E5)

Tribal Leader 1 shared his thoughts on research with Native people in general as, “People want to make quick conclusions. If you use only quantitative data, it’s too simplified. You have to take a deeper dive with qualitative research because, without a qualitative dive to understand at a deeper level, it doesn’t create a complete picture.” Tribal Leader 1 added that not only is it important to use qualitative methods, but “including values as an evaluation tool is important and will definitely make an impact.” Elder 5 has hope that this study will help Native people from many tribes. She ended her interview with, “We will be putting our tobacco out for success in this endeavor.”

**Discussion**

The way that tribal members answered this question was interesting and brings up other possible areas of discussion. One participant talked about a level of “suspicion” in programming and evaluation due to not feeling that programs were authentically created for Native Americans, while another felt that tribal programs were “steeped in our values.” If programs are based on tribal values, it makes sense that including attention to a particular value would be important in an evaluation of the program. From the responses of these participants, it seems clear that inclusion of values is important in both programming and evaluation. This is a topic area that needs to be explored further, because whether or not
programs are inclusive of a tribal group’s values needs to be discussed. This is just as important as whether or not values per se are included in the evaluation.

Although the question of whether or not utilization of evaluation results would increase as a consequence of including tribal values was not answered directly, the common thread throughout the discussions was the importance of the dominant society in gaining an understanding of Native people and our values. One tribal member talked about how previous programming and evaluation did not seem to be specific to Native people, while another talked about how even Natives within a Tribe may have different values, and that researchers really need to look deeply with qualitative methods to understand the full picture. The main understanding that I received during these interviews was that tribal members are excited and hopeful that research is being done to find out more about who we are and that this will help others to know us and work with us in more productive ways.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to answer questions about values, specifically tribal values, using culturally appropriate methods. This was accomplished by examining published articles to see if Indigenous values are included in evaluations, defining values in a local culture-specific context, and examining whether the inclusion of cultural values in evaluation is beneficial to a specific tribal group and if this would lead to greater utilization of evaluation results. It is my intention that this study will add to the knowledge base of the evaluation field in the area of cultural competence by providing a better understanding around the inclusion of cultural values in evaluation. I hope that this study will expand the evaluation field’s understanding of cultural competency when working with diverse populations by helping people to gain more knowledge regarding the importance of including specific values in evaluation. The research questions were answered, one more fully than others, and there were many more “teachings” that came out of this research. At the inception of my study, I wanted to know three things:

1. How, if at all, are Native American values included when evaluating programs for Native American Nations?

2. What values are important to Native Americans in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, primarily people from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians?

3. How, if at all, might a values-based approach to evaluation lead to an increase in utilization of evaluation results by people from the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians?
Questions One and Three

I begin my discussion around questions one and three because they are related in some ways. Question one was asking whether Indigenous values have been included in evaluations. The tentative answer to this question is yes, but there are issues that need to be resolved to get a more definite answer. Simply examining published evaluation articles to see if values have been included only gives a surface level depiction and does not offer enough information to answer the question thoroughly. For example, in some published evaluations, a value word was stated directly, but most times it was inferred through action. It is difficult to know if values were included in the actual process associated with the evaluation. Also, many evaluations in Indian Country go unpublished, and are therefore not included in databases that can be searched for an inquiry like this. As an evaluator on the ground, I can attest to not thinking about publishing results when there are deadlines to meet and serving the needs of Tribes is the focus. This kind of question requires a deeper dive that qualitative research can answer more effectively, and this should include the use of Indigenous methods when working with Native people.

Question three asked whether inclusion of tribal values would increase utilization. This was not an easy question to answer and was a bit like “putting the cart before the horse” because I think values have to first be included in evaluations for Native Tribes before people can know whether it was a good thing. Otherwise, we are asking them to guess about something that they either do not know about or perhaps have no interest in. For instance, one of the participants who previously worked for a tribe thought that programs for Native people had been designed by people from the dominant society, and because of this tribal stakeholders were not invested in the program or the evaluation and people may be “just going through the motions when it comes time to do the evaluation” (E11). Other people said that inclusion of
values was probably a good idea when evaluating programs for Indigenous tribes, but the focus of the conversation was more about values research. Some thought that this kind of research is important in that it gives others a better understanding of who we are as Native Americans; that people will know us. I agree. The common component in questions one and three is that I wanted to know more about *the inclusion of values in evaluation*. I wanted to gain a better understanding of how values are included in evaluations (question one). I also wondered whether inclusion of values is useful to the Indigenous group (question three). This leads to a discussion on cultural metaevaluation.

**Cultural Metaevaluation**

I see the need for a model of cultural metaevaluation which would assist in answering these types of questions by examining evaluations to discover whether values were included in the evaluation. I think more research in this area is needed to find out which methods would be most useful in this effort, and for whom. Since cultures vary, one method may be useful for one cultural group, while another method would work better for another group. I think developing a cultural metaevaluation approach or model would begin with research on the values of an Indigenous group. Once a list of values of most importance is established, methods to gather information that are culturally relevant would be developed and would be specific to a certain Indigenous Tribe or group. A general model of metaevaluation may be too broad to be useful for the majority of Tribes due to differences in culture. On the other hand, if a Tribal Nation has a number of Tribes who have a shared set of values, a more general model could be useful. Much more research in the area of cultural metaevaluation needs to be completed before we can adequately answer these questions, and I challenge Indigenous researchers to take on this task, especially as it relates to their own culture. Research about Indigenous people needs to be done by Indigenous people (Prussing, 2018; Wehipeihana, 2019). The need for cultural
metaevaluation approaches will become even more apparent as values-based evaluation gains momentum.

**Question Two**

Question two was answered fully, and the responses provide a greater understanding of values and other attributes of some of the people of my Tribe. These “teachings” can provide guidance for the evaluation field. The teachings are not only about values, but go deeper and reflect the relational worldview of my people. As with Anishinaabek stories, there are obvious teachings, such as those related to a certain value like humility, but there are other teachings that are not as apparent, or may be implied, and all teachings are open to personal interpretation. To explain this further, in regard to this research, even as I write this, the process of praxis continues and the more that I reflect on the different aspects of the study, the more I learn and discover. As an Indigenous researcher, my process of knowing and learning is relational and builds on what was known, and it evolves to create new understandings. I am sure that I will continue to find new meaning each time I reflect on what I have learned. In the previous chapter, I discussed the findings of this study according to each question. I will now present the overall findings, other “teachings” and how these can be utilized by the evaluation field, and what this means going forward. I present this in kind of a circular approach that is indicative of the relational worldview of my culture.

**Overall Findings**

The findings of this study suggest that the values of the people of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians are unique to their culture, and that some of these values are similar to the values of other Indigenous peoples. This study also demonstrates that the value system of this specific tribal group is not the same as the value system of the dominant culture. And, since the majority of evaluation models, methods, and approaches have been created by people
from the dominant culture who have value systems unlike those of Indigenous people, there
seems to be a question of how useful the mainstream models, methods, and approaches are to
Indigenous peoples. As stated earlier, values are at the core of culture (Hofstede, 2001;
SenGupta et al., 2004; Kirkhart, 2010), so for evaluation as a field to be effective and useful to
Indigenous populations, we must find a way to include a specific cultural group’s values into
evaluations for that cultural group or we will be unsuccessful in our attempts to understand the
effectiveness and usefulness of programs serving Indigenous people. In addition, if the
evaluator is not a member of the cultural group, and is instead from the dominant culture, the
evaluator’s values may be so vastly different from the Indigenous group’s that the evaluation
findings may lack any kind of real meaning or usefulness to the Indigenous stakeholders. We
can continue doing evaluation as usual, without the inclusion of the values of the cultural
group, but if we want to know the truth about the success or failure of a program, we have to
see it through the cultural lenses of the people who provide and participate in the program.
Beyond values, we must consider everything else that makes a culture distinct (beliefs, customs,
etc.) and pay attention to these contextual factors when evaluating programs for cultures other
than our own. It is insufficient and even disrespectful to complete an evaluation with a cultural
group without including their values in every aspect of the evaluation. Since the results of this
study demonstrate that including values is important when conducting evaluations with a
Native American Tribe, this is something that should be done as a matter of course when
working with Indigenous cultural groups.

Teachings and Implications for Evaluation

This study has been like one of our Anishinaabe stories, which, according to Elder 1, is
“open to the understanding and interpretation of the listener.” Also, in every story “…there’s
more than just one lesson.” Each time I read what I have written, I come to new
understandings and lessons learned, because each day I stand in a place of new perspective. Life is like that, and my culture is like that. Everything moves in a circular way and is relational, building on what has come before. In addition to the cultural values discussed in this study, not only are there are many other concepts that can be utilized by evaluators to improve how they work with Indigenous people, but the evaluation field as a whole can gain from these teachings. Some of the teachings included throughout this report are sovereignty, Anishinaabemowin, animate/inanimate, relationality, kinship, Seven Generations, spirituality and intention, values acquisition (observation and listening), identity development, values (humility, honesty, love, interdependence, respect, truth, bravery, wisdom), historical trauma (and how we can stop the perpetuation of it), and the risks of sharing Indigenous knowledge and ceremonies. My list keeps growing as I reflect on what I know and incorporate new understandings. I invite the reader to think about all of these concepts and to find out more about each of these beyond what is written here.

I will begin with my reflections on values since they were the focus of this study. I am filled with gratitude for my ancestors, and T13 sums up my thoughts by saying, “Our ceremonies and our values are alive today because of the people who had the courage to risk everything to practice our sacred ways of life.” It is because of all who have come before me that I stand here today. My values guide what I do, and I plan on making sure that I am more cognizant to include these in my practice as an evaluator. Table 6 provides a basic understanding of each of the Seven Grandfathers (values) and how these can be used by evaluators to improve evaluation practice, but it is through communication and relationships with tribal members that a full understanding of a culture’s values can be known. For example, respect is important when interacting with an Indigenous Tribe, but how this is expressed may be exclusive to a certain cultural group. In my Tribe, it would be appropriate to give tobacco to
certain elders as a sign of respect when seeking knowledge on a specific topic. It may also be a sign of respect to offer tobacco in prayer to the ancestors at the beginning of an interaction with the Tribe, including an evaluation.

Humility is an important teaching, and what I will always remember is when T2 said, “We need to make ourselves just the right size.” This can easily apply to my work as an evaluator. I can realize that I have strengths and I also have limitations, and I can reach out and ask for help when it is needed. This teaching on humility demonstrates interconnectedness as it combines honesty and bravery by requiring me to look within and to have the courage to reach out to others for their expertise. This brings out another teaching about the role of “expert” and how, in my culture, we think of people not as experts, but as having wisdom. There are people who are the “wisdom keepers,” and many are elders due to their knowledge and lived experience. Humility can allow me to go to those who are wise and ask them in a good way (with respect) to share their knowledge with me.

Another value that is dependent on other values in its expression is truth. As stated by tribal members, truth “comes from the heart,” and it takes courage to speak the truth. As an evaluator, when I report the results as they are, even though this may not be seen as favorable by certain stakeholders, I am demonstrating bravery in doing so.

Of all the values of importance to Sault Tribe members, love was rated above all else and this is expressed in the good ways that we interact with each other and all of Creation. Showing positive regard to everyone at all times during an evaluation is respectful and it is how we demonstrate love. I can also show love in the way it is expressed by my people, by being helpful to others.

Table 6: Seven Grandfathers Implications for Evaluation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seven Grandfathers</th>
<th>Anishinaabek Meaning</th>
<th>Implications for Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Demonstrating honor and esteem to all of Creation</td>
<td>Treating all beings with reverence. Understanding this concept from a cultural perspective and expressing it appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Demonstrating kindness, compassion, and helpfulness</td>
<td>Treating all stakeholders with positive regard during every interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Being forthright with ourselves, so we can do the same with others</td>
<td>Knowing our biases, strengths, and limitations and asking for help from others when needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humility</td>
<td>Knowing our place in Creation; to not consider ourselves better or less than others</td>
<td>Knowing when to ask for input and help as others may be experts (wisdom keepers) especially in cultural matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bravery</td>
<td>Having the strength to follow and express our truth</td>
<td>Being courageous by looking within to know who we are as people and as evaluators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truth</td>
<td>Speaking from our hearts and knowing that there is not &quot;one&quot; truth</td>
<td>Having courage to presenting findings as they are regardless of whether they conform to others' expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisdom</td>
<td>Knowledge gained through many years of experience</td>
<td>Relying on those with knowledge and experience (wisdom keepers) to provide guidance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tribal Sovereignty**

Tribes are considered nations within a nation and have the fundamental right to self-determination including self-governance according to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, Public Law 93-638 (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2023). This is a basic definition of sovereignty but it goes much deeper than this. As sovereign nations, Tribes have the right to conduct research and evaluation in a way that is most beneficial to them, and
the data that is created belongs to the Tribe. We have to remember this and act accordingly.

With many evaluations, the stakeholders may be connected to an agency by being either funders, service providers, or recipients, but a Tribe is a completely different entity. The evaluation team must implement different protocols because they are interacting with a nation, not an individual agency. It may take time for evaluators to understand sovereignty, so it is recommended that all evaluators who work with Indigenous groups undertake a study of Native American history, beginning with the Doctrine of Discovery (Cobb, 2015) and progressing through the various termination, removal, and assimilation policies. This will give an overall understanding of common Native American history, but each Tribe also has a unique local history. The best way to get to know a Tribe is through building relationships with tribal members on a personal level, and this can take a considerable amount of time.

**Going Forward**

The main questions now are: How do we assess the values of a cultural group? And how do we include them in an evaluation for that group? In this study, since I am a member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, I was able to utilize my cultural knowledge of the beliefs, norms, and customs that are most appropriate to use with members of my Tribe. I knew that storytelling is a way that we have always shared teachings and knowledge with each other. I also have participated in and facilitated the Talking Circle ceremony in the past, so I knew that this was culturally appropriate and an acceptable way to gather information through storytelling. Most importantly, I have lived most of my life in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan which is the homeland of my Tribe, and I have strong relationships with many people. I humbly say that I am a respected and trusted member of my community. So, I had an “in” that someone from the outside would not have. It would be much harder for someone seen as an outsider to conduct this kind of research, especially if the person is seen as someone who wants
to “study” Native people, because some researchers have exploited Indigenous people. Exploitation by researchers, and the intergenerational trauma brought on by the atrocities inflicted on Indigenous peoples by conquering societies in the not-so-distant past, together with the reality of current institutional racism are major factors that contribute to lack of trust as a major barrier to working with Native American Tribes. The first step in establishing trust so that an evaluator can work with Indigenous people is to adopt a relational approach, and this begins by building positive relationships. Taking the time to build trusting relationships between evaluators and Indigenous people must come before any evaluation effort begins, or the process and outcomes will be of limited use and meaning, especially to the cultural group.

**Indigenous Values-based Approach (IVA)**

The results of the current research demonstrate that the values of the Sault Tribe members who participated in this study are distinct from the values of the dominant culture. It is also apparent that some tribal members would prefer evaluations that include their cultural values. It makes sense that an evaluation implemented with a cultural group should include the values of the cultural group in all aspects and at every step of the evaluation. An evaluation that is culturally responsive should “relate to the core values of the cultures, community, and context” (Hood et al., 2015, p. 307). Therefore, I have developed and am proposing that the Indigenous Values-based Approach (IVA) be utilized with Indigenous peoples, including Tribal First Nations. IVA is not a theoretical model of evaluation, but rather an approach that will supplement those models currently in use. It is my opinion that IVA will work best with evaluation models that are already in alignment with basic cultural values (e.g., inclusiveness, democratic ways of decision making, relationality, reciprocity, and so on). Some of the evaluation approaches that can be utilized with IVA are: (a) Participatory Evaluation (Cousins & Earl, 1992), (b) Deliberative Democratic Evaluation (House & Howe, 2000), (c) Responsive
Evaluation (Stake, 2003, (d) Utilization Focused Evaluation (Patton, 2015), and (e) Empowerment Evaluation (Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005). Evaluation models that have been used successfully with tribal populations, making them particularly well suited for use with the IVA approach, are (a) Tribal Participatory Research (Fisher & Ball, 2003), (b) Culturally Responsive Evaluation (Acree & Chouinard 2020), (c) Indigenous Evaluation Framework (LaFrance & Nichols, 2009), (d) Culturally Responsive Indigenous Evaluation (Bowman et al., 2015), (e) Community-Based Participatory Research (Burhansstipano et al., 2005; LaVeaux & Christopher, 2009; Novins et. al, 2010, (f) Fourth Generation Evaluation (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), and (g) Tribally-Driven Participatory Research (Mariella et.al., 2009). There are other approaches used successfully with Indigenous groups that can be found in the evaluation literature and utilized as well.

In Appendix A, I provide a description of IVA and an example of how this approach can be used in practice. The main point of this example is to show how values can be incorporated into an evaluation model. When using this approach, in addition to values, the evaluator should also consider and incorporate other cultural factors including beliefs, norms, and customs, as they are salient parts of what makes an Indigenous culture distinct from other cultures. Whenever working with an Indigenous Tribe, it is most appropriate for the evaluator to be a member of the Indigenous Tribe (Wehipeihana, 2019). When that is not possible, it is imperative that the evaluator seek counsel from the people belonging to the culture at every step of the evaluation process to know how to best proceed in a culturally appropriate manner. The three principles of IVA are presented along with descriptions of the CDCs Evaluation Framework, the Seven Grandfather Teachings, and how IVA can be incorporated into an evaluation. I utilize my own culture as an example of the cultural context that the evaluator
might encounter, and I incorporate some of my cultural beliefs and knowledge to give an idea of how IVA might be utilized in an evaluation.

**Conclusion**

This study adds to the academic literature on values by establishing that the values of a Native American Tribe are different from the dominant society’s values. The values that have been passed down for as long as people can remember are still the primary values that make up the worldview of the people of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. The core of who we are as a people is our value system and this has been consistent over many generations. Our values combine with our beliefs, ways of knowing, and ways of being to create our worldview.

Since this Tribe has a specific value system that is divergent from the values of dominant society, and people from the dominant society have developed most of the evaluation models that are in use, this speaks to the need for evaluation approaches to be created by Indigenous people for Indigenous people. It also means that having more Indigenous people trained in evaluation would be beneficial for Indian Country. Although this is a small study, it could be the tip of the iceberg, where many more values studies are necessary to better understand the multitude of cultures around the world. It could also mean that values studies that propose universal values are actually promoting dominant culture values while ignoring the values of cultures that were either not included in the studies or were in such small numbers that they were overlooked. Either way, much more information is needed to understand the values of all cultures.

So, what does all of this mean beyond my dissertation study? In my opinion, this speaks to the need for the evaluation field to adapt to the needs of Indigenous populations, and perhaps this begins by completing values research. My study is the only values study completed with a single Tribe, but there are others that have included Native Americans (Kluckhohn &
Strodtbeck, 1961; DuBray, 1985). I invite other Indigenous scholars to consider values research. Other evaluators (SenGupta et al., 2004; Kirkhart, 2010) have been saying for a long time that values are important to evaluation because they are at the core of what makes a culture distinct. Many other fields (medicine, energy development, climate change, cybersecurity, transformational leadership, employee recruitment, and psychiatry) acknowledge the importance of tailoring their services to culturally distinct groups and have developed values-based approaches (Fulford, 2008; Joseph, 2015; McGonagle et al., 2015; Necefer et al., 2015; Gratani et al., 2016; Mouteret al., 2018; O’Brien & Wolf, 2010; Ritchie et al., 2018; Kharlamov & Pogrebna 2019). There are also some fields such as cultural heritage preservation, education, and justice that include Native American values in their policies and programming (Jerome, 2014, Tippeconnic & Tippeconnic Fox, 2012, Deloria, 1999). It is time for the evaluation field to follow suit in the development of approaches that include values.

In addition to conducting this study on values, I have created and offered the Indigenous Values-based Approach (IVA) (Appendix C) as a starting point to utilizing and incorporating cultural values in evaluation, but much more can be explored and developed in the area of values-based evaluation and values research in general. By studying values, we can customize evaluation approaches to be beneficial to a specific cultural group by incorporating their values and utilizing methods appropriate to their culture. While I think the development of values-based evaluation is important, the ultimate benefit of conducting values research in my opinion, and perhaps the most significant purpose, is that we are attempting to understand each other on a deeper level. By learning another culture’s values, we are getting to know who people are at the core of their existence. As we understand more about the values of importance to other cultures, we will have a sense of knowing each other and we will feel a sense of
belonging and a sense of being known. We will no longer have the thought that “they don’t know us,” and this will contribute to everyone’s healing and growth as human beings.
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https://www.bia.gov/frequently-asked-questions


https://www.bia.gov/regional-offices/great-plains/self-determination


APPENDIX A

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Letter of Approval

Date: July 18, 2019

To: Chris Corpia, Principal Investigator
    Karen Alexander, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair

Re: IRB Project Number 18-03-20

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project titled “Exploring the Use of Cultural Values in the Evaluation of Programs with Native American Tribes” has been approved under the expedited category of review by the Western Michigan University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note: This research may only be conducted exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes to this project (e.g., add an investigator, increase number of subjects beyond the number stated in your application, etc.). Failure to obtain approval for changes will result in a protocol deviation.

In addition, if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the IRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

A status report is required on or prior to (no more than 30 days) July 17, 2020 and each year thereafter until closure of the study.

When this study closes, submit the required Final Report found at https://wmich.edu/research/forms.

Note: All research data must be kept in a secure location on the WMU campus for at least three (3) years after the study closes.

[Signature]

[WMU Institutional Review Board]

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APPENDIX B

Talking Circle Protocol

Cultural Values - Dissertation Research – Karen Alexander

Introduction
Aanii, Waabshka Mukwa Kwe ndizhnikaaaz, Mukwa ndodem, Baaweting ndoonjbaa, Ojibwe ndaa. Opiji gtchi nendam maapii yaa’aa. Hello, my name is White Bear Woman. I am bear clan, from Sault Ste. Marie and I am Ojibwe. I am very glad to be here today.

In the English language, my name is Karen Alexander and I’m a doctoral student at Western Michigan University. I’m working on my PhD in Evaluation and my research is focused on learning more about Native American cultural values and how these are or could be included in program evaluations for Native American Tribes. The purpose of this Talking Circle is to learn more about what values are most important to you. This research will help to me to better understand whether inclusion of Native American values in evaluation would be beneficial for Tribes and it will help those conducting evaluations for Native American Tribes to better understand Native American culture.

Participation
Your participation in this study is voluntary and you can decide to end your participation at any time. If you do decide to participate in this study, you will take part in a Talking Circle with other tribal members. After we finish going over the consent to participate, you can sign the form to give your permission to be a participant in this study. Your information is confidential, so even though general information will be shared, no names or personally identifying information will be used in any reports. The Talking Circle will be audiotaped, with your permission, to make sure that I gather all the information you provide. After audiotaped information is
transcribed, the original audiotaped information will be deleted. Also, all information that is gathered will be kept in a secure location with only the Principal Investigator having access.

What are the risks and benefits of participation?

As a participant in this study you will have the benefit of sharing your experience and knowledge with others so that they may better understand some aspects of your culture. There are no known risks associated with your participation in this research as all information gathered will be protected and no personally identifying information will be disclosed without your written permission. All information gathered will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and will only be viewed by the Principle Investigator. Your participation is completely voluntary. While there may not be any personal benefits to you, you can know that the information you share may be helpful to the evaluation community in their learning more about how to best serve Native American communities by gaining a better understanding of what values are most important to you.

Will I receive compensation?

As a gift for your participation in this study, you will be given a $25 gift card at the end of the Talking Circle. No other compensation will be given for your participation.

Is my confidentiality protected?

Your confidentiality is of great importance and no personally identifying information will be shared with anyone. Since this study is part of a doctoral dissertation, there will be published reports of various aspects, findings and outcomes. Any reports that are published or presented to the public will only contain general information that will explain values from a group perspective and will not identify any specific person.

What if I have questions?
You may ask questions at any time during this study or afterwards by contacting the Principle Investigator, Karen Alexander at (906) 440-6176. If you have further questions or are not satisfied with any aspects of this research, you should contact the Institutional Review Board Office at Western Michigan University at (269) 387-8298.

Signature for Consent

Your consent to participate in this research study is completely voluntary. You may end your participation at any time without any negative consequences or repercussions. Your signature on this consent form means that you have read and understand this consent form and you have had an opportunity to ask questions specific to your participation. By signing this form, you are consenting to participation and you are consenting to being audiotaped. You will receive a copy of this consent form for your records.

_________________________________________  __________
Signature of Consent to Participate  date

Talking Circle Protocol

The Talking Circle will take place in a quiet, neutral, and comfortable setting at the Nigaanigiizhik Cultural Center of the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians at 3 Ice Circle, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783. This is a public building used for cultural gatherings and will be rented to be specifically used for the Talking Circle to insure privacy and to avoid any interruptions. Since some people may not have participated in a Talking Circle previously, the following Talking Circle setting is explained and it is noted that because a Talking Circle is a sacred Native
American traditional ceremony, this can only be facilitated by Native Americans with the ability and privileges to conduct a Talking Circle (Browning, 2016).

Chairs are placed in a circle with an opening space in the Eastern direction. Participants and facilitator enter through this “Eastern door” and can sit wherever they prefer. The Eastern direction is sacred and represents the new day, new beginnings, and new life (to name a few things). Upon entering the Talking Circle each participant is given a “tobacco tie” (a small portion of tobacco wrapped in cloth) as an offering of thanks for participation. Tobacco is one of the four sacred medicines (tobacco, cedar, sage, sweetgrass) used by Native Americans during ceremonies (Buhner, 2006). Tobacco is used for prayer and is given as an offering. The facilitator smudges (burns medicines to purify) the circle. Participants are offered smudge. The facilitator then recites a prayer to open the Talking Circle, giving thanks to all of Creation.

The facilitator explains the following general aspects of a Talking Circle to participants.

1. An object (rock, talking stick, etc.) is handed to and held by whomever volunteers to speak first and this item is then passed to the left to the next speaker. This process continues until everyone has shared.
2. While one person is speaking, there are no interruptions or comments made by any other people in the circle.
3. After everyone in the Talking Circle has shared once, there is an opportunity for participants to share once more in the same manner as before.
4. Please respect others’ privacy by not sharing anything outside of the circle that is said in the Talking Circle.

Next, the facilitator then implements the following procedure for this particular Talking Circle.

Talking Circle Procedure (specific)

1. A definition of values is explained to participants. Then the traditional Ojibwe story of The Legend of the Beaver’s Tail is told as an example of how values are passed down through storytelling. It is explained that it may be hard to think of exactly what values are most important to us, so a printed list of values from the Personal Values Card Sort (Miller et al., 2001) including The Seven Grandfather Teachings (Benton-Banai, 1988) is given to participants.
2. Participants are given five minutes to look at the values list.
3. The question of interest in this Talking Circle is asked:
   a. Please tell me what values are of most importance to you.

Closing the Talking Circle.

1. After everyone has shared, the facilitator will say a closing prayer, thanking everyone for participation.
2. Participants are thanked and dismissed and given a gift card worth $25 for their participation.
APPENDIX B

Interview Protocol

Cultural Values - Dissertation Research – Karen Alexander

Introduction

Aanii, Waabshka Mukwa Kwe ndizhnikaaz, Mukwa ndodem, Baaweting ndoonjbaa, Ojibwe ndaa. Opiji gtchi nendam maapii yaa’aa. Hello, my name is White Bear Woman. I am bear clan, from Sault Ste. Marie and I am Ojibwe. I am very glad to be here today.

In the English language, my name is Karen Alexander and I’m a doctoral student at Western Michigan University. I’m working on my PhD in Evaluation and my research is focused on learning more about Native American cultural values and how these are or could be included in program evaluations for Native American Tribes. The purpose of this interview is to learn more about what values are most important to you. This research will help me to better understand whether inclusion of Native American values in evaluation would be beneficial for Tribes and it will help those conducting evaluations for Native American Tribes to better understand Native American culture.

Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you can decide to end your participation at any time. If you do decide to participate in this study, you will take part in an interview with me, the Principle Investigator. After we finish going over the consent to participate, you can sign the form to give your permission to be a participant in this study. Your information is confidential, so even though general information will be shared, no names or personally identifying information will be used in any reports. The interview will be audiotaped, with your permission, to make sure that I gather all the information you provide. After audiotaped information is
transcribed, the original audiotaped information will be deleted. Also, all information that is
gathered will be kept in a secure location with only the Principal Investigator having access.

What are the risks and benefits of participation?

As a participant in this study you will have the benefit of sharing your experience and knowledge
with others so that they may better understand some aspects of your culture. There are no known
risks associated with your participation in this research as all information gathered will be
protected and no personally identifying information will be disclosed without your written
permission. All information gathered will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and will only be
viewed by the Principle Investigator. Your participation is completely voluntary. While there
may not be any personal benefits to you, you can know that the information you share may be
helpful to the evaluation community in their learning more about how to best serve Native
American communities by gaining a better understanding of what values are most important to
you.

Will I receive compensation?

As a gift for your participation in this study, you will be given a $25 gift card at the end of the
interview. No other compensation will be given for your participation.

Is my confidentiality protected?

Your confidentiality is of great importance and no personally identifying information will be
shared with anyone. Since this study is part of a doctoral dissertation, there will be published
reports of various aspects, findings and outcomes. Any reports that are published or presented to
the public will only contain general information that will explain values in general and will not
identify any specific person.
What if I have questions?

You may ask questions at any time during this study. Afterwards you may contact the Principle Investigator, Karen Alexander at (906) 440-6176. If you have further questions or are not satisfied with any aspects of this research, you should contact the Institutional Review Board Office at Western Michigan University at (269) 387-8298.

Signature for Consent

Your consent to participate in this research study is completely voluntary. You may end your participation at any time without any negative consequences or repercussions. Your signature on this consent form means that you have read and understand this consent form and you have had an opportunity to ask questions specific to your participation. By signing this form, you are consenting to participate and you are consenting to being audiotaped. You will receive a copy of this consent form for your records.

_________________________________________   ____________
Signature of Consent to Participate             date

Interview Setting

The interview will take place in a quiet, neutral, and comfortable setting at Eskoonwid Endaad (Native American Center) at Lake Superior State University, College Dr., Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783. This is a public building used for cultural gatherings and will be rented to be specifically used for interviews to insure privacy and to avoid any interruptions.

Upon entering the interview area, consisting of two comfortable chairs placed near each other, the participant is given a “tobacco tie” (a small portion of tobacco wrapped in cloth) as an
offering of thanks for participation. Tobacco is one of the four sacred medicines (tobacco, cedar, sage, sweetgrass) used by Native Americans during ceremonies (Buhner, 2006). Tobacco is used for prayer and is given as an offering. The facilitator smudges (burns medicines to purify) the area. The participant is offered smudge. The facilitator then recites a prayer to open the talk, giving thanks to all of Creation. Next, the facilitator implements the following interview procedure.

Interview Procedure

4. A definition of values is explained to the participant. Then the traditional Ojibwe story of The Legend of the Beaver’s Tail is told as an example of how values are passed down through storytelling. It is explained that it may be hard to think of exactly what values are most important to us, so a printed list of values from the Personal Values Card Sort (Miller et al., 2001) including The Seven Grandfather Teachings (Benton-Banai, 1988) is given to the participant.
5. The participant is given five minutes to look at the values list.
6. The question of interest in this Talking Circle is asked:
   a. Please tell me what values are of most importance to you.

Closing the Interview.

3. After the participant has shared, the facilitator will say a closing prayer, thanking them for participation.
4. The participant is thanked and dismissed and given a gift card worth $25 for their participation.
APPENDIX C

Indigenous Values-based Approach (IVA)

The results of the current research demonstrate that the values, of the Sault Tribe members who participated in this study are distinct from the values of the dominant culture. It is also apparent that this Tribe would prefer to use evaluations that include their cultural values. It makes perfect sense that an evaluation implemented with a cultural group should include the values of the cultural group in all aspects and at every step of the evaluation. An evaluation that is culturally responsive should “relate to the core values of the cultures, community, and context” (p. 307, Hood et al., 2015). Therefore, I am proposing that the Indigenous Values-based Approach (IVA) be utilized with Indigenous peoples, including Native American Tribes. IVA is not a theoretical model of evaluation, but an approach that will supplement those models currently in use. It is my opinion that IVA will work best with evaluation models that are already in alignment with basic cultural values (e.g., inclusiveness, democratic ways of decision making, relationality, reciprocity, and others.). The larger categories of evaluation approaches described by Stufflebeam (2001) that can be utilized with IVA are Case Study Evaluations, Mixed-Methods Studies, Client-Centered Studies (or Responsive Evaluation), Constructivist Evaluation, Deliberative Democratic Evaluation, and Utilization-Focused Evaluation. Some of the specific evaluation models that have been used successfully with tribal populations, making them particularly well suited for use with the IVA approach are Tribal Participatory Research (Fisher & Ball 2003); Culturally Responsive Evaluation (Hood, et al., 2015); Culturally Responsive Indigenous Evaluation (Bowman et al., 2015); Indigenous Evaluation Framework (LaFrance & Nichols, 2008); Community-Based Participatory Research (McKenzie, 1997); Fourth Generation Evaluation (Lincoln & Guba, 1989); Empowerment Evaluation (Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005); Participatory action
research (Tolhurst et al., 2012); and Collaborative Participatory Action Research (White & Hermes, 2005). There are other approaches used successfully with Indigenous groups that can be found in the evaluation literature and utilized as well.

What follows is an example of how the IVA approach can be used in practice. The main point of this example is to show how values can be incorporated into an evaluation model. In addition to values, the evaluator should also consider and incorporate other cultural factors including beliefs, norms, and customs as they are a part of what makes an Indigenous culture distinct from other cultures. It is imperative that the evaluator seek counsel from the people belonging to the cultural group at every step of the evaluation process to know how to best proceed in a culturally appropriate manner. The three principles of IVA are presented along with descriptions of the CDCs Evaluation Framework, the Seven Grandfather Teachings, and how IVA can be incorporated into an evaluation. I utilize my own culture as an example of the cultural context that the evaluator might encounter, and I incorporate some of my cultural beliefs and knowledge to give an idea of how IVA might be utilized in an evaluation.

The Indigenous Values-based Approach to evaluation (IVA) includes two stages containing three basic principles:

Pre-Evaluation Stage:

- Build and maintain relationships with people from the cultural group
- Determine values of importance to people from the cultural group

Values Incorporation Stage

- Incorporate appropriate cultural values into existing evaluation models

**Build Relationships.** During the Pre-Evaluation Stage, the evaluator must lay the groundwork to prepare for what will hopefully turn into a positive evaluation experience for
the cultural community and the evaluator, and it begins with relationship building and proceeds to determining values. The aspect of absolute importance to working with Indigenous peoples is building and maintaining relationships with people from the Indigenous culture. Trust is a huge issue in Indian Country when it comes to trusting someone from outside of the cultural group, especially if the outsiders are from the dominant race. This is due to the histories and experiences of trauma and loss by Indigenous peoples during their interactions with non-Indigenous peoples in the recent past. The inter-generational trauma is still fresh in the minds and hearts of many people; therefore, it can take a great deal of time and resources to build trusting relationships with Indigenous people. Building relationships equates to building trust.

At first glance, this sounds like a daunting task that seems challenging if not insurmountable because relationships take time, resources, and effort. It can take months or even years to be accepted into an Indigenous cultural group, especially if the evaluator is from the dominant culture. Because there is such a great amount of distrust and fear of the intentions of people from the dominant race, the only way for a non-Indigenous evaluator to gain trust and acceptance into an Indigenous culture’s society is by spending time with Indigenous people and building friendships by sharing meals and attending social gatherings and other events. A non-Indigenous person who has taken the time to build meaningful relationships with Indigenous people may find themselves invited to events, gatherings, and certain ceremonies.

Even a person who is from the larger cultural group but from a different geographic region may experience challenges to gaining trust and acceptance as there is still an element of being an outsider within the group. For example, my Tribe is very large and covers a seven-county service area, so we have many offices across the region that provide services. Years ago, I was assigned to work part of the time at one of our other tribal sites an hour away from my
home site and it took some time before I was fully accepted as someone who was a part of that group even though we are from the same Tribe. After a month or so, I knew I was accepted when the head cook (an elder) at the tribal center where I worked began stopping by my office to chat and bring treats. Because she had special standing as the head cook and is a respected elder, others were also quick to accept me. Being accepted by elders and others who have special standing in a community is a definite sign that you are being accepted by others in the community. If trust is not gained through relationship building, an evaluation may go forward as a requirement of the funding source, but a true picture of the program and whether it was effective in the eyes of the people will not be realized because people will not be receptive to providing the full picture of how the program has been received by the community. They may be compliant and simply saying what they think the evaluator wants to hear, but many important aspects could be missing from the evaluation.

If the evaluator is not from the Indigenous culture, an inroad to gaining access to a culture can be by getting to know someone of special standing from the culture who can serve as a cultural liaison to bring the evaluator to gatherings and events. This cultural liaison should be a respected community member such as a tribal leader, an elder, or a community member. Once the evaluator has solid relationships with people from the cultural group, it is imperative that the evaluator seek the guidance of an advisory group made of people from the cultural group who will inform the evaluation at every step of the process. The cultural liaison could assist with forming the advisory group and could become a member of the group. Again, this seems like a formidable undertaking, but it is possible. There are many non-Natives working in Native communities who are trusted, respected, and accepted as members of the community. It goes back to “intent” as mentioned by tribal members who participated in my
dissertation study. If a person has the intention of doing a study in a good way that will be beneficial to the Tribe, this will be apparent to the people.

**Determine Values.** The second part of the Pre-Evaluation Stage of IVA is to determine the values of a cultural group. It cannot be assumed that mainstream or dominant society values apply to every cultural group as there is plenty of evidence to the contrary. The first question the evaluator should consider after building relationships with people is, “What method of inquiry is useful and culturally appropriate for this specific cultural group?” The advisory group should be consulted during this and every step of the evaluation process. In my experience, qualitative approaches work well with Indigenous peoples as this generates an abundance of rich detail. Storytelling provides a great way to gather information and is important to many Indigenous cultures and this can be utilized either in individual interviews or with the use of a Talking Circle. In my culture, utilizing a Talking Circle as an approach to gathering information is appropriate but it cannot be assumed that this is appropriate in other Indigenous cultures. Once an approach is determined, many other contextual aspects must be attended so, such as preferences for days and times, how and who to invite as participants, what behaviors are acceptable or taboo, etc. If it is an acceptable method and you are planning to employ a Talking Circle, it is important to note that a Talking Circle is an Indigenous ceremony, and as with other ceremonies, certain people are given the right to facilitate this ceremony, either through fasting, receiving a vision, in a dream, etc. If the community determines that it would not be culturally appropriate for the evaluator to conduct a Talking Circle, the evaluator could possibly be an observer while an elder or other appropriate community member facilitates the Talking Circle.

It is important to have an idea of what general values, beliefs, and customs are important to a cultural group before employing any method of inquiry. It is most useful to
consult with the advisory group to discover what is important to a cultural group. Values and beliefs are often unspoken and may not be written but are demonstrated through the actions of people in a community. Reciprocity and sharing are especially important concepts in some Indigenous Tribes, such as mine. For example, having a feast at a gathering is common among my people and there are many customs associated with feasting. One custom in my culture that is a demonstration of respect is that food is offered in the fire for the spirits before any humans eat. After the spirits are fed, elders eat next, but this is not the same in all communities. Another custom in my Tribe is that gifts are given to demonstrate appreciation at many gatherings and ceremonies. For instance, a family who is having a feast for some reason (such as during a naming ceremony) may have a “giveaway” to show their appreciation to everyone in attendance. At pow wows there is usually a giveaway on the last day. After receiving a gift at a pow wow, everyone dances one last time in appreciation of their gifts. Appreciation is shown in many ways, such as through giveaways and by offerings of tobacco. In my culture we often give tobacco to people in appreciation for what they give us, and this goes beyond the human world when we offer tobacco to the spirits, animals, and plants. An example of this is how my grandmother taught us to show respect to the plants. When we were young, we would harvest plants, such as wild leaks. We were each given a little bit of tobacco and told to “put some in the hole of the first one you pick” and to “only pick what you need.” Although my grandmother never specifically said that we were learning important values, such as respect, generosity, or reciprocity, we were doing just that, and we were providing for the coming generations by not overharvesting. These are some of the important values practiced in my culture.

**Incorporate Values.** Once the information on values is gathered and analyzed qualitatively, the values of the Indigenous group are then incorporated into every step of the evaluation process. The IVA approach does not specify utilizing a specific model of evaluation
but is instead an approach that supplements an evaluation model. The decision of what model to use will have to be made by the evaluator with the guidance of the advisory group and other stakeholders. Personally, I prefer a participative approach as it is more closely related to the relational worldview of Indigenous peoples. Each step of the evaluation should incorporate the culture’s values in every process and procedure involved in the evaluation. For example, if respect is an important value of the cultural group, the evaluator would show respect by displaying the appropriate behaviors that model this value. In my Tribe that might mean making an appointment to present to the Tribal Council to explain the evaluation and to get their approval. Another way that respect could be given in my culture is by giving tobacco to an elder to ask for guidance on some aspect of the evaluation, such as what kind of gifts would be appropriate to give as an incentive for participation. How exactly to incorporate the determined values should be made with the assistance of the advisory group as they are the cultural experts.

**Example Incorporation of IVA**

As a general demonstration of how to incorporate IVA into an evaluation, I will use the CDC Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health (CDC, 1999) as presented in checklist form (MacDonald, 2013) incorporating the Seven Grandfather Teachings of the Anishinaabek (Benton-Benai, 1988) into each step of the evaluation. As mentioned, I will use beliefs and traditions from my own culture so the reader can understand what utilizing IVA might be like in practice with an Indigenous group. I will describe the CDC Framework and the Seven Grandfather Teachings and then discuss how these values can be incorporated with the CDC Framework when utilizing the IVA approach to evaluation.

The CDC Framework (Milstein et al., 2000) was developed in 1999 as a guide in the planning, implementation, and utilization of evaluation findings and contains six steps to follow for evaluation of health programs. The steps are: 1. Engage stakeholders; 2. Describe the
program; 3. Focus the evaluation design; 4. Gather credible evidence; 5. Justify conclusions; and 6. Ensure use and share lessons learned. The checklist for the CDC Framework was developed by MacDonald (2013) and is available at Western Michigan University’s Evaluation Center (https://wmich.edu/evaluation/checklists). The checklist condenses the CDC Framework into a manageable size for easier application. More detail for each step will be given in the section - CDC Framework Incorporating Seven Grandfather Teachings. For a full description of the entire CDC Framework, please see https://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework.

The Seven Grandfather Teachings of the Anishinaabek are: Respect, Humility, Love, Truth, Wisdom, Honesty, and Bravery. These teachings and other values have been passed down through the generations and are incorporated into the mission and vision statements of many tribal schools and colleges across Indian Country (Tippeconnic, 1999). According to Benton-Benai (1988), The Seven Grandfather Teachings promote a values-based way of living a good life which we refer to in Anishinaabemowin as Mino-Bimaadiziwin. The Seven Grandfathers have been passed down through the generations for as long as people can remember. These teachings were always known among the Anishinaabek and gained prominence during the American Indian Movement (AIM) when Native Americans were starting to gain more control of their education and able to incorporate the teachings into educational systems. According to Gifts of the Seven Grandfathers (2023), the Seven Grandfather Teachings were revived and remembered, “As elders began to retell stories they heard as children they connected the present to a past when these values were both a part of ceremonies and everyday life.” Definitions of the Seven Grandfather Teachings used in the IVA approach are provided by Benton-Benai (1998) from The Mishomis Book (p.60-66). After each definition, I offer a note of interpretation and provide guidance below on how these values can be utilized in an evaluation. My interpretation is just that, mine, as each teaching is open to interpretation in many ways by many people. I will use my cultural worldview
as an example of how the IVA can be applied in an evaluation. Note: The Seven Grandfather Teachings are not presented in a specific order as there is no hierarchy of teachings.

**Minaadendamowin (Respect):** Benton-Benai (1988) explains that respect grows as we get to know one another at a deeper level by building a relationship over time. Respect is a value that is reciprocal, so giving respect will in turn gain respect. Respect is shown to all of creation, to all beings. Respect means to hold someone in esteem and to show them honor. Note: Even though we each have an understanding of what respect means, to understand it in a cultural context the evaluator will have to rely on the people from the culture to explain how respect is displayed at the cultural level. As noted earlier, in my Native American culture offering tobacco is an act of respect.

**Nibwaakaawin (Wisdom).** According to Benton-Benai (1988) wisdom is used for “the good of the people” and this means to use good judgment and common sense. Wisdom is sometimes equated with intelligence which develops over time. Elders are people that we turn to for their wisdom because they have much knowledge and experience to draw on to provide guidance to others. Note: A key concept expressed is “for the good of the people” meaning the Indigenous people for whom the evaluation is being completed. This should always be the main priority of any evaluation effort and any knowledge or wisdom gained as a result of an evaluation should be treated as the property of the cultural group and with their permission shared with others (i.e., at conferences, in journals, etc.).

**Zaagi'idiwin (Love).** Benton-Benai (1998) states, “To know love is to know peace.” When we are first able to love ourselves and then able to love others, we will know peace. When we give love, it comes back to us making it reciprocal and mutual. Note: Love can be interpreted as positive regard and kindness for others. Treating everyone involved in the
evaluation with positive regard and kindness will create reciprocal feelings and behaviors. Also utilizing this value will go a long way toward securing commitment to the evaluation project.

**Aakode’ewin (Bravery).** Benton-Benai (1988) reports that “Bravery is to face the foe with integrity.” This means having courage to do the right thing despite the possibility of negative consequences or retaliation by others. Note: Bravery can mean to move forward in the face of adversity regardless of fear which can mean facing and overcoming challenges as they arise during an evaluation. It can also refer to reporting results that may be contrary to what was desired or expected and being able to share the results with stakeholders in a straightforward manner (with honesty).

**Gwayakwaadiziwin (Honesty).** Benton-Benai (1988) states that it takes bravery to be honest in what we say and with our actions. Being honest first with ourselves makes it easier to be honest with others. Note: Being able to be honest with ourselves, as evaluators, is primary to doing an evaluation in a good way. As we are able to be honest with ourselves about our biases, shortcomings, and also with our strengths, we can then be honest with others about the same. The interconnection of these teachings is apparent in that being honest requires bravery and humility.

**Dabaadendiziwin (Humility).** Benton-Benai (1988) explains that as Native people we know our relationship to all of creation and to understand that “all forms of life are equally important.” We are not better than any other beings. We must show care and compassion for all other beings. Note: Being humble requires “knowing what we don’t know” and reaching out to others for their knowledge and expertise in some areas. This is especially important when working with Indigenous cultures because they, not us, are the experts when it comes to what is relevant in their culture.
Debwewin (Truth). “Truth is to know all of these things” (Benton-Benai, 1988). All of the teachings go together; you cannot demonstrate one without the others. We must always look at things from a truthful place and not deceive ourselves or others. Note: Truth comes down to providing accurate information and a truthful picture of the results of the evaluation and doing this in a way that is meaningful to the cultural group as well as the other stakeholders.

Figure 2. IVA approach utilizing the CDC Framework and the Seven Grandfather Teachings
Pre-Evaluation:

Step One: Engage Stakeholders. First, the evaluator needs to decide which stakeholders (i.e., funding agency, program managers, services providers, participants) to engage. Be sure to include the recipients of services, their families, and other community members because the idea of relationality is important in many Indigenous cultures (Cajete, 2000). Because everyone is connected; when one community member completes a service (i.e., substance abuse treatment) it affects others in the family and community. Healing for one member of the community has the ripple effect of providing healing for all. Each step of the evaluation should include stakeholders in whatever way is best for the stakeholders and is appropriate and useful to the evaluation. Using my own culture as an example, engagement of stakeholders could involve inviting the chosen stakeholders to gather for a meal and discuss the evaluator’s role and how the stakeholders would like to be involved in the evaluation. This could be done in a Talking Circle format which allows every person to be heard and recognized. People would be treated with respect, kindness, humility, and honesty. Each step should include oversite by the tribal advisory group to ensure that the evaluation continues to be done in a good way. Values of focus: respect, love, humility, honesty. Note: Even though a suggestion of “values of focus” is given for each step of the evaluation, all of the Teachings should be observed and incorporated into every part of the evaluation and every interaction with members of the community as this is how to conduct an evaluation “in a good way” in Indian Country.

Step Two: Describe the Program. The program should be described in a way that reflects the way it is seen and experienced by Indigenous community members. For example, if the program takes place on the reservation, what does that look like from the perspective of community members? Are more people attending the program because it is provided close to home, or are less attending because there is a lack of confidentiality because it is too close to
home? Are their barriers to receiving services that can only be seen from a certain cultural perspective? An example could be that a service seems to be a great idea but does not offer snacks and is failing because it is not adhering to cultural norms of sharing food at gatherings, and therefore feels unwelcoming to people. Utilizing truth and wisdom will help to provide an accurate picture of the program from the view of the community members.

Step Three: Focus the Evaluation. There are many aspects that need to be explored, such as: the purpose of the evaluation; the parts of the program to be examined or assessed; the methods to utilize to answer the questions and collect information; the procedures to follow, timelines, reporting, etc. Each of these subtopics should be discussed with the tribal advisory group and stakeholders to find out what would be appropriate and best suited to the cultural group according to their values. In keeping with traditional values in my culture, whenever an important meeting is held it begins with a prayer and a smudge with sage or sweetgrass. This is a way to get things going in a good direction and brings everyone together as a group in their commitment to this effort. The values of focus are humility, love, and wisdom.

Step Four: Gather Credible Evidence. The first question to ask is - What do community members consider credible evidence? This step takes into consideration many items related to what is considered credible in the perception of the evaluator and the stakeholders. We have to consider indicators, sources, quality, quantity, and logistics. Credible evidence to some may mean the numbers of people in attendance at an event or how many times someone received a certain type of service, but there are other aspects to consider. When consulting an elder, they might want to know how a service affected someone in a spiritual way; they may wonder how it made the person feel or how their behavior changed in a positive way as a result of their participation in a program, or how their family is functioning in a better way after taking part in the program. This step as with any of the previous steps may be discussed in a Talking
Circle utilizing culturally appropriate norms, beliefs, and customs with the assistance of cultural guides. Values of focus: wisdom, humility, respect, truth.

Step Five: Justify Conclusions. The elements to pay attention to when justifying conclusions are standards to use, analysis and synthesis of information, interpretation of findings, making judgements about the significance of the program, and recommendations for action based on the findings. As with every step of the evaluation, each of these areas must be discussed with and agreed upon by stakeholders. What is important and meaningful to a tribal group may be quite different than what the evaluator deemed as most relevant. For example, the numbers of people attending a program may be useful to the funders while a description of the factors involved in the experience of attending a program may be more useful to the tribal group. While analysis of the program may be a technical function that community members agree is best suited to the skills of the evaluator, interpretation must be a joint effort. Having the humility to ask the advisory group what their interpretation of the results are, is imperative and demonstrates respect. Also, having the courage to provide stakeholders with findings that are contrary to the expected goals of a program may be difficult but will garner respect from the Indigenous group. The values of focus are truth, courage, humility, love, wisdom.

Step Six: Ensure Use and Share Lessons Learned. Deciding how the evaluation findings will be used is something to discuss with stakeholders at the beginning of the evaluation and will help to focus the evaluation. Some things to consider in this step are how the design will affect intended uses, preparation for how findings will be received and accepted by other stakeholders, feedback at all points of the evaluation, follow-up with intended users, dissemination of findings, and additional uses. In this step, the most important thing is to meet with and talk to stakeholders about how the evaluation findings will be used and to make plans for how this will unfold. Is the purpose of the evaluation mainly to find out how well a program
in performing or is it for use in attaining additional funding, or both? Meeting with stakeholders at every step of the evaluation by having a regular time to meet biweekly or even weekly will ensure that stakeholders are sharing valuable input and it will also work toward relationship building by strengthening commitment and trust between the evaluator and the community. Following up with intended users will help to maintain the relationship that was built and will allow for the possibility of working together on future evaluation projects.

Dissemination of findings can look very different in Indian Country than just providing a forty-page report. How to report findings should be dependent on the information needs of the community and should be provided in a way that is useful to them. On an earlier project, working on a needs assessment for a Tribal Action Plan across the seven-county service area of my Tribe, I presented the results to tribal leaders in both a lengthy paper form along with a PowerPoint presentation. For the tribal members, I presented a PowerPoint presentation in several of our communities. I included the salient information that the community members requested, and the local settings were tribal community centers where refreshments were offered, and it had a social atmosphere of visiting with people. As always, tobacco ties were given to community members to offer appreciation and as a sign of respect. It is important to remember that the information needs of stakeholders vary and to provide the information in a way that is culturally appropriate. Values of focus are love, humility, respect, truth. I have offered the Indigenous Values-based Approach (IVA) as a starting point to utilizing and incorporating cultural values in evaluation, but much more can be explored and developed in the area of values-based evaluation.