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Culture Efficacy: An Alternative to Collective Efficacy

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Abstract

Cultural efficacy (Abril, *forthcoming,* (a) & (b)) suggests cultural values in conjunction with cultural identity work to (1) restrain individuals from deviant behavior while (2) motivating each to respond to community deviance. In this discussion of *cultural* efficacy within an American Indian community, the theory of collective efficacy (Sampson, Roaenbush & Earls, 1997) is analyzed. Abril argues *cultural efficacy* is a more robust construct in tribal communities to better understand community-level dynamics that might intercede in the prevention (or amelioration) of criminogenic community circumstances. A variety of statistical analyses and cultural interpretive techniques are used to support this idea. Directions for future research using *cultural efficacy* are provided.

Keywords: Cultural values, mixed methods, Native American Indian, community research, race & ethnicity, cultural identity, cultural efficacy, collective efficacy, theory, culture

Introduction

The previous century has witnessed renewed interest in understanding community behaviors as these might influence the etiology of crime and community violence. Widespread community violence such as mass shootings across the United States - not just within urban ghettos where such violence is viewed as normative - has motivated many to look toward specific communal characteristics for understanding which elements of the community dynamic might be conducive to developing prophylactic measures for these events. Not since Park and Burgess' foundational work in *The City* (1925) and Anderson's ethnographic work within an urban ghetto in *Code of the Streets* (2000) has there been such interest – a scientific mandate – to understand what it is about a community that facilitates development of community violence.

Peterson, Krivo and Hagan's *Divergent Social Worlds* (2010) offers sight into understanding criminogenic mechanisms operating within Black communities. Within the context of an Indian reservation – a community that by *explicit inequitable design* facilitates suffering - Peterson *et al.'s* markers of race, space, and time - when coupled with measures of culture and identity - may be where community research should continue. Ideas by DiPieto and Bursik (2012) have become increasingly relevant here. Their ideas about the

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fallacy undergirding use of pan-ethnic descriptors and their 'distorting effects' on the populations are centered. As often occurs when discussing violence against American Indians, grouping 'all Indians' (both urban and rural), into one pan-ethnic category, *i.e.*, "Indians" instead of groups stratified by tribal affiliation is distortive of the experiences of tribes. Social conditions are different between Native Americans residing on reservations and those who reside in cities. The Ute Mountain Ute reservation, for example, shares an exterior border with the Southern Ute Tribe, while both tribes' residents share membership in the umbrella Ute group. Yet both tribes experience different social conditions because dissimilar economic circumstances are present in each. Other tribes, located away from the rural mountainous resort area of Ute people, suffer pathologies not experienced by Utes. The Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona and its neighbor, the Tohono O'odham Nation, both located near the southern international border of Mexico, for example, must contend not only with historically-based social pathologies, such as poverty, disparate poor health outcomes and lasting effects of the Indian boarding school era, must also contend with rising influxes of immigrants from around the world, as migrants cross into the U.S. while traversing tribal lands - bringing with them burdens unexperienced by tribes located further away from the border. Migration patterns away from urban areas to rural environments, as witnessed during the COVID-19 health crisis, may be a precursor to changing characteristics of communities thus necessitating re-calibration of methodologies, theoretical orientations, and foci for those who study this area of criminology. Finally, American Indians residing in urban areas – are often over-sampled in national crime victimization studies – suffer different criminogenic circumstances, such as cultural isolation, heightened exposure to violence and other at-risk situations not experienced by Natives who reside within reservations.

Abril (*forthcoming,* (a) & (b); Abril, 2025) found Native American cultural values and a cultural identity standard *within a tribal community* were relevant to responding to deviance when that deviance involved violation of cultural values. This finding might be applicable to other populations and settings that contain groups who adhere to the behavioral mores of a shared culture and ascribed identity, such as do many Hispanic populations, *e.g.*, *Chicanos y Cubanos*. Within homogeneous groups where people share an identity and *pro-social* cultural values, these individuals will likely respond to cultural deviance occurring within that group, as Abril (2024(a)) found. This was a timely finding because the changing nature of U.S. society is such that significant populations of migrants arriving into the U.S. from Central and South America, are likely to change the composition of society and of those who engage in deviant behavior. Thus, changes to what constitutes a 'common' set of values, at least between rural and urban populations, have become necessary and prudent. Certainly, views of what constitute 'common cultural values' are dependent upon who encompasses the community.

The purpose of this paper is to examine both *collective efficacy* and *cultural efficacy,* as defined by Abril (*forthcoming,* (a) & (b)), within an American Indian community. Data from the *Southern Ute Indian Community Safety Survey* (SUICSS) will highlight theoretical differences between these two constructs. Abril argues *cultural efficacy* is a more robust predictor construct for use in tribal communities.

Previous Work

Defining Sampson et al.'s Collective Efficacy

Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls' community research, discussed in *Science* (1997), was a significant contribution to understanding community-based behaviors related to mitigation of community violence. Their idea about collective efficacy states within areas (communities) of concentrated economic disadvantage (poverty), informal social control (acting for the greater good) and community cohesion (people who get along) – defined as collective efficacy - will mitigate community violence (deviance). Sampson *et al*. demonstrated this dynamic within urban Chicago. Abril (2005; 2007) attempted to measure this phenomenon within a rural reservation community.

Defining Abril's Cultural Efficacy

Abril defines cultural efficacy as the ability of (1) an internalized *cultural identity* and (2) *cultural values* to both (*i*) constrain one's behavior in criminogenic circumstances and (ii) motivate one to act to respond to cultural / social deviance, a different perspective from what Sampson *et al.* (1997) proffered. Upon surface examination, the psychological mechanisms inherent to cultural efficacy might appear to mimic those of collective efficacy yet there are distinctive culturally-based differences and explanatory mechanisms between each of these important constructs, which provide the basis for this report.

Research Sites and Population Demographics

The research sites from which Sampson *et al.* and Abril gathered their data to develop the theories discussed herein are significant to understanding these distinctive concepts, especially as they relate to *cultural efficacy*. Data used to support collective efficacy were collected during *Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods* (PHDCN) beginning around 1995 (Raudenbush & Buka, 1997). Data for the cultural efficacy construct were collected during *Southern Ute Community Safety Survey* (SUICSS), conducted during 2001 (Abril, 2005). The research site for PHDCN was urban metropolitan Chicago, Illinois, a dense racially- mixed community. The site for SUICSS was a rural Indian reservation located in southwest Colorado, the nearest population center to the reservation is Durango, Colorado. It is important to understand the context of these different research sites because population characteristics varied greatly within PHDCN, while those of SUICSS were simply Indian or non-Indian. While diversity of population within PHDCN are key to collective efficacy's generalizability to other cities, the ideas generated from this heterogeneous make such less applicable to Indian reservations. The homogeneous rural population examined during SUICSS was ideally-suited to detailed examination and testing of community dynamics related to mitigating community pathologies, such as violence. For this reason, measures of collective efficacy and cultural efficacy were tested in tandem verbatim during SUICSS.

What is Cultural Efficacy? Self-Efficacy and Indigenous Cultural Efficacy

Bandura's (1977) ideas about self-efficacy are relevant to cultural efficacy because both concepts involve an individual's ability to effectuate ideals of self and an idealized community. *Cultural efficacy* was used in another study supporting tertiary ideas proposed herein. Houkamau and Sibley (2011) previously defined *cultural efficacy* as "perceptions of personal resources to effectively and appropriately engage with Indigenous (New Zealand Māori) cultural and social contexts." They found a positive association between cultural efficacy and personal life satisfaction indicators (*i.e.*, standard of living, health, achievements, relationships, community connection, and future security) among their Māori participants. Their definition of cultural efficacy supports current understandings of cultural efficacy within a cultural framework of health and wellness (Gonzales, Sittner & Walls, 2022). Within a cultural framework of disciplined behavior and its antithesis criminal conduct, cultural efficacy, is defined as the ability of an individual's cultural values and attached cultural identity to act as both (1) a corset for supporting disciplined behavior and (2) as a motivator for action when such is needed to respond to cultural deviance (crime) in the community.

Abril (*forthcoming*, (a) & (b)) advances cultural efficacy is an artifact of the values embedded within a cultural group and an identity emanating from membership in and interactions between members of the same cultural group. Cultural values and identity of members of the same culture work in tandem to (1) prevent cultural/social deviance and, (2) motivate one to respond to cultural/social deviance when faced with criminogenic circumstances in the community thereby (3) re-enforcing and enhancing cultural group membership (social solidarity) and (4) ensuring cultural group survival and communal well-being. Abril suggests cultural efficacy is *more effective* than collective efficacy because the shared cultural values threatened by deviance from acceptable behavioral norms are also an *existential* threat to one's very culture and internalized identity; indeed a threat of cognitive dissonance to the individuals who make up that cultural group. Whereas collective efficacy is a threat to the physical safety of a community that might be mitigated by removal from the community (seeking physical safety). Abril suggests if cultural values and identity of group members are threatened by deviance from within the group, then these members are threatening extinction of the entire cultural group - a threat not posed by deviance as suggested by Sampson *et al.* (1997). Thus, it becomes critical to explore and examine how *cultural efficacy* works to enhance culturally-based pro-social behavioral norms found within human cultures. To begin this exploration, Abril extends this study.

Relevance of Culture and Identity to Behavior

There is little debate within and between scientific domains that culture influences human behavior (see, *e.g.,* Cronk, 2017; Hernandez & Gibb, 2019). Precisely how does culture influence behavior and the development of behavioral norms (pro-social and anti-social)? Which element(s) of culture offer explanatory mechanisms for behavioral norm acquisition and internalization? These questions cannot be answered without examination of socio-cultural developments of the role of cultural attributes found among human behavioral norms.

Cultural Values

Early anthropological work (Kant, 1798; Bidney, 1949; Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952) and then sociological work by Durkheim (Alexander, 1988) and Merton (1949) have developed the relevance of culture to behavioral norms, mores, and laws (Tyler, 1994). Later development on the nexus between culture, values, and informal social control (informal law) offered by Abril (2005; 2007, 2014; 2015(a), (b), (c)) provided an alternative set of principles to frame a cultural efficacy construct. Ideas about informal social control and community cohesion are well-understood in psychological literature and undergird collective efficacy (Sampson *et al*. 1997). Sampson *et al.* argued collective efficacy measures are "common values of residents" (918) and influence communal responses to deviance.

The American Psychological Association (2024) defines identity as "an individual's sense of self defined by (a) a set of physical, psychological, and interpersonal characteristics that is not wholly shared with any other person and (b) a range of affiliations (*e.g*., ethnicity) and social roles" (APA, 2018). How is an identity acquired and developed? Galliher, Rivas-Drake & Dubow (2017) attempted to answer this question and provide theoretical integration by incorporating various perspectives that span several culturally-based differences. Similarly, Abril (2024(a)) reported identity acquisition and maintenance among homeless American Indian youth is likely to be dependent upon a variety of social and cultural phenomena that vary according to socio-economic status and societal messages assigned to various groups at varying historical time periods.

What is a Cultural Identity? Relevance of Identity to Behavior

Consensus across scientific domains (*e.g*., exercise physiology, philosophy, education, ethnic studies) that, analogous to culture, identity influences behavior, as Alfrey, Waters, Condor, & Rebar (2023) synthesized. Ethnic identity is part of one's social identity (Taifel, 1981). The role of one's *cultural identity* becomes salient here. Some define cultural identity as the socio-cultural equivalent of one's social identity - the "we-ness" of a group - in terms of socio-cultural belonging (see, *e.g.,* Lustig, 2013; Groha, 2019).

What is Efficacy?

Efficacy is the ability to produce an intended result. The relevance of self-efficacy to behavior has been well-examined since Bandura proposed self-efficacy as one's belief in their own ability to enact strongly-held beliefs (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy is the grounding principle of many sociological and psychological developments, including ideas surrounding Sampson, *et al.'s* (1997) collective efficacy. Sampson *et al.* discovered urban-based groups will arise to address harm to the collective body when aspects of shared urban survival are threatened. Sampson *et al.'s* ideas about collective efficacy are different from Abril's ideas about cultural efficacy in several significant operational mechanisms.

Indigenous Cultural Efficacy

Bandura (1977) believed if people believe in themselves (self-confidence in social situations and their functioning within society), they will be better prepared to respond to circumstances within their lives (1977). He believed individuals with strong self-efficacy beliefs are the same individuals who will respond to matters affecting the self. Similarly, Abril's *cultural efficacy* has at its core underlying supports that (1) if one is empowered with the knowledge of socially-desirable cultural values and (2) individuals have strong internalized ties to the (a) culture and (b) the identity of the culture from which it was drawn, then one's behaviors will likely be in accordance with that culture's mores. Furthermore, *cultural efficacy* proposes possession of *pro-social* cultural mores will motivate individuals to (1) respond to cultural deviance to both (*i*) protect internalized mores of the self, and (*ii*) the larger culture from which these mores were derived, in a (2) overall effort to protect the self and one's culture from harm. Values based on an individuals' internalized identity standard, which is intimately tied to the base culture to which one is affiliated (see, *e.g.,* Gans, 2010), will motivate responses to deviance because failure to act accordingly threatens one's very existence and way of life in the world. A paradigmatic shift is threatened by deviance from principles of cultural efficacy. Because cultural deviance is a very personal threat to one's paradigm - a substantial threat of cognitive dissonance - responses to cultural deviance will be stronger than those to general community disorder suggested by Sampson *et al*. Moreover, Abril's (*forthcoming,* (a) & (b); 2005) cultural values measures were based on *codified* societally-held values, the basis of which is U.S. federal Indian law, perceived to reflect the values of a larger society (Durkheim, 1933). Thus, an *alternative* set of tools with which to measure other constructs related to responses to deviance are presented here. Measures of collective efficacy were correctly tested against measures of *cultural efficacy.* Embedded hypotheses propelled this study.

Measurement Issues

To understand significant differences between collective efficacy and cultural efficacy, it is important to first understand how these constructs were measured by Sampson *et al*. (1997) and Abril (Abril, *forthcoming,* (a) & (b); *under review*). This is important to do because this Abril argues what Sampson *et al.* believe they are measuring, *i.e*. "common values," may not be what these measures are in fact measuring; a significant validity issue when used in other communities.

Collective Efficacy

Sampson *et al.* measured collective efficacy by dual use of five (5) "conceptually-related items" (using a Likert-style scale) for each of the (a) *informal social control* and (b) *community cohesion* constructs.

Informal Social Control (ISC)

The five "conceptually-related items" (measures) of informal social control used by Sampson *et al.* were (a) People around her are willing to help their neighbors; (b) This is a close-knit community, (c) People in this

neighborhood can be trusted; (d) People in this neighborhood generally do not get along; (e) People in this neighborhood do not share the same values.

Community Cohesion

The five "conceptually-related items" (measures) of community cohesion used by Sampson *et al.* were (f) How likely is it that your neighbors could be counted on to do something if children were skipping school and hanging out; (g) How likely is it that your neighbors could be counted on to do something if children were spray painting graffiti on a local building; (h) How likely is it that your neighbors would do something if children were showing disrespect to an adult (i) How likely is it that your neighbors could be counted on to do something if a fight broke out in front of their house (j) How likely is it that your neighbors could be counted on to do something if the fire station closest to your home was threatened with budget cuts. Together, these ten (10) measures encompassed the collective efficacy measurement tool.

Cultural Efficacy

Abril (*forthcoming,* (a) & (b); *under review*) measured cultural efficacy by combining several distinctive measures of American Indian *cultural identity* and *values* to create a continuous variable upon which a scale of *cultural efficacy* is based. The 15 *cultural identity* measures and 21 *cultural values* measures used by Abril are presented in Table 1 (Appendix).

Cultural Values

American Indian cultural values were measured by asking 21 broad generalized questions about Native American culture. Ten (10) of these culturally-relevant items were derived from asking about the offensiveness of common behaviors experienced by Native people towards Native culture, while eleven items asked about stereotypical images about Natives. If, for example, common behaviors or stereotypes were offensive to an interviewee, then each was assigned a number (0 / 1 = not offensive / offensive). Other measures of Native culture included asking about personal use of medicine people (traditional healers), views of disrespect of tribal elders, and other culturally-based values reflected within various literatures and from the Abril's lived experience with and among Native Americans. Survey questionnaire items asked a respondent to rate crimes against Indian cultural values from 1 - 5 (1,2 = "a little serious or not serious"; 4,5 = "serious to very serious"; 3 = "neither serious nor not serious" were excluded from the analysis. All *cultural values* data were dichotomized for statistical analysis. Farrington and Loeber (2006) reported dichotomization of coded variables provides some additional benefits, such as "improved power" to detect effects and "no measurable decrease" in the strength of detected associations than when using continuous variables. Using items that required simple "yes/no" responses control the possibility of myriad varied responses that might not be understandable. Interview data from the S.U.I.C.S.S. have been publicly available since 2009 (Abril, 2009(a)), but only analyzed recently (Abril, *forthcoming,* (a) & (b)).

Cultural Identity

Cultural identity was measured by asking interviewees and survey respondents about various aspects of their ethnic identity, such as tribal affiliation(s), name of tribe(s), tribal enrollment status, familial tribal enrollment status, past attendance at an Indian school, place of residence on/off reservation, etc. All *cultural identity* data dichotomized for statistical analysis are presented in Table 1 (Appendix). Identity measures used here were developed in another study of Native identities among women housed in a prison in 1998, (Abril, 2003; *under review*).

Measuring Collective Efficacy in a Rural Tribal Reservation Community

Sampson *et al.'s* (1997) collective efficacy measures were included on the same survey questionnaire form *verbatim* as the cultural values and cultural identity measures distributed to the survey population during the summer of 2001. This was important to do because significant statements about measures used and populations tested were foreseen by the Abril. The historical period in which data for PHDCN and SUICSS were collected closely-aligned, so temporal sampling differences were minimized.

Data Analysis

To understand hypothesized differences between various groups within the surveyed populations (urban and rural), survey respondents were stratified into five different groups based on common categories used throughout social science: location (rural / urban), race (Indian / non-Indian), gender (female / male), age (under 40 years / over 40 years), and income (under annual area median of USD$39,419) / over annual area median). Paired samples *t*-tests were conducted on each category to detect any differences between the two groups within each category, as suggested by Rosenthal and Rosnow (1991). To determine where these hypothesized differences might be located, the individual measures used by Sampson *et al* to indicate informal social control (ISC) and community cohesion (CC) were tested (*i*) separately, then (*ii*) together as a sub-construct, and finally, (*iii*) together as the full collective efficacy construct.

Location: Rural v. Urban Area Differences

In the first set of analyses, collective efficacy was compared between the group stratified by location (rural/urban), in the context of a rural-based Indian reservation area to an urbanized area (Durango, Colorado) to detect differences between these areas. This was important because Sampson *et al* developed collective efficacy in the highly urbanized environment of Chicago and this Abril is arguing this construct may not be as applicable to other areas, such as in a rural Indian reservation.

Except for "neighbors not getting along," every other individual measure of ISC indicated significantly more disagreement with the statements by residents of the rural area, who disagreed more than those from the urban area. Likewise, every individual statement of CC revealed disagreement between rural and urban residents, with rural residents indicating more disagreement with these statements. These differences were again reflected in the analyses of the combined ISC statements (t = -40.027, df = 658, p = .000), as they were in the combined CC analysis (t = -43.982, df = 658, p = .000). When

the individual measures were tested together, as a complete construct of collective efficacy, test revealed significant differences between rural and urban residents (t = -45.914, df = 658, p = .000), as hypothesized would occur. The reasons for these findings are many, complex, and likely due to the nature and characteristics of this rural area. On this reservation, spatial characteristics allow for more space – less close physical proximity – between residents, who often reside miles apart. The potential for solitude some tribal people experience might distort their views of their community. Similarly, other reservations, such as the Pascua Yaqui Pueblo, tribal members reside in homes within close physical proximity to one another. This can lead to greater levels of conflict between residents, which might fuel misperceptions about a neighbor's willingness to help or sharing values, which could be indicators of 'getting along.'

Race / Ethnicity Differences

In the second set of analyses, collective efficacy was compared between the group stratified by race (Indian and non-Indian) to detect variances between these two groups. This was important because Sampson *et al* developed collective efficacy in the highly racially-mixed neighborhoods of Chicago. Furthermore, the Abril is arguing the *culturally-based differences found within racial groups* are precisely what makes collective efficacy a less robust construct for use, particularly within tribal communities.

The *t*-tests of each individual measure of ISC and CC indicated disagreement with the statements between Indians and non-Indians. These differences were again reflected in the analysis of the combined ISC statements (t = -63.236, df = 664; p = .000), as they were in the combined CC analysis (t = -74.105, df = 664, p = .000). When individual measures were tested together as a complete construct of collective efficacy, test revealed significant differences between Indians and non-Indians (t = -76.567, df = 664, p = .000), as hypothesized. That is, Indians reported higher levels of disagreement with the statements than did the non-Indians. The reasons for these findings are also many and complex. The term "race," might be a misnomer, as these two groups are more accurately differentiated by culturally-based characteristics: one identifying as members of a cultural group with clear, demarcating behaviors, values, and norms, whilst the other is a mixed menagerie of various groups (Black, White, Other). Second, the ideas asked of the Indian group are subject to many varied interpretations, as will soon be discussed.

Gender Differences

In the third set of analyses, collective efficacy was compared among the group stratified by gender to detect differences between females and males. This was important because the Southern Ute tribe is a *matrilineal* society, wherein women hold leadership positions; either formally or informally, often known as "aunties."[2]

[2] "Aunty" is a term of endearment usually spoken in the Native dialect, *e.g.*, "*tía* M*"* (or *"The Aunties are angry*") instead of the English version "Aunt Melinda." These women are beloved female role models within tribes,

Every measure of ISC indicated disagreement by females than males, especially related to statements "neighbors do not get along" and "neighbors do not share values," where females were in greater agreement with these statements. Likewise, every individual statement of CC revealed disagreement between the genders, with females indicating significantly more disagreement with these statements. These differences were again reflected in the analysis of the combined ISC statements (t = -31.001, df = 664, p = .000), just as they were in the combined CC analysis (t = -28.547, df = 664, p = .000). That is, females had higher levels of disagreement with the statements than did males. When the individual measures were tested together as a complete construct of collective efficacy, the test revealed significant differences between genders (t = -32.535, df = 664, p = .000), as hypothesized based upon the unique gender hierarchy of this tribe. Reasons for these findings are many and complex. Within Ute culture, females are the higher order gender (a matrilineal characteristic) and may have given greater contemplations to the items requested of them, *i.e.*, 'over thinking' items. Females also have greater interest in civic participation than males, especially as societal changes influence gender parity in political pursuits (USAID, 2024), and this might be reflected in the responses. Non-Indian females are more involved with generalized civic activities, such as voting and survey response, whereas Indian women are more 'hands on' in civic behaviors that 'take care' of the community, such as in picking-up litter and child monitoring, as reported earlier by Abril (2015a).

Differences

In the fourth set of analyses, collective efficacy was compared between the group stratified by age to detect differences between people under 40 years of age and those over 40 years. This was important because, within this tribe, people who are considered tribal elders are respected, hold leadership positions, and whose communal views are widely sought.

Every individual measure of ISC indicated more disagreement with the statements by younger people (under age 40), more so than those from the older people (over age 40). Likewise, every individual statement of CC revealed more disagreement between these age groups, with younger people indicating higher levels of disagreement with these statements than older people. These differences were reflected in the analysis of combined ISC statements (t = -27.586, df = 659, p = .000), as they were in combined CC analysis (t = -29.389, df = 659, p = .000). When the individual measures were tested together as a complete construct of collective efficacy, test revealed significant differences between the age groups (t = -30.607, df = 659, p = .000), as hypothesized. That is, younger people had higher levels of disagreement with the statements than older people. The reasons for these findings are once more varied, complex, and similarly-reflected within literatures across scientific domains, such as community psychology (Greenberg & Weber, 2008) and education (see, *e.g.,* Twenge, Campbell, & Freeman, 2012), reporting differences in communal views among people of various age groups. However, some significant differences are also likely reflective of the unique culturally-

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usually having helped to rear tribal children, although does not necessarily indicate a biological relationship with any tribal community member.

based value placed on tribal elders and their higher placement within the tribal social structure thereby raising the importance of their views of the tribal community.

Income Differences

In the fifth set of analyses, collective efficacy was compared in the group stratified by income to detect differences between people reporting incomes under the area annual median of USD$31,419 and over the median. This was important because Sampson *et al* posits it is in areas of "concentrated economic disadvantage" (poverty) where collective efficacy is most needed and will likely be an underlying community dynamic determining what mitigates community violence. Furthermore, literatures across scientific domains and governmental reports indicate American Indian communities are more economically-disadvantaged (impoverished) than other racial communities (JECD, 2024).

Every individual measure of ISC indicated disagreement with the statements by respondents who reported lower annual incomes, more so than those who reported higher annual incomes. Likewise, every individual statement of CC revealed more disagreement between residents reporting lower incomes than those who reported higher incomes, indicating higher disagreement with these statements, except for the statement "children showing disrespect." That is, people reporting lower incomes disagreed more with the statements than did people who reported higher incomes. These differences were again reflected in the analysis of the combined ISC statements (t = -28.914, df = 625, p = .000), as they were in the combined CC analysis (t = -31.016, df = 625, p = .000). When individual measures were tested together as a complete construct of collective efficacy, test revealed significant differences between respondents who reported lower and those reporting higher annual incomes (t = -30.607, df = 659, p = .000), an inferred hypothesis by Sampson *et al*. within their generalized statements about collective efficacy. The reasons for these findings here are many and complex. These results might reflect increased migration of non-Indians into various areas of tribal community life, such as employment with the tribe, using scarce housing spaces, and other aspects of tribal life that might impact Indians residing within this community. Higher wage paying jobs with the tribal government being held by non-Indians, for example, is one area of contention among tribal members and might be reflected in these results. Finally, the tribe pays a monthly dividend only to tribal members derived from tribal enterprises, known colloquially as "per cap" (per capita payment). Also, upon attaining a certain age designating one as a "tribal elder," older individuals receive a unique retirement benefits package. These financial benefits paid to enrolled members of this tribe are not universally found among other tribes; residual effects of these benefits might be reflected in these responses.

Construct Structural Analysis

While Sampson *et al.* (1997) state their measurement items are "conceptually-related" (918) these items are unrelated to the *cultural context* in which they were applied in a homogenous, cultural-specific population: an Indian reservation community. In this section, I discuss why these items are

inappropriate for use in the Southern Ute community. To begin, I address each item individually then address the underlying constructs informal social control and community cohesion, separately. The purpose will be to demonstrate these measures do not accurately reflect phenomena in question (validity), in the Ute tribal community. Simply stated, Sampson *et al.'s* collective efficacy measures are not valid measures for use in an American Indian tribal community.

Problematic Measurement Items

The are significant problems with each item used to measure informal social control (ISC) and community cohesion (CC). Examples include:

1st - Asking Indians to rate, "People around here are willing to help their neighbors," within the context of their own tribal community, potential responses will be many and varied, such as: "depends on who the neighbor is: a relative (very likely to help), an Indian but not a member of the tribe on whose reservation they reside (it depends), a non-Indian who just relocated to the area (not likely at all to help)," potential responses are infinite. These social realities help explain significant differences between rural and urban samples (t = -27.947, df = 657, p = .000), race (cultural) differences (t = -49.297, df = 663, p = .000), gender differences (t = -17.553, df = 663, p = .000), age differences (t = -17.431, df = 658, p = .000), and income differences (t = -18.553, df = 658, p = .000) found during tests of this measure of ISC. A better question for use in tribal communities might be: "Are members of your cultural / spiritual activity group(s) willing to help each other?"

2nd - Asking Indians to rate, "This is a 'close knit' community," is also context dependent. Comparable among reservation communities, the non-Indian Town of Ignacio, is within the Southern Ute reservation. Non-Indians live 'in-town,' as do many substance abusers, criminal offenders, and other socially-undesirable individuals, next to Indians. Yet the Town of Ignacio is within walking distance of the surrounding reservation community where many tribal member homes are located (on tribal land). Because the Southern Ute reservation is "checker-board" (meaning one block might be tribal land, wherein the middle of the next block is county/state land, and so on) - this type of reservation is demarcated based on historic rights negotiated with tribes and the U.S. within the *Brunot Agreement with the Ute Nation of 1873*. These spatial characteristics help explain significant differences between rural and urban samples (t = -37.947, df = 657, p = .000), race (cultural) differences (t = -58.119, df = 663, p = .000), gender differences (t = -28.313, df = 663, p = .000), age differences (t = -27.552, df = 658, p = .000), and income differences (t = -28.926, df = 624, p = .000) found during the tests of this measure of ISC. A better question for use in tribal communities might be: "Do members of your cultural / spiritual activity group(s) like each other?"

3rd - Asking Indians to rate, "People in this neighborhood can be trusted," context would, again, matter. Many study participants feel Ignacio is part of their neighborhood, while other Indians do not feel this way because they feel problems are caused by the non-Indians who reside "in town." The spatial and social realities of the reservation community help explain significant differences between rural and urban samples (t = -35.543, df = 654, p = .000), race (cultural) differences (t = -62.371, df = 660, p = .000), gender differences

(t = -27.941, df = 660, p = .000), age differences (t = -26.078, df = 655, p = .000), and income differences (t = -27.614, df = 621, p = .000) found during tests of this individual measure of ISC. A better question for use in a tribal community might be: "Can you trust the people in your cultural / spiritual activity group?

4th - Asking Indians to rate, "People in this neighborhood generally do not get along," the responses would be context dependent. Many tribal members residing in farther reaches of the reservation might feel their "neighborhood" is either the Town of Ignacio or their nearest neighbor who resides 10 miles away. Again, context matters. Spatial and social realities of the reservation community help explain significant differences between rural and urban samples (t = -34.496, df = 657, p = .000), race (cultural) differences (t = -57.372, df = 663, p = .000), gender differences (t = -22.610, df = 663, p = .000), age differences (t = -22.023, df = 658, p = .000), and income differences (t = -23.159, df = 624, p = .000) found during tests of this measure of ISC. A better question for use in a tribal community might be: "Do the people who live nearest you get along with each other?"

5th - Asking Indians to rate, "People around here do not share the same values." The responses would vary widely. They might wonder, which values? Ute (*nucchu*) values? Standard middle-class (White) values? Diné (Navajo – *The People*) or Yaqui (*yoeme*) values? And, *on the reservation*, in-town, or in Durango?" Again, spatial and social realities juxtaposed with the cultural paradigm prevalent within this community explain significant differences between rural and urban samples (t = -40.957, df = 656, p = .000), race (cultural) differences (t = -59.704, df = 662, p = .000), gender differences (t = -30.825, df = 662, p = .000), age differences (t = -30.942, df = 657, p = .000), and income differences (t = -31.578, df = 623, p = .000) found during tests of this measure of ISC. A better question for use in tribal communities might be: "Do the people with whom you interact most share the same cultural values as the (insert tribal name)?"

6th - Asking Indians to evaluate their reservation community according to "likeliness of neighbors doing something about kids skipping school and hanging out," the context in which the reservation community has evolved is most critical. Are the 'kids' tribal members or children of tribal members? Are these 'kids' Indian but not tribal members (other tribes)? Specification makes a difference and is especially significant if the children are non-Indian. Also, how old are these 'kids'? Young children or teenagers? Are these 'good' kids, or 'bad' kids? These distinctions have significance because there is little law enforcement on the reservation and these 'kids' might take revenge for being 'called-out' for their behavior (spotlighted). Additionally, most significantly within this context, the history of the Indian boarding school policy, recently ending in the late 1970's – a federal policy that forcibly removed Indian children from their homes and sent them to schools where they were violently and sexually victimized – doing something, *anything*, about children 'skipping school' is culturally prohibited and likely to evoke post-traumatic stress-like symptoms among adults, if asked these types of questions about kids skipping school within the reservation community. Also, children attending school reflects a pejoratively-held non-Indian cultural value (see, *e.g.,* Mumphrey, Luvrye, Lee, 2024). The spatial, social, and historical realities juxtaposed with

cultural practicalities of this reservation community help explain significant differences between rural and urban samples (t = -38.672, df = 658, p = .000), race (cultural) differences (t = -57.147, df = 664, p = .000), gender differences (t = -29.220, df = 664, p = .000), age differences (t = -28.598, df = 659, p = .000), and income differences (t = -28.846, df = 625, p = .000) found during tests of this measure of CC. A better question for use in a tribal community might be: "Do you think this community would support a tribal school, one that teaches tribal culture and language?"

7th - Asking an Indian about the likelihood of "doing something about painting graffiti on a building," context and specificity are critical. Is the building tribally-owned, which would evoke strong tribal responses should that building be named after a revered leader or on/near sacred ceremonial grounds? Or, importantly, is the building a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) government building, a vestige of conquest and domination by non-Indian culture, that needs electronic surveillance to prevent vandalism. Or is the building a former federal Indian school where violence toward tribal members often occurred? The spatial, historical, and social realities in a milieu of a subjugated culture resigned to this reservation help explain significant differences between rural and urban samples (t = -26.621, df = 657, p = .000), race (cultural) differences (t = -44.758, df = 663, p = .000), gender differences (t = -16.963, df = 663, p = .000), age differences (t = -17.455, df = 658, p = .000), and income differences (t = -18.365, df = 624, p = .000) found during tests of this measure of CC. A better question for use in a tribal community might be: "Would anyone do anything if the Tribal Administration building (or Sun Dance grounds) were vandalized?"

8th - Asking Indians if they would do anything "if children were showing disrespect to an adult" is also a stacked question. Who is the adult? Is the adult considered a tribal elder, who would be protected by many? Is the adult a local undesirable? Context and specificity matter. The social and spatial realities of the reservation community, as well as *cultural values of the population*, help explain significant differences between rural and urban samples (t = -38.510, df = 657, p = .000), race (cultural) differences (t = -54.615, df = 663, p = .000), gender differences (t = -29.625, df = 663, p = .000), age differences (t = -29.112, df = 658, p = .000), and income differences (t = -29.981, df = 624, p = .000) found during tests of this measure of CC. A better question for use in a tribal community might be: "If a tribal elder were being disrespected, would anyone do anything?"

9th - Asking Indians if they could "count on their neighbors to do something if a fight broke out IFO their house" is context dependent. Who is fighting whom? Are any of the fighter's relatives of the homeowner? Are any of the fighter's criminals/drug users/sellers? Law enforcement on reservations is limited. It would be risky to get involved in a fight knowing the fighters would likely return to harm whoever intervened in a conflict. Also, what is the fight about? Is it over desecration of culturally-significant areas/grounds, which would evoke a communal response? Or is the fight a drunken brawl emanating from domestic violence? Context and specificity are critical and help explain significant differences between rural and urban samples (t = -28.064, df = 658, p = .000), race (cultural) differences (t = -45.557, df = 664, p = .000), gender differences (t = -18.627, df = 664, p = .000), age differences (t = -19.001, df =

659, p = .000), and income differences (t = -21.186, df = 659, p = .000) found during tests of this measure of CC. A better question to use in tribal communities might be: "Would there be any problems with the tribal police if you had to call them about a fight in front of your home?"

10th - Asking Indians to evaluate "neighbors doing something if the fire station closest" to their home were threatened, is also context dependent. Is the reservation in a mountainous area where wildfires ever-present risks? Or is the reservation in a dry desert area, such as in southern Arizona? Are there volunteer firefighters who could be called upon to fight a fire? Have the firefighters themselves known to ignite fires, which have occurred among tribes by individuals seeking employment as firefighters? The spatial, social, and economic realities of the reservation community help explain significant differences between rural and urban samples (t = -31.986, df = 658, p = .000), race (cultural) differences (t = -51.321, df = 664, p = .000), gender differences (t = -22.545, df = 664, p = .000), age differences (t = -21.186, df = 659, p = .000), and income differences (t = -22.889, df = 625, p = .000) found during tests of this measure of CC. Context is illuminating. A better question for use in a tribal community might be: "If there were a fire in the area, do you feel comfortable with whomever might respond?"

Constructing items to measure a targeted phenomenon, such as informal social control or community cohesion, must reflect the population in which these tools will be used, or they lack validity. Perhaps items used by Sampson *et al*. were valid for their heterogenous site in Chicago, but these items were not appropriate for use in this homogenous tribal population.

Underlying Constructs Problematic for Indian Country

Collective Efficacy vs. Cultural Efficacy

It might be helpful to better understand the Abril's argument if constructs underlying each element of these perspectives were taken apart and analyzed separately. This will further illustrate strengths and weaknesses of each construct as they relate to Abril's argument.

Informal Social Control

Each tribe has its own methods of informal and formal social control. These are dependent upon how assimilated and acculturated (culturally harmed) the tribe has become with the dominant culture during the Indian boarding school era of federal Indian policy and after the enactment of the *Indian Reorganization Act (IRA)*). The Ute tribe has a history of traditional social control, historically under authority of the person holding the position of war sub-chief, an occupation ranked just under Tribal Chief (now known as Tribal Chairman). The war sub-chief's responsibilities included carrying out punishments or enforcing behavioral norms during war time or harvest season or any other group activity (see Abril, 2009(b) for a discussion of the tertiary power negotiation that occurred within the history of the Southern Ute tribe). The position of war sub-chief morphed into Chief of the Tribal Court, holder of tribal tradition. This is critical background to know when attempting to understand informal social control within any modern tribal context. Use of traditional mechanisms of informal social control have been irrevocably

damaged by intrusion of non-Indian norms introduced during the Reorganization Period (1928 - 1945), and later by more damaging federal policies (*e.g*., The Termination Period - between 1945 – 1961 - whereby many tribes were stripped of recognition as tribes) that left remnants of traditional methods of informal social control unacceptable to overseers who monitored Indian behavior. Often, tribal members were subject to punishment by Indian Agents (now known as the Bureau of Indian Affairs police), for practicing traditional ceremonies (*e.g.,* dancing and marriage rites); each ritual having embedded within elements of informal social control. Thus, asking about informal social control among American Indian populations will likely evoke traumatic memories among older members of the population, whilst evoking a powerful reaction from younger people. It might be best for researchers to observe how informal social control operates during pan-Indian tribal rites, such as pow-wows or annual tribal royalty pageants, wherein behaviors are strictly monitored by participants and observers.

Community Cohesion

As in many sub-cultures with characteristic faith practices, there are prohibitions about revealing spiritual matters to outsiders. Most tribal groups have spiritual practices intertwined with their cultural and social norms. For example, various Ute tribes share a common Sun Dance (a spiritual sacrament) and the Bear Dance (a mating ceremony) whereby participants in both are the same tribal members albeit hailing from the various Ute tribes in the region (Abril, 2024(b)). Within and during these cultural practices the values of the Ute are transmitted and reinforced. For an outsider to ask about the intricacies (*e.g*., meanings, details, *etc*.) of these practices is culturally offensive, likely leading to exclusion from the entire tribal community.

The sub-constructs within collective efficacy – informal social control and community cohesion – are present to varying degrees among all tribal communities. However, inquiring or attempting to measure these common human dynamics using ordinary non-Indian methodologies for doing so, might doom the research enterprise. A researcher's interpersonal skills are critical. Attempts to 'go Native' (*e.g*., presenting oneself to be 'a cool Hippie'), is culturally repulsive to Native people.

Cultural Efficacy Fostered by Community Cohesion

A tribal community might be more receptive to research efforts facilitating or reviving traditional practices within the context of a 21st century world. Tribes are cognizant social times have changed, and they weld more political power now than in any other time since Euro-Americans arrived. Couple this with growing non-Indian public willingness to make amends for past damage done to tribal cultures. The recent "formal apology" issued by President Biden (Williams, 2024) and his establishing a federal monument dedicated to acknowledging harms wrought on tribes by the Indian boarding school era (Shabad, 2024) are but one example of this change in historical context researchers might address. Tribal language revitalization efforts to include all tribal members (both on the reservation and those who are far-flung in urban areas) will go far to amend past harms and help tribes become healthier. Through these efforts tribal community cohesion is strengthened.

Cultural Efficacy Embedded in Cultural Identity

Many Indians survived a time when being called "Indian" was intended as a degrading insult, as did Abril. To support Native identity development with positive cultural connotations, will embed into Native individuals a strong sense of cultural pride. Fostering positive societal imaging of modern Native people – without stereotypes from the past - will go far to enhance the positive aspects of a cultural identity thereby increasing the overall effectiveness of cultural efficacy.

Final Arguments For Cultural Efficacy

Cultural efficacy will be embraced by tribal groups. Measures derived from communal consensus of tribal norms better reflect the individuals who are the community. Policies based on research conducted from this perspective will align with tribal cultural values regarding consensus-building and will be efficacious and embraced by the community. A cultural efficacy framework is forecasted to facilitate accurate theoretical and policy developments regarding groups beyond Native Americans thus providing a broader scope of theoretical understanding.

Discussion

"Conceptually-Related Items" v. Culturally-Relevant Items

There are significant problems inherent to measuring social facts within communities *in absentia* from within confines of an Ivory Tower, although Sampson *et al* (Barnes, Sampson, Kindlon, & Reiss, 1997) attempted to address this problem. Theoretically-developed measures, as opposed to measures derived directly from a community, is problematic and likely ethnocentric. Less obvious intervening variables, such as culturally-based differences (*e.g*., paradigms, circumstances, *etc*.) are not foreseeable without insight into the community. Assuming individuals within a community will share 'common values' with a researcher far removed from the community and its cultural milieu is poor scientific practice. It is ethnocentric to assume commonality with others whose paradigms do not include higher education and all the advantages it imparts. Theoretical exercises are best secured within laboratories where knowledge of the history, development, and future outcomes for what has been created for study is predictable.

Context Matters!

As in life, context matters. In field research with homogenous populations, the cultural context must be reflected in ideas about the community when proposing policy interventions. The best method for understanding what a community perceives as problematic is to immerse oneself into the community. Better outcomes will result if care for cultural definitions and customs is first acquired prior to data collection efforts.

Historical context matters, too. It is this Abril's experience – just twenty-five years ago – it was not acceptable to propose research with tribes. Not just historical disregard of social realities of Native people were ignored by academics. Problems developed from efforts of anthropologists (Parsons,

2022) and geneticists (*Havasupai Tribe v. Arizona*) alike are perceived to have caused harm to Native people thus preventing access to tribal communities by other researchers until now.

Conclusion

Theoretical Implications for Community Research

Cultural efficacy should be used when working within culturally-homogenous communities. It is also a fitting construct to employ in communities where *racial* differences exist because those communities are tied by other characteristics that have yet to be explored beyond cultural values. Many urban communities host a variety of culturally-based events. Native Hawaiian dances and Black American hip-hop festivals are held in Las Vegas, as are Chinese Lunar New Year and Muslim-based celebrations are in New York City - each welcoming participation of other cultural groups. Perhaps it is respect between these groups and reverence of one's culture and *cultural pride* allowing varied individuals to celebrate values not necessarily held by observers? Future explorations of this community characteristic – *cultural pride* - is needed to understand what allows varied cultures to live in tranquility.

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APPENDIX

Table 1.
Measures of Cultural Values (Rank Offensiveness)
(Cultural Values Question was rated as "Offensive" to Interviewees and Survey Respondents)

Cultural Identity Measures (Interviews)	**Cultural Values Measures (Interviews and Survey Form)**
Are You Indian?	Ever Asked How Much Indian Are You?
Identifies Name of Tribe	Ever Told You Don't Look Like an Indian?
Are You Enrolled?	Ever Asked for Location of Ancient Indian Burial Grounds?
Any Family Enrolled?	Ever Asked to Have a 'Real' Indian?
Any Family Member Attend Indian School?	Ever Heard All Indians Are Drunks/Druggies?
Do You Have Any Contact with Your Tribe?	Ever Asked for Photograph Without Compensation?
When Did You Last Visited the Reservation?	Ever Asked for Cultural Artifacts?
Are You Currently Living on a Reservation?	Stated Using Medicine People (Traditional Healers)
Are You Considered a Tribal Elder?	Holds a Harsh View of Disrespect of Tribal Elders
Has a Harsh View of Disrespect of Elders	Would Act if Witnessed Disrespect of Elder
Not Wanting Family Shame	Involved in Cultural / Spiritual Activities
Are You Involved In Cultural Activities?	Non-Indians Trespassing onto Indian Ceremonial/Burial Grounds
Uses Medicine People (Traditional Healers)	Non-Indians Buying Indian Bones / Other Cultural Artifacts
Mentioned Spirits/Witchcraft in Interview	Non-Indians Hunting/Fishing Without Tribal Permit
Time Living on Reservation (in Years)	Non-Indians Taking Natural Resources / Sacred Items Off Rez
$\bar{X}$ COMPOSITE IDENTITY SCORE	Non-Indians Practicing Indian Spiritual Ceremonies
	Indians Selling Indian Bones / Other Cultural Artifacts
	Indians Not Respecting Tribal Elders
	Indians Taking Natural Resources / Sacred Items Off Rez
	Indians Hunting/Fishing Without Tribal Permit
	Indians Stealing Money from the Tribe
	$\bar{X}$ COMPOSITE CULTURAL VALUES SCORE
Coded as dichotomous variables ("0 / 1" = no / yes ***or*** "0 / 1" = not offensive / offensive)	