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Introduction

Many assessments are used clinically and for research with American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations although few are standardized, validated, normed, or examined for cultural appropriateness. With over 560 federally recognized American Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages in the United States and many with small tribal populations made this examination difficult (Bureau of Indian Affairs, 2007).

Established research with AI/AN populations has shed light on increased rates of health disparities, suicide, mental illness, and social injustice with these communities. Brave Heart and colleagues (Brave Heart, 1998; 1999a, Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998; Brave Heart-Jordan & DeBruyn, 1995) have attributed many of the aforementioned consequences to the more than 400 years of genocide, cultural purification, and coerced acculturation (Whitbeck et al., 2004).

The purpose of this study is to address the APA (2002) established ethical codes that indicate the need for psychologists to be proficient in multicultural assessment procedures and instrumentation pertaining AI/AN populations.

Methods

Published literature was examined to identify assessments, problems arising from the lack of standardized assessments, barriers to developing norms for AI/AN, and recommendations to provide as much information as possible to address the needs. A snowball sampling approach was implemented to identify articles relevant to the research questions.

Databases searched:

PubMed (1974-2007), PsychInfo (1974-2007), and Scopus (1974-2007).

Keywords included:

American Indian, Alaska Native, clinical measures, standardized tests, validity, reliability, psychological testing, psychometric properties, anxiety scales, and depression scales.

Limitations:

Inclusion of articles or studies published in English language, and exclusion of studies/articles that did not include the standardization of psychological assessments.

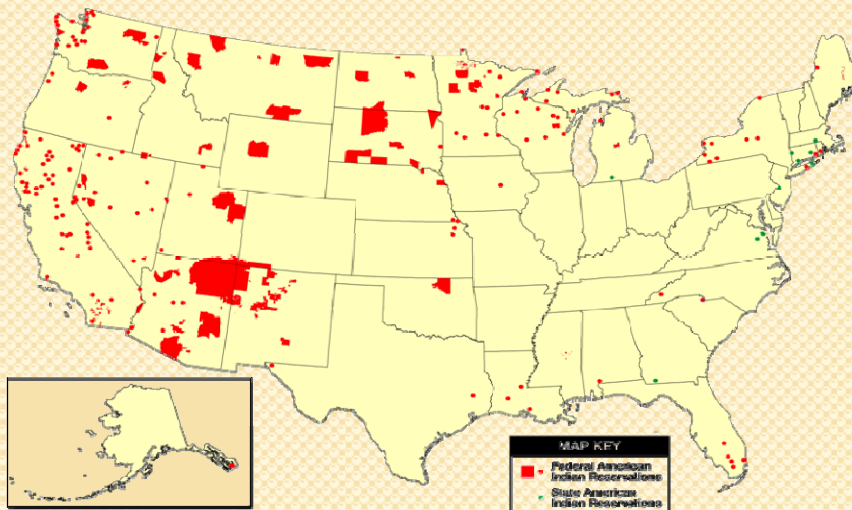
Literature Review Findings:

A total of 94 articles addressing AI/AN assessment, testing, and psychometrics were published.

Analysis:

Abstracts included types of assessments, number of participants, AI/AN identification, and age of participants (demographics).

Federally Recognized Reservations



Results: Demographics

Researchers obtained samples from 15 tribes/affiliations, representing less than 3% of tribes residing in seven different regional borders.

Tribal Representation

Cheyenne (Northern)	Eskimo
Papago	Pueblo
Cree	Miccosukee
Sioux (Oglala)	Inuit (Canadian)
Hopi	Lakota, Dakota
Yakima	Navajo
Mayan	Ojibwa (or Chippewa)
Native Canadian/First Nations/Aboriginal	

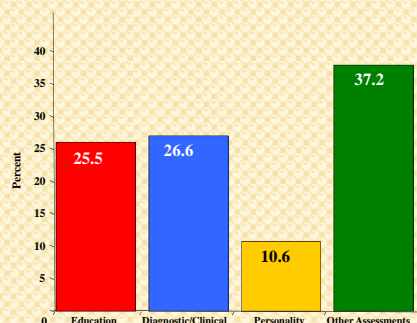
Age Representation

Age Range	# of Studies	Percentage
Children (0-13):	20	(21.3%)
Children & Adolescents:	13	(13.8%)
Children & Adults:	4	(4.3%)
Adolescents (14-18):	12	(12.8%)
Adolescents & Adults:	7	(7.4%)
College:	12	(12.8%)
Adults(18+):	26	(27.7%)

Results: Psychological Assessment Frequencies

Articles were further categorized into four groups based on the content: Educational Tests (N=24), Diagnostic/Clinical Tests (N= 25), Personality Tests (N=10), and Other (tests not fitting within the previous three; N=35).

Types of Assessments



Educational:

Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS)
Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (K-ABC)
Diagnostic Achievement Battery
Peabody Individual Achievement Test (PIAT; Markwardt, F.)

Diagnostic/Clinical:

Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children [DISC]
Michigan Assessment-Screening Test/Alcohol-Drug
National Anxiety Disorder Screening Day instrument
National Comorbidity Survey (NCS)

Personality:

Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory - 2 (MMPI-2)
Rorschach
Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)
Draw-A-Person

Other:

Bicultural Ethnic Identity Scale
Historical Loss Associated Symptoms Scale
Historical Loss Scale
Native American College Student Attitude Scale

Recommendations

Overall, these findings suggest the need to continue to establish norms in research with regards to AI/AN populations. Without adequate norms it is difficult to assess functioning with the use of psychological tests available.

- Establish a dialogue on how to address the diversity issues in AI/AN assessment
- Develop a universal database of AI/AN publications
- Build relationships with elders in the community (e.g. tribal council) and/or cultural liaisons
- Use regional standards for psychological assessments
- Conduct community-based participatory research with tribal communities as full partners
- Provide specific information to Native communities about the importance of the standardized research tools
- Develop assessments for clinical/diagnostic measurement that accurately assess psychological disorders within AI/AN communities
- Develop research addressing AI/AN populations for elder assessment
- Examine the policies regarding the accuracy of assessment results and the importance of decisions made