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Source: *American Indian Quarterly*, Spring, 1995, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Spring, 1995), pp. 205-227

Published by: University of Nebraska Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1185168>

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COLLECTIVE DESIGN OF THE FUTURE: STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF TRIBAL VISION STATEMENTS

BY BENJAMIN J. BROOME

For most of the past century, the situation of Native American tribes on this continent has been ignored by the general public. Recently, however, Native American issues have been drawing attention from the popular media in publications such as *Time*, (Gibbs 1991, Goodgame 1985), *Newsweek* (Baker and Reese 1989), *Omni* (Bosveld 1990), *Maclean's* (Brady and Bergman 1991, Came 1989, Fulton 1991, Wood 1991), *Forbes* (Cook 1984 and 1987, Meeks 1989, Schiffrin 1987), *The Wilson Quarterly* (Cornell 1986), and *The Nation* (Hentoff 1990; Johnson 1987). For the most part, this attention has been directed toward the problems that threaten many tribes, such as a low standard of living, the high rates of alcoholism, and diseases such as diabetes, and the subpar educational opportunities of Indian people on many reservations. Of course, in the academic literature these problems and others have been discussed from a variety of perspectives, including economics (Anders 1981, Snipp 1986), organizational theory (Bee 1990), psychiatry (Bromberg and Hutchison 1974), law (Clinebell and Thompson 1978), social work (DuBray 1985), ethnicity (Jarvenpa 1985), education (McQuiston and Brod 1985), politics and government (Farber 1970, Kickingbird 1984, Marule 1984, Ponting and Gibbins 1984), anthropology (Medicine 1981) and communication (Lake 1991, Philipsen 1972).

In addition to their focus on *problems*, both the popular press and the academic literature tend to portray tribes as victims of circumstance, abused by the larger society. The prevailing view seems to be that tribes are incapable of dealing with their own situations. This often leads to the position that responsibility for dealing with these problems lies primarily with the United States government. This attitude often is adopted by tribal members as well, leading to indifference toward the many challenges faced by their tribe. Indeed, at the root of many problems in Indian country is the failure of tribal members to take an active part in their own governance.

At the same time, some tribes have taken the initiative, addressing their many difficulties with systematic planning. Such action has allowed these tribes to take greater control of the future and to improve tribal conditions in spite of the many barriers in their way. In the past six years I have been able to take part in a series of planning and design sessions with tribal leaders and community members in defining and addressing the *system* of issues confronting people in their tribes. Sessions have been held with tribal leaders (Broome and Christakis 1988), the Winnebago tribe (Broome and Cromer 1991), the Memominee tribe, and the Comanche tribe (Broome

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1994). Recently, I was asked to assist with projects that included planning and design sessions with the Apache, Cheyenne & Arapaho, Comanche, and Pawnee tribes of Oklahoma. Not only are these sessions excellent examples of tribal initiative, but their results can inform our understanding of tribal views toward the future. In this article I will describe the process used to conduct these sessions, and I will analyze the results produced by four tribes during one phase of that work.

CONTEXT FOR THE STUDY

During 1991 and 1992, Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO) worked with Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity (OIO) to sponsor a series of workshops for the Apache, Cheyenne & Arapaho, Comanche and Pawnee tribes of Oklahoma. Members participated in sessions on "Designing the Future of the Tribe." The sessions were conducted in each tribal community. The location of the sessions varied depending on available space. Some were held in the tribal building, while others were held in public meeting places such as a local college meeting room or the tribal senior citizens center. For each tribe, the design session ranged from four to six days. The work reported in this article took about two days for each tribe. The average number of participants in each session was fifteen, with a range from ten to eighteen. In addition, a number of observers attended each session, ranging from two to twelve. Participants were selected to represent a variety of ages, educational levels, and incomes. Both tribal officials and community members were included, although more participants were from the community than were elected officials. In each case the mix of men to women was approximately equal.

In work with each tribe, the process moved through three phases: (1) definition of the situation facing the tribe; (2) creation of a "vision statement" of the tribe's future, and (3) development of specific plans for moving toward the tribe's vision. This analysis focuses on phase two, in which each tribe proposed goals for the future and explored how these goals support each other.

PROCESS

Design work was conducted using a system of planning and problem solving referred to as "Interactive Management" (IM). This system of problem solving is described by Broome and Keever (1989), Broome and Chen (1992), Warfield (1976 and 1994) and by Warfield and Cardenas (1994). In an IM session, a group of knowledgeable participants, who represent a variety of perspectives, are brought together to design ways to deal with a situation confronting the group. A facilitation team that is skilled in managing group work guides the participants through the problem-solving and planning

process. A carefully selected set of design methodologies is employed to help groups generate, structure and make choices among ideas. These design methodologies use behaviorally sensitive technologies, including computer assistance, to support the recording, structuring, displaying, and reporting of group work. The physical environment is set up to include extensive visual display space for ideas and structures. Throughout a design session, participants assume all responsibility for content contributions and the facilitation team handles the session's process management. It is assumed that ideas about the design situation are most appropriately supplied by the participants rather than outside "experts," and the participants are relieved of the processual burden so that they can concentrate on the situation at hand.

GROUP METHODOLOGIES

Two of the group methodologies typically used with IM are Nominal Group Technique (NGT) and Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) (see Warfield and Cardenas 1994). NGT allows individual ideas to be pooled and is used in situations in which uncertainty and disagreements exist about the nature of possible ideas. NGT involves five steps:

- (1) A triggering question is presented to participants;
- (2) Participants, working alone, write down their ideas;
- (3) A facilitator records the ideas on butcher-block paper in front of the group. The papers are posted on the walls of the room;
- (4) Participants discuss the ideas to clarify their meaning; and
- (5) Participants vote to select the more important items.

ISM is a computer-assisted methodology that helps a group identify the relationships among ideas and impose order on a complex issue. The ISM software uses mathematical algorithms that minimize the number of queries necessary for exploring relationships among a set of ideas. ISM can be used to develop several types of maps, including *influence structures* ("supports," "aggravates"), *priority structures* ("is more important than," "should be learned before") and *categorizations of ideas* ("belongs in the same category with").

The ISM steps include:

- (1) identifying and clarifying a "relational question" for exploring relationships among a set of ideas (e.g., "Does idea A support idea B?" "Is idea A of higher priority than B?" or "Does idea A belong in the same category with idea B?");
- (2) developing a structural map by using the relational question to explore connections between pairs of ideas (see below);
- (3) displaying and discussing the map; and
- (4) amending the map, if needed.

In step two group participants view questions (generated by the ISM software) on a computer screen projected in front of the room. The questions take the following form: *"Does idea A relate in X manner to idea B?"* Ideas "A" and "B" are from the list developed by the participants during the NGT, and the relationship "X" is the statement identified in step 1 of ISM. The group discusses this relational question, and a vote is taken to determine the group's judgment about the relationship. A "yes" vote is entered in the ISM software by the computer operator if a majority of the participants see a significant relation between the pair of ideas; otherwise a "no" vote is entered. Another pair of ideas is then projected, and this pair is discussed and a vote taken. This process is continued until the relationships between all necessary pairs of ideas have been explored. The ISM software then provides the information for constructing a structural map showing the result of the group's judgments. The length of time required to finish discussion of all necessary pairs of ideas depends on the total number of ideas in the set, but generally the process requires three to eight hours of group deliberation. The number of necessary queries also depends on the total number of ideas in the set, but generally the ISM software is able to infer about 80 percent of the judgments involved in relating the complete set of ideas. The ISM software makes these inferences based on a set of mathematical algorithms developed by Warfield (1976).

DEVELOPING A VISION STATEMENT

During Phase 2 of the design sessions, which required developing a vision statement, participants discussed the tribe's desired future and organized the ideas into an influence map. NGT was used for the idea generation, and ISM was used for the mapping. This triggering question guided the idea generation: *"What are desired goals for the future of the tribe?"* In their response, participants were asked to focus on the *desired* future and to delay concerns about feasibility or means for accomplishing their ideas. Participants also were asked to use phrases like these in stating their ideas: to promote, to encourage, to develop, to enhance, to provide opportunity for, to strengthen.

After the fourth step of the NGT, in which the group discussed the ideas to clarify their meaning, participants selected a subset of these goals to structure during the ISM session. In order to determine this subset, each participant indicated the five goals he or she considered to be of greater importance, relative to the other goals, and ranked these from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important). These selections were collected and summarized. ISM, which asks participants to make collective judgments about the relationship between paired items, was then used to structure this subset of goals according to the following relational question: *"In designing the future for the tribe, would the accomplishment of goal A significantly*

support the accomplishment of goal B?"

The "support" relationship examines the positive influence that goals have on each other and can be interpreted as "helps achieve," "makes it easier to accomplish," "promotes," "increases the likelihood of," or "helps advance." The structuring process allowed the participants to produce an influence map, which showed the group's consensus on how the more important goals positively influence each other. In this case, the influence map represents an "intent structure" for the tribe. After this structure was displayed, participants discussed and amended the map.

RESULTS

COLLECTIVE VISION STATEMENTS FROM INDIVIDUAL TRIBES

The four sessions generated a total of 129 ideas, representing each group's perception of their goals for the future of the tribes. Samples of ideas are included in **Table 1** (see following page). Participants selected seventy-nine of the goal statements during the NGT voting step as being of "greater relative importance," and these were structured using the ISM methodology. The Apaches structured eighteen items, the Cheyennes & Arapahoes structured twenty-four items, the Comanches structured twenty items, and the Pawnees structured eighteen items. "Collective Vision Statements" were developed, depicting the perceived influence among these goals using a relational question of "significantly supports."

Depicted in **Figure 1** is a sample influence map from one of the tribes. The figure is read from left to right, with the goals perceived as having the most influence shown on the left side of the map. Those items marked with a bullet and grouped within a single box are part of a "cycle," meaning that the participants saw them as mutually supportive. Several "walks" can be taken by following various "paths" in the map. To walk a path, one starts on the left side of the map and follows the arrows that represent the line of influence. For example, in the sample Vision Statement, show in Figure 1, one walk can be taken as follows:

1: Item 29, "To involve members in decisions important to tribal government" supports the cycle of Items 1 and 3, "To improve communication" and "To obtain understanding of tribal constitution." The goals in the cycle are mutually supportive.

2: This cycle supports Item 27. "To involve senior citizens in relating culture to younger people." (It also supports item 23, although it is not part of this "walk.")

3: Item 27 supports the large cycle of Items 2, 4, 10, 19, 20, and 22.

**TABLE 1. VISION FIELD
GROUPINGS OF TRIBAL GOAL STATEMENTS (WITH SAMPLE GOALS)**

A Participation and Involvement

- To improve communication between tribal members
- To assure that tribal members can have input
- To promote community involvement

B Ownership

- To promote tribal self-governance
- To involve members in decisions important to tribal government
- To develop a constitution that will be beneficial to members

C Continuation of the People

- To involve young people in tribal affairs
- To keep tribal sovereignty for younger generation
- To build the tribal land base

D Individual Responsibility

- To educate tribal members on the tribal government procedure
- To promote an attitude of service in the best interests of the tribe
- To promote professionalism in service to the tribe

E Preservation of Identity

- To strengthen our tribal language
- To preserve our tribal history and artifacts
- To promote tribal pride

F Quality of Life

- To provide opportunity for jobs
- To ensure adequate health care
- To provide better housing

G Collective Responsibility

- To promote tribal self-sufficiency
- To develop and expand tribal resources
- To run the tribal complex like a business

H Inclusiveness

- To provide services to all tribal members
- To ensure equal access for all services

I Connectedness to Natural Environment

- To enhance the environment
- To promote wise use of our natural resources

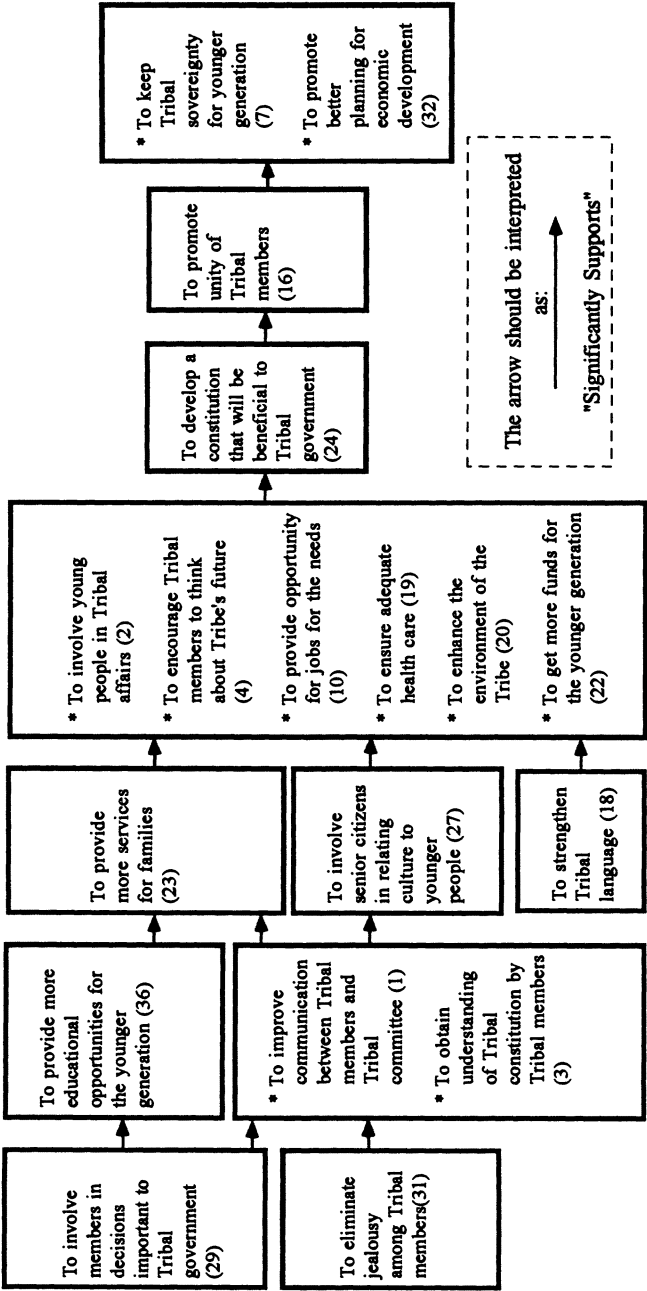
J Relationship

- To promote unity of tribal members
- To resolve conflict between Business Committee & Tribal Council

K Contribution

- To educate federal and state governments in tribal history
- To contribute to national and global issues

Figure 1: Sample Vision Statement



These goals are future oriented, concerned with involving young people in tribal affairs, encouraging tribal members to think about the future, enhancing the environment, and other issues.

4: This cycle supports Item 24, developing a better constitution, which supports Item 16, promoting unity, which supports the cycle that anchors the right side of the map, Items 7 and 32, "To keep tribal sovereignty for the younger generation" and "To promote better planning for economic development."

The perceived positive influence exerted by those goals on the left is propagating; that is, their support propagates along the path from item to item, making the impact of the items on the left greater than it might otherwise appear. By starting with an item on the left side of the map and following its path of influence, one can understand the potential represented by that item, as perceived by the participants. Similarly, by starting with an item on the right side of the map and walking back to the left, one can understand what participants believe needs to be achieved before this goal can be realized. Thus, the goals perceived as providing the greatest support are shown on the left side of the map. The goals on the right side of the map might represent the long-term direction of the tribe. The following general statements can be made in interpreting the sample influence map:

1. A total of four goals lie on the right side of the map. The group's discussion of these goals indicate that they deal with long-term hopes—tribal sovereignty, economic development, unity, and an appropriate constitution. These goals (24, 16, 7, and 32) are influenced by the remaining items on the map.

2. There are three primary paths toward accomplishing the long-term goals. One path follows a line of influence concerned primarily with education, services, and jobs. Along this path are items dealing with educational opportunities (36), services for families (23), and opportunities for jobs (10). A second path follows a line of influence concerned primarily with communication and understanding. Along this path are items dealing with involving members in decisions (29), eliminating jealousy (31), and improving communication (1) and understanding (3). The third path follows a line of influence concerned primarily with culture and identity. Along this path are items dealing with tribal language (18), relating culture to younger people (27), and enhancing the environment (20).

3. The goal that has the potential for influence along all three paths is involving members in decisions (29). This goal influences fifteen of the remaining seventeen goals on the map, or more than 85 percent of the total. Progress made in accomplishing this goal can have significant beneficial effects throughout the system of goals.

STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF VISION STATEMENTS

An examination of the four influence maps revealed similarities and differences both in the goals selected for inclusion in the map and in where these goals were placed on the map. For example, all four tribes included a goal dealing with involvement of the people in decision making. Moreover, all four tribes included this goal on the far left side of their map, indicating their view that it has potential for significant influence on the other goals. Three of the four tribes included a goal related to unity, this goal near the right side of the map, indicating their view that it will take the achievement of other goals to bring this about. On the other hand, while all the tribes included goals related to language and culture, their placement of these goals varied from the far right to nearer the left side of the map.

Additional analysis was necessary to provide a composite picture of the four vision statements. First, a vision field of tribal goals was constructed by organizing the total set of goals into areas of focus. This task was performed by representatives of Americans for Indian Opportunity, using the following relational question: *"In understanding contemporary Tribal values, does goal A share the same area of focus as goal B?"*

This relationship allows the commonality between goals to be explored. In this case, the researchers were seeking to determine categories of goals that addressed similar values. The term "category," as used in this paper, emphasizes commonalities instead of differences. Each category perhaps is better viewed as a "family" of ideas than as a distinct division of ideas. The difference between the two uses of the term category is critical to interpretation of work described in this paper.

The goals were grouped into areas of focus, and names were given to the groupings. There were no predetermined categories, nor was there a predetermined maximum or minimum number of categories. The grouping of these ideas resulted in a "field" of tribal goals, which is depicted in abbreviated format in Table 1. As this table shows, eleven categories emerged from this process, with varying numbers of statements in each category. The largest number of items in a single category was twenty-nine, while two categories contained only three items. Originally, the sequence of categories in the vision field was determined randomly. After the structural analysis described below, this sequence was modified to reflect the influence scores associated with the categories.

This field was then mapped onto each of the vision statements in order to depict each item's area of focus. After this mapping, several influence scores were computed for each of the items contained in the four vision statements. These scores portray various aspects of the degree of influence exhibited by each item. Six influence scores for each item were computed: position score, succedent score, antecedent score, activity score, net score, and influence score. In addition, category scores were computed to determine the effects of each area of focus from Table 1. These influence scores were computed as described in the following paragraphs (see Warfield and

Cardenas 1994):

1. **Position Score:** Each vision statement places goals in stages. A goal in the first (leftmost) stage has the potential to support all the goals to which it connects on the right. It is strategically positioned to provide support. On the other hand, a goal in the last (rightmost) stage has no such power. Its accomplishment depends to a significant degree on support from the left. For these reasons, position is a factor in assessing relative significance of particular goals, and in deciding with what priorities to approach the total goal set. Each goal can be assigned a "position score." Goals in the leftmost stage are assigned the highest score, and those in the rightmost stage are assigned the lowest score. In the individual tribal vision statements, the goals at the right receive a position score of 1, while the position score of goals on the left varies from 9 (Pawnee) to 7 (Apache and Comanche) to 6 (Cheyenne & Arapaho). Intermediate goals in one of the stages between the left and right receive an appropriate position score.

2. **Antecedent and Succedent Score:** While position scores are rough measures, more detailed measures can be found by assigning "antecedent scores" and "succedent scores" to goals. For a given goal, the antecedent score is simply the number of goals lying to the left of that goal which support it. Likewise, the succedent score is the number of the goals to the right of a given goal which it supports.

3. **Activity Score:** The activity score for a given goal is the sum of the antecedent score and the succedent score. This score represents a flow of influence, both received influence and dispensed influence. High activity scores often result when items function as "conduits" through which influence passes.

4. **Net Antecedent/Succedent Score:** This score is found by subtracting the antecedent score from the succedent score for a given goal or category. If the net A/S score is positive, it means that the goal is a net source of support. If the net score is negative, it means that the goal is a net receiver of support.

5. **Influence Score:** The influence score for a goal is found by adding the position score to the net score. This addition gives some weight to position and some weight to the specifics of antecedents and succedents.

6. **Scores for Goal Categories:** Once the individual scores for the goals have been computed, category scores for the different areas of focus can be found by adding the scores of those goals in separate groupings. The average position score for a category is found by dividing the total position score for the category by the number of goals in the maps.

Table 2 shows the composite results of the structural analysis of the four vision statements. Scores in Table 2 are listed for each area of focus from the vision field depicted in Table 1. In addition to the six influence scores, the total number of items in each area of focus is shown, along with the total

TABLE 2. Analysis of Vision Statements/Apache, Cheyenne & Arapaho, Comanche and Pawnee										
Category	Category Title (with total items in Vision Field)	Total Items in influence maps*	Total Position Score	Average Position	Succedent Score	Antecedent Score	Activity Score	Net A/S Score	Influence Score	
A	Participation and Involvement (18)	7 (39%)	45	6.4	107	27	134	80	125	
B	Ownership (7)	6 (86%)	35	5.8	70	26	96	44	79	
C	Continuation of the People (14)	9 (64%)	33	3.7	71	68	139	3	36	
D	Individual Responsibility (8)	3 (38%)	12	4	32	10	42	22	34	
E	Preservation of Identity (20)	17 (85%)	52	3.1	127	175	302	-48	4	
F	Quality of Life (29)	17 (59%)	51	3	130	171	301	-41	10	
G	Collective Responsibility (16)	9 (56%)	26	2.9	68	99	167	-31	5	
H	Inclusiveness (4)	3 (75%)	12	4	27	28	55	-1	11	
I	Connectedness to Natural Environment (3)	2 (67%)	7	3.5	17	15	32	2	9	
J	Relationship (7)	5 (71%)	14	2.8	33	56	89	-23	-9	
K	Contribution (3)	1 (33%)	1	1	0	17	17	-17	-16	

number of items from each area of focus that were voted for inclusion in the influence maps. These numbers are important, since the influence scores included in the table are based on the sum of items in each area of focus.

To interpret the results from this analysis, it is important to use more than a single score, since a category may have a low influence score but a high activity score. The low influence score means that it needs more support than it provides for other goal categories. However, the high activity score means that it is quite active in receiving and dispensing support. Both measures are necessary for a balanced picture. As Table 2 shows, influence scores ranged from a high of 125 to a low of -16. Activity scores ranged from a high of 302 to a low of 17. The following section will discuss more fully these results and other outcomes of the structural analysis.

DISCUSSION

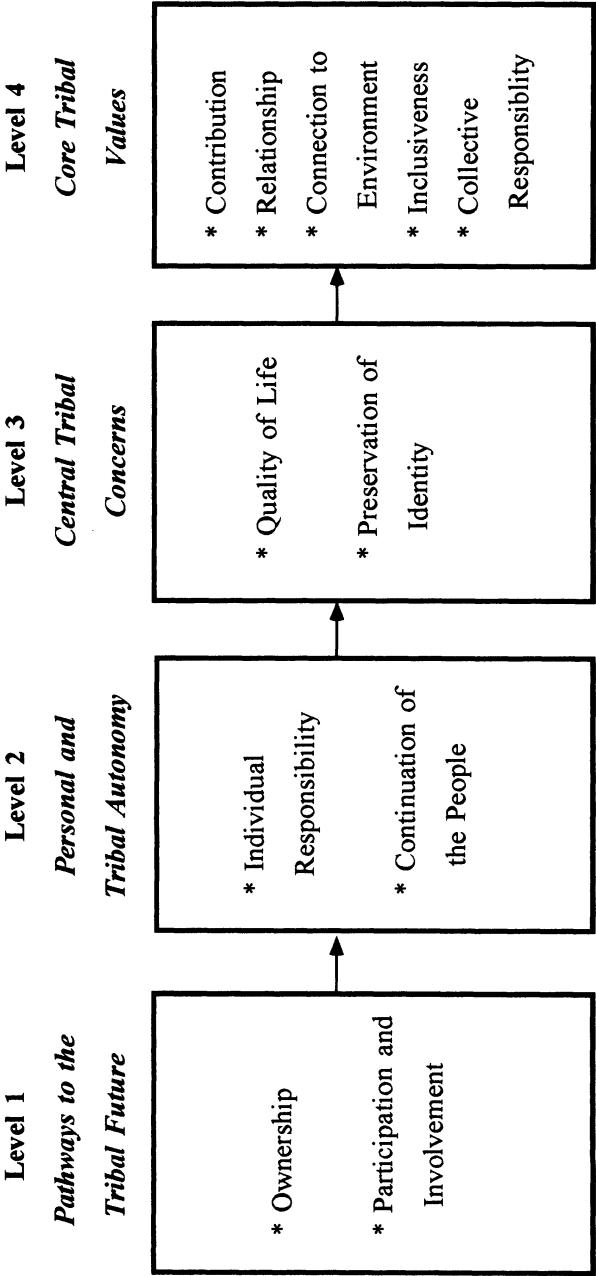
Results from the structural analysis of the goal categories show that categories related to Participation/Involvement and Ownership are perceived to exert the greatest degree of influence on the future of the tribes, while categories concerned with Relationships (tribal and non-tribal) and Contribution (to local, national, and global issues) were seen as highly dependent on the influence of other categories. Categories related to Preservation of Identity and Quality of Life received the highest activity scores. Based on these influence scores and activity scores, a four-level structure emerges.

Figure 2 depicts the four levels of support that emerge from a structural analysis of the tribal vision statements. These levels were formed by considering the scores in Table 2 for the various categories of goals. The category influence scores and activity scores are used to form sets of categories that have a similar degree of overall influence and/or activity. These sets of categories are placed according to their level of support and activity. In general, categories are placed in the same set if their influence scores and activity scores were similar, and sets are differentiated by natural breaks in the pattern of influence scores for the categories. For example, level 1 was formed from categories A and B, which have the highest influence scores. A natural break occurs between categories A and B and those categories that follow, and consequently they form a natural set. Level 2 was formed in a similar manner. The remaining categories were divided into two levels based on both overall influence and activity scores. Level 3 consists of the two categories with the highest activity scores, and level 4 consists of the categories with relatively low influence scores and moderate to low activity scores. The remainder of this section will discuss these results in more detail.

At level 1 are the two areas perceived to have the greatest potential for supporting the accomplishment of their overall set of goals: Participation and Involvement and Ownership. These sets of goals provide the pathways to the tribal future. The goals in these categories are not only strategically positioned to provide support, but their net influence on the total goal set

Figure 2: Levels of Support for Tribal Vision

The items marked with an asterisk are categories from Table 1, Vision Field of Tribal Goals.
The lower level categories support those that lie at higher levels.



is significant. With Participation and Involvement receiving an influence score of 125 and Ownership an influence score of 79, it is likely that the achievement of the goals in these categories will make it significantly easier to accomplish other tribal goals. Likewise, without Participation, Involvement, and Ownership, it is unlikely that efforts to accomplish other goals will succeed.

The positioning of these two categories, relative to the other groupings, is perhaps the most significant statement emerging from the design sessions. In the past 150 years, these aspects of tribal life have been most severely affected by the forced removal of tribes from their traditional lands, by the imposition of external forms of governance, and by the suppression of core values. For these tribes, as well as for most other indigenous peoples of the Americas, participation in tribal governance was a way of life, and people felt ownership in tribal decisions. Once treaties halted the military conflicts between the United States and tribes, federal policies eliminated these pathways for involvement. Administration of tribal affairs was taken over first by the United States military and later by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Only in 1934, when Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act, did tribes assume some control over their own affairs. By that time much of the damage had been done, and only a few tribes (e.g., many of the Pueblos in the Southwest) were able to resurrect traditional forms of governance. For most tribes, that modeled their new constitutions after those used by local city and county governments, the transition to “self-rule” has been marred by internal conflict. As a result, most tribal members are not active in tribal affairs, and the sense of ownership in tribal decisions has been lost. In defining the desired future for their tribes, the Apache, Cheyenne & Arapaho, Comanche, and Pawnee peoples recognize the crucial role of participation, involvement, and ownership, and they acknowledge the critical importance of developing ways to regain these characteristics. The planning and design sessions represent one way of involving participants. If tribes are to achieve their goals for the future, then this type of participation will need to become part of the daily functioning of the tribe, and additional ways will need to be found to promote ownership of plans and policies.

At level 2 fall the areas of Individual Responsibility and Continuation of the People, which concern personal and tribal autonomy. Each is important, and the two are closely linked. Individual Responsibility plays a greater role than its number might suggest. The four tribes proposed only eight goals in this area, and only three of these were selected for inclusion in the map. However, these three goals are moderately positioned to support other goals, their net influence score is positive, and their overall net score is in the medium range. While the indigenous peoples of the Americas exhibit a more collectivist orientation than Euroamerican culture, a great deal of emphasis is placed on individual responsibility to the tribe. The emphasis on individualism is different in kind rather than in degree from western notions of “individualistic” or “independent.” Personal autonomy is nurtured from an early age in tribal society, with a simultaneous emphasis on collective

responsibility. Traditionally, roles were clearly defined for individuals *vis-a-vis* the tribe, and the effective functioning and sometimes the survival of the tribe depended on everyone carrying out the responsibilities associated with his or her role. External pressures have led to a decline in the assumption of individual responsibility to the tribe, and it is common to hear tribal members blame many of their problems on the failure of individuals to perform their “responsibilities as Indians.” The participants in these design sessions recognized the essential function of role expectations, and the positioning of this category of goals in the overall system of influence is testament to its perceived importance.

Continuation of the People contributed a high degree of activity in the influence maps, even though its overall influence score was moderate. While there were only thirteen goals proposed during the sessions, with eight of these selected for structuring, the activity score for this category was 139, indicating that it plays a significant role in giving and receiving support. Indeed, the very existence of tribes in today’s world is a testament to the strength of the tribal spirit. Many of the tribal leaders who signed treaties during the 1860s through the 1880s did so with the recognition that their people eventually would prevail—in spite of the loss of a way of life—as long as young people could be taught Indian values. This category emphasizes young people and their involvement in tribal affairs. For the great majority of Native Americans, concerns about generations to come far outweigh the needs of the present, and such a view is a central part of a vision of the future.

Not only are the two categories important as individual areas of focus, but they are integrated in ways that may be difficult for non-Natives to grasp. Without individuals accepting responsibility for carrying out the obligations of the role, continuation of the people would not be possible. Gaining knowledge and understanding while seeking to serve the tribe is essential if there is to be a future for Indian people. The reverse is equally true. If tribal members uphold the values and carry out their duties, then the continuation of the people is assured. Finally, identities as a person and as a tribal member are tightly coupled with both continuation of the people and individual responsibilities. It is impossible for a tribal person to have a clear sense of self without clear and continuous reference to tribal obligations and the tribal future.

At level 3 are the two areas about which the tribes seem to have the greatest degree of concern, as measured by the total number of goals related to these areas: improving their Quality of Life (twenty-nine goals) and Preservation of Identity as a Tribe (twenty goals). These two areas of focus can be viewed as central concerns. Concerns about improving the quality of life for tribal members are not surprising, since almost any report about conditions on reservations across the United States tells the story of poverty and poor health. Unemployment is as high as 80 percent on many reservations, and most families live below the poverty level. Diabetes and alcoholism are higher than among any other group in the United States, and teen suicide

is triple the national average. Numerous economic development programs have failed to improve life for tribes, and billions of dollars have been wasted in ill-conceived government programs. Improving health care, increasing employment, and providing more educational services are goals that every tribe wants to pursue with vigor.

Tribal members also are deeply concerned about preservation of their identity as Native Americans. As a result of suppression from schools, governments, and churches, many traditions have been lost during the past 150 years, and some of the old ways are not as viable as they were when conditions were different. The ways that have been preserved are under constant attack by the media, surrounding communities, and work environments. Native ways that happen to be viewed positively by non-Indian groups are usually trivialized and all too often misused through commercial exploitation or inappropriate incorporation into educational or religious programs. For young people, there is tremendous pressure to deny their Indianness and conform to the ways of non-Native America. Caught between two worlds, young people often struggle with how to integrate their tribal heritage with the values advocated by white society. As a result, there is a great deal of concern with strengthening tribal language use, preserving tribal history, promoting tribal culture, teaching tribal values, and establishing pride and respect for tribal heritage.

Not only are Quality of Life and Preservation of Identity central concerns for tribal members, but they are closely intertwined. The United States was able to confiscate vast amounts of land during the latter part of the nineteenth century by destroying the tribes' means for maintaining a healthy quality of life. By taking away the sources of food, clothing, shelter, and education, the United States government sought to eliminate the essence of Indianness, hoping that those who weren't killed would soon find themselves "legitimate" members of United States society. The attempt continues to this day to deny tribal members a high quality of life unless they relinquish their Indian identity. On the other side of the coin, many of the problems associated with quality of life are brought about by loss of personal and tribal identity. Many have given up the search for a better life or have turned to self-destructive behaviors such as alcohol abuse because they have ceased to have pride in their heritage and respect for their history.

Thus, the identity and life quality issues have become a cycle, each feeding on the other. At the same time, the fact that they are a cycle means that improvements in one area can support improvements in another. This possibility for an upward cycle holds great potential for a strong tribal future. However, neither Quality of Life nor Preservation of Identity goals can exist in a vacuum. The participants in these design sessions saw both as net receivers of support. This can be interpreted to mean that session participants view their accomplishment as dependent on the achievement of goals that lie to the left on the maps. While they are capable of providing a great deal of support for goals to their right, they need support from goals on the left to make realization possible.

At level 4 are five core tribal values: Collective Responsibility, Inclusiveness, Connectiveness to the Natural Environment, Relationship, and Contribution. These are the goals toward which all others point. Although the overall influence score for each of these five categories was low (or in two cases negative), the categories were represented very differently in the vision maps. For example, the category of Collective Responsibility had sixteen items, and the Relationship category had seven items. The other two categories had a small number of total items (three and four). Additionally, the nine goals included in the maps from the Collective Responsibility category had an activity score of 150, and the five goals from the Relationship category had an activity score of 89. The remaining categories had two of the lowest activity scores (18 and 32).

Four of the five categories at level 4 are strongly related to the set of core cultural values identified in the AIO monograph on tribal governance (Harris and Wasilewski, 1992). They list "being a good relative," "inclusive sharing," "contributing," and "non-coercive leadership" as values that form the core of traditional tribal governance processes. These values are similar to the categories of Relationship, Inclusiveness, Contribution, and Collective Responsibility that emerged from the present analysis. The category that plays the strongest role in the influence maps at this level is Collective Responsibility. The items in this category deal with better planning, more money, self-sufficiency, and professionalism. These areas are seen as tasks that demand input from all the people, rather than as responsibilities of a single individual or a small leadership group. While these goals had a small positive influence score, their net score was negative, with an antecedent score of 82. This means that it will be very difficult to achieve these goals without the support of the goals at lower levels. It is important to point out that Collective Responsibility is complementary with the category Individual Responsibility at level 2. As discussed previously, individuals have a strong obligation to the collective whole, and part of the responsibility of the whole is to nurture strong individuals.

The category of Relationship contains five total goals, most of them concerning tribal unity. In the early part of these sessions, when participants were exploring the problems they face as a tribe, lack of unity was raised again and again, with a great deal of painful discussion of this perceived problem. With an activity score of 89, it is clear that relationship is a central concern, but its net score of -23 and its influence score of -9 places this category as a net receiver of support. With its succedent score of 33, it also is an important provider of support for the overall vision. In their vision statements participants recognized that unity is crucial, but it cannot happen by magic. It is necessary that pathways be developed for participation and ownership, that personal and tribal autonomy be strengthened, that quality of life be improved, and that identity issues be addressed. Otherwise, attempts to promote unity almost certainly will fail. Without the support of deeper levels, efforts to bring people together will be defeated by the negative forces that lie beneath.

The area of Inclusiveness refers to equal distribution of services to tribal members. All four tribes expressed concerns about favoritism and nepotism leaving some people out of services, although only three goals were included in the vision statements. Again the accomplishment of this goal is dependent on the realization of more fundamental goals, as indicated by its net score of -1 and its overall influence score of 11.

An area frequently associated with Native American values, connectiveness to the natural environment, received relatively little attention. Only three goals related to this area were proposed, with two included in the maps. The lack of a strong showing does not necessarily mean that this area is unimportant. While overriding issues may take attention away from environmental concerns, it is possible that concerns in this area are so deeply ingrained that public acknowledgment is unnecessary.

Another area that received little attention is contribution to the larger world community. The participants proposed only three goals dealing with this area, with only one selected for inclusion in the vision statements. This particular goal had a succedent score of 0, signifying that it is perceived as providing no significant support for the other goals. Additionally, its overall influence score was -16, indicating that many other goals need to be pursued before it can be accomplished. This finding may be considered surprising, given the emphasis on sharing and inclusiveness that is characteristic of Indian country. It perhaps is best understood in light of the need for appropriate mechanisms for this sharing. During the previous 150 years, many of the avenues for contributing were taken from the tribes. Contributions to both the tribe and the outside world is dependent on rebuilding appropriate means.

PRACTICAL RESULTS

The people of the Apache, Cheyenne & Arapaho, Comanche, and Pawnee tribes of Oklahoma have been affected in many ways by the design sessions. By participating in the group work, people have become more aware of others' perceptions and of activities within the tribe. Listening to tribal members explicate their views has helped the leadership better understand the needs of the people they serve, and having the opportunity to hear tribal leaders describe their actions has helped the tribal members become more informed citizens. In addition, people have become more involved in tribal affairs. Many people who were not active in tribal affairs became involved in projects, and some decided to run for public office. In general, the design sessions have helped to promote change within the tribes.

Perhaps the most dramatic change occurred among the Pawnees, although it is inappropriate to attribute it solely to the work reported here. For several years the tribe was unable to administer its affairs because of a split between the Chiefs Council and the Tribal Executive Committee. The tribe's constitution requires that decisions by the Executive Committee be approved

by the Chiefs Council, and because of the conflict the tribe was unable to pay for many of its programs. Recently the two groups have been reconciled, and the tribal government is functioning again. The design sessions are seen by many as an important force in bringing about the reconciliation.

The Comanche tribe has been most affected by the design process, because application of the interactive design process started earlier and has continued. Soon after the design sessions, there was a move to revise the tribe's constitution, starting with a grant proposal to apply the process described above in designing the revision. In addition, several participants from the design sessions ran successfully for seats on the business committee, and later one participant ran for tribal chairman. One of the most direct results of the sessions has been the restoration of the community center in Walters, Oklahoma. Abandoned for many years, the participants initiated an effort that brought about its reopening for tribal activities.

Among the Cheyennes & Arapahoes, the design sessions have helped ongoing community work. Although many projects had been started prior to the sessions, the group work helped focus the efforts. In addition, the sessions helped the Tribal Council in its planning.

Only among the Apaches has there been no evident progress on specific projects. While the participants were enthusiastic about the group work, no significant attempts were made to carry activities forward.

It is important to point out that the "benefits" of the design process may not be necessarily "positive" from the standpoint of established leaders. In some cases the participation of tribal members in such sessions can lead to the defeat of the current leadership as people become more aware of tribal workings and more involved in the life of their community.

Participation often brings to light aspects of tribal life that previously were not obvious to the membership, and they often come away with greater impetus to do something about the things they don't like. As one participant put it: "What we've done here is start change, and I hope we are willing to put up with the consequences."

CONCLUSION

While the findings reported in this analysis are a potential contribution to the literature on Native American issues, there are a number of "cautions" that must be issued on the use of these results. First, it must be recognized that the analysis of results in this study is strongly tied to the set of categories of goals developed by Americans for Indian Opportunity. Although these categories were constructed through a systematic process using a tested methodology, there are no applicable statistical measures of reliability for the groupings. Other groups may have developed different categories and may have placed individual items in categories other than those chosen by AIO. On the other hand, there is no adequate predefined set of categories into which these goals could be sorted. Moreover, the categories were constructed before the structural analysis, and so there were no

experimental conditions or hypotheses guiding the research that influenced category development. While it must be acknowledged that this study's conclusions are category dependent, the analysis reflects the participants' perspectives. Although an alternate set of categories might lead to different statements about the participants' perspectives, the current conclusions emerged *ex post facto* from the perceptions of those involved. In future studies, it might be desirable to engage the participants in both the structuring and the categorization processes.

An additional limitation of these results is that the participants in the design sessions were from Plains tribes. While there are significant differences among the Apache, Cheyenne & Arapahoe, Comanche, and Pawnee tribes, there are many similarities in their cultural traditions, and they share a common history of relations with the United States government. In terms of both culture and external relations, all four tribes differ in significant ways from tribes in other geographical regions. Conducting similar design sessions with tribes from other regions might produce different results.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that the results reported in this paper represent only part of the total products from the group's work. The goals and vision statements came from phase 2 of the design sessions. phase 1 produced barrier statements and corresponding problematiques, and phase 3 produced option statements and "profiles" for action plans. The same procedures used to conduct this analysis can be employed to examine the problem maps. Similar methods can be used to study the option profiles. When this additional analysis is completed, it will be possible to compare the findings from all three studies for consistent and divergent themes.

The results reported in this paper were derived from a fundamentally different type of research than is normally conducted among Native American people. First, the research was participant-centered rather than researcher centered. The sessions were scheduled to help participants understand their own situation rather than for the researcher's benefit. Second, the research was contextually embedded in situations that were meaningful for the participants. Rather than giving participants a survey or questionnaire to fill out, participants were engaged in a process in which they were provided opportunity to fully elaborate on the meanings of ideas and perceptions. Third, the research was dialogically based, engaging participants in the co-creation of findings. Both the participants and the researcher were participating in the learning process. Fourth, there was an emphasis on the integrated nature of the outcomes. Relationships between ideas were explored in depth, and consensual maps provided a holistic view of group perceptions. Finally, the results of the analyses were participant-validated. All results were reviewed and amended by the participants to ensure that the findings represented the situation as they saw it.

In conclusion, I would like to note that the methodology used in this research allowed for pursuit of the twin goals of understanding and empowerment. The scientific purpose of this research was shared with a social purpose that sought to improve the lives of the people who participated.

Fortunately, “the epistemic and moral domains are not—nor should they be—mutually exclusive; their interdependence can simultaneously create knowledge and empower individuals and communities” (Tanno 1992:9). Perhaps it is best to end by using the words of a tribal member who participated in his tribe’s design sessions: “I am impressed by all of the things that went on here the last few days. I’ve learned more about the way things are, and I understand more about the way things work now. This is a very exciting time because we have the opportunity with this group to turn the corner and head things a different way. While it will take a lot of work and a lot of time, if we use the right effort and if we persevere we have the chance to make things a lot better for the tribe.”

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The design sessions reported in this paper were organized by Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO), Ladonna Harris (Comanche) President, and Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity (OIO), Iola Hayden (Comanche), Director. The author would like to thank Ladonna Harris and the staff of AIO for their assistance in the analysis of the sessions’ products and for their encouragement to “tell the story” of this work.

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