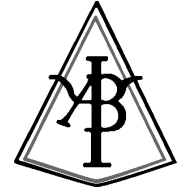


GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH IN ETHNIC MINORITY COMMUNITIES

**COUNCIL OF NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF
ETHNIC MINORITY INTERESTS
(CNPAEMI)**

JANUARY 2000



NHPA



These guidelines are published by the American Psychological Association (APA), but the ideas expressed in this document do not necessarily represent APA position or official policy. Each paper was independently drafted by the presidents (or their designees) of the national minority psychological associations.

PREFACE

There are five national ethnic minority psychological associations:

- Asian American Psychological Association
- Association of Black Psychologists
- National Hispanic Psychological Association
- Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues (Division 45 of the American Psychological Association)
- Society of Indian Psychologists.

The presidents of these associations and the president (or his/her designee) of the American Psychological Association (APA) constitute the Council of National Psychological Associations for the Advancement of Ethnic Minority Interests (CNPAAEMI). The goals of the council are:

- To promote the professional/career development of ethnic/racial minority psychologists,
- To advance multicultural competence of psychologists,
- To promote culturally competent service delivery models of psychological care,

- To increase the recruitment and retention of ethnic/racial minorities in the profession of psychology,
- To liaison and collaborate with other appropriate organizations interested in ethnic/racial minority issues and/or projects, and
- To promote research and understanding using alternative cultural paradigms.

Authorization of CNPAAEMI activities, such as the development of these guidelines, requires unanimous consent of all council members. Indeed, the guidelines were developed in response to critical concern among all of the nation's ethnic minority psychological associations about the cultural appropriateness of the methodology of much of the research in communities of color and the potential negative impact that may result when findings of such studies are used to inform public policy. Consequently, CNPAAEMI developed these guidelines to empower communities of color and to inform not only the nation's social and behavioral researchers, but also major public and private funders of community research and public policy analysts and advocates.

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INTRODUCTION

Prepared by
Lisa Porché-Burke, PhD,
Society for the Psychological Study of
Ethnic Minority Issues (Division 45 of the
American Psychological Association)
(March 1999)



This living document reflects the collective efforts of five major ethnic minority associations: The Society of Indian Psychologists (SIP), the Asian American Psychological Association (AAPA), the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi), the Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues (Division 45) of the American Psychological Association, and the National Hispanic Psychological Association (NHPA). The individual documents that comprise the living document were each designed to reflect research issues relevant to African American, Asian American, Hispanic, and American Indian populations.

These guidelines have been developed in the context of a rapidly changing demographic reality and the recognition that the field of psychology must develop research-based strategies and methodologies that reflect the philosophical tenets of multiculturalism. It is believed, therefore, and reflected in each of the models presented, that as an agent of prosocial change, the culturally competent psychologist carries the responsibility of combating the damaging effects of racism, prejudice, bias, and oppression in all their forms, including all of the methods we use to understand the populations we serve. It is also clearly recognized that psychology has been traditionally defined by and based upon Western, Eurocentric perspectives and assumptions that have governed the way in which research has been both conceptualized and implemented, including the general tendency to ignore the influence and impact of culture on cognition, emotion, and behavior. Thus, the effects of such biases have, at times, been detrimental to the diverse needs of the populations we serve and the public interest and have compromised our ability to accurately understand the people that we serve.

Each of the models of research presented raises a number of conceptual, methodological, and interpretation considerations critical to the implementation of culturally relevant research. Issues related to the historical and sociocultural realities of each of the nation's four major ethnic minority groups are discussed with an emphasis on helping the researcher ask the appropriate questions as research activities are formulated and developed. Communication and language issues are presented and discussed in an effort to assist researchers in developing assessment tools that are useful and effective with the populations to be investigated.

A consistent theme throughout each of the four models relates to the interpretation and dissemination of research findings that are meaningful and relevant to each of the four populations and that reflect an inherent understanding of the racial, cultural, and sociopolitical context within which they exist. These models not only challenge some of the historical notions, traditional methods, and theoretical underpinnings upon which Western psychology was initially predicated, but also offer us a unique opportunity to articulate the profound importance of valuing individual and cultural diversity in the research that we conduct.

CONDUCTING PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH WITH THE ASIAN AMERICAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER POPULATION

INTRODUCTION

The Asian American/Pacific Islander population is now over 10 million persons (almost 4% of the population), is the fastest growing visible racial/ethnic minority in the United States, and is expected to double by the year 2010. In the 1980s alone, the Asian American/Pacific Islander population increased by 108% and is expected to reach 20 million in the year 2020 and 50 million by the year 2050. The three largest groups are Chinese, Filipinos, and Japanese. Significant numbers of Asian Indians, Koreans, Southeast Asians (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, and Hmong), and Pacific Islanders are also included in the Asian American category. The Asian American/Pacific Islander population is not only the fastest growing major ethnic minority group in the United States, but also the most diverse group in terms of cultural background, country of origin, and circumstances for coming to the United States. For example, more than 50 ethnic groups, which may primarily speak one of more than 30 different languages, are included in the Asian American/Pacific Islander category.

ASSUMPTIONS IN CONDUCTING RESEARCH ON ASIAN AMERICANS/PACIFIC ISLANDERS

1. The study of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders is important because: (a) They have important human needs that have gone unrecognized; (b) not much research has been devoted to this population, and the existing research has concentrated primarily on the

Chinese and Japanese; and (c) research on Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders can help to test the generality of theories that have already largely been developed about European Americans.

2. Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders should be studied on various levels—as human beings, as Asians, as particular Asian/Pacific Islander groups (e.g., Chinese, Filipinos, Hawaiians, etc.), and as individuals (e.g., individual differences in level of acculturation, language skills, ethnic identity, etc.).
3. To understand Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders, the examination of minority group experiences (history in the United States, experiences with prejudice and discrimination, etc.) and culture is critical.
4. Appropriate theories, valid assessment tools, internally and externally valid research methodologies should be used with Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders.
5. Research on Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders should include the participation of appropriate Asian American/Pacific Islander investigators or collaborators in order to have points of view from cultural insiders.
6. Investigators are in a better position to conduct research with internal and external validity if they receive training in ethnography, race relations, and Asian American/Pacific Islander research issues.

Prepared by
Stanley Sue, PhD,
and **Derald Wing Sue, PhD,**
Asian American Psychological Association

ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

In using assessments or measures, researchers must take care to address the equivalence of psychological concepts as discussed in cross-cultural research: Translation equivalence, conceptual equivalence, and metric equivalence.

Translation equivalence exists when the descriptors and measures of psychological concepts can be translated well across languages. To test the translation equivalence of a measure that was developed in a particular culture, it is first translated by a bilingual translator to another language, then back-translated from the second language to the first by an independent bilingual translator. The two versions of the measure in the original language are then compared to discern which words or concepts seem to survive the translation procedures, with the assumption that the concepts that survive are translation equivalent. This procedure can be used to discover which psychological concepts appear to be culture-specific or culture-common.

Conceptual equivalence refers to the functional aspect of the construct that serves the same purpose in different cultures, although the specific behavior or thoughts used to measure the construct may be different. For example, one aspect of good decision making in the Western cultures may be typified by an ability to make a personal decision without being unduly influenced by others, whereas good decision making may be understood in Asian cultures as an ability to make a decision that is best for the group. These two different behaviors pertaining to making decisions may be conceptually equivalent.

Metric equivalence refers to the analysis of the same concept and the

same measure across cultures, with the assumptions that the scale of the measure can be directly compared. For example, one may consider whether a score of 100 on a certain personality scale may be a metric equivalent of a score of 100 on the translated version of the same personality scale.

In assessing the characteristics of Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders (as well as other ethnic minority groups), the following procedures are important to keep in mind.

1. See if the test or assessment instrument has been standardized and normed on the particular ethnic minority group of the research participant.
2. If the test has not been standardized and normed on the group, use caution in interpreting the results.
3. Use multiple measures or multi-method procedures to determine if tests provide convergent results.
4. Try to understand the cultural background of the research participant in order to place test results in a proper context.
5. Enlist the aid of consultants who are familiar with the research participants' backgrounds and cultures.
6. Use tests that can be linguistically understood by research participants.
7. If unsure of the validity of tests for a particular ethnic participant, use the findings as hypotheses for further testing rather than as conclusive evidence.

DESIGNING THE RESEARCH STUDY

1. In conceptualizing the research, researchers should use cultural factors and background experi-

ences as a context within which to view Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders. Again, it is wise to have expertise on Asian American/Pacific Islander culture and experiences.

2. Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders show a great deal of heterogeneity, thus, the combining of various Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders groups may be inappropriate. Researchers should be aware of the differences among the various Asian American/Pacific Islander groups (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, etc.). Research conducted with Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders as an aggregate is appropriate if a characteristic under investigation is thought to be common to different Asian American/Pacific Islander groups and the limitations are recognized. For example, if a researcher hypothesized that Asians are more collective than are White Americans, then different Asian groups may be combined.
3. When comparisons are made between Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders and non-Asian American/Pacific Islander groups, differences between the groups are not routinely assumed to reflect deviance or undesirable characteristics among Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders (i.e., a deficit model interpretation).

METHOD

1. It is often difficult to obtain representative samples of Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders for study as an ethnic minority group. Researchers must take care to note the limitations that may be attributed to sampling methodology.

2. The reliability and validity of assessment instruments and measures to be used in a study should be established with Asian American/Pacific Islander groups. In the absence of instrument validation, results should be cautiously interpreted.
3. Instructions and tasks required of research participants should be conveyed in a language that is understandable to them.
4. Researchers should be aware of ethnic response sets or cultural factors that may affect the interpretation of the research task or performance among Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders.

INTERPRETATION AND DISSEMINATION

1. Research results should be cautiously interpreted in view of the cultural backgrounds of Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders.
2. Alternative explanations for the outcome of investigations should be considered, including explanations provided by Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders.
3. In the interpretation of findings, investigators not familiar with Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders should be aware of the literature on Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders and consult with persons who have expertise on this population.
4. Research findings should be disseminated not only to the professional audience but also to the Asian American/Pacific Islander communities through more popular media.

IMPLICATIONS

In the provision of services to Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders, the guidelines established by the American Psychological Association

should be applied (see APA Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs, 1993, Guidelines for providers of psychological services to ethnic, linguistic, and culturally diverse populations. *American Psychologist*, 48,45-48). Interventions should be guided by the outcomes of culturally valid research findings. This means that more research needs to be conducted on Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders. Research on the rates and distribution of mental disorders, stressors, and systems should be studied. Funding sources should be made aware of the importance of Asian American/Pacific Islander research. Research on a small population is often expensive, because of complexities in sampling and recruitment of participants in research. Therefore, sufficient funds should be provided to allow rigorous research to be conducted on Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders.

With respect to training, students and research psychologists should be exposed to research on Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders as well as members of other ethnic minority groups. This can be accomplished by inclusion of literature on Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in higher education course curricula, the development of courses that focus on Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders and other ethnic groups, and exposure to workshops and lecturers who are knowledgeable about Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders. Attempts should be made to recruit and have available Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders as fellow students and colleagues, faculty, clinical and research supervisors, as well as to work with Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders clients and communities.



CONDUCTING RESEARCH WITH PERSONS OF AFRICAN DESCENT*



Prepared by
Linda James Myers, PhD,
Samella Abdullah, PhD,
and **George Leary, MA,**
Association of Black Psychologists

Introduction and Background

At the close of the 20th century in the Westernized world, the value for and appreciation of persons of African descent and their cultural heritage remains most problematic and is yet to be fully informed. One of the most critical issues facing the science and profession of psychology as we enter the second millennium of the West is how to address the cultural, historical, economic, and social factors that influence conceptions of human beingness, features of human functioning, and methods for restoring healthy order to humans throughout the world. Issues of race, which cannot be separated from culture and history, continue to challenge our humanity. Historical records, along with archeological, anthropological, and biogenetic evidence, confirm that Black African people are the mothers and fathers of humanity. The authenticity of African people is related to their sense of being one with the Creator and with the creations of the Creator. Balance in nature and social harmony were the hallmarks of African lifestyles. African people developed and maintained civilizations comprised of complex social and economic systems, which enhanced the perpetuation of moral, ethical, and valued lives within the context of communalism. African people are united through culture, history, language, and psychology. We use the term "persons of African descent" interchangeably with "Black" to emphasize the cultural [African] and historical [i.e., slavery and oppression] roots of being Black [in the United States] because the term has been so extensively identified with race devoid of the contextual factors of culture and history.

The history of people of African descent in America has been harsh. During the enslavement period marking the beginning of the African Holocaust, Africans were severely punished for making efforts to maintain observable aspects of their culture via sacred rites and rituals, language, systems of organization, diet, and health practices. The collective, though a heterogeneous group, continues to suffer from the multigenerational trauma caused by the sustained oppression imposed individually and collectively within the larger social context, which has historically regarded persons of African descent as less than human and

remains one within which the fight for equality of opportunity for the collective is on-going.

This document is for those committed to the health and uplifting of all humankind and promotion of the understanding of African people through constructive approaches to research that will enhance our psychological and general well-being. In order to support an agenda of good science, the following guidelines are offered based on knowledge of the history and experience of African people in America, as well as an understanding of the workings of the American educational, health care, political, economic, and other social institutions and systems. Our aim is to move beyond the current approach to multiculturalism in which poor relations between the "objective" scholar (theorist, researcher/practitioner) and the subject matter (the cultural others) yields the outcome of "I" trying to understand "them" so that "they" can be better served by "us." Our alternative strategy supports that "I" better understand "myself" with all of the diversity markers I inhere and understand their relationship to the social context within which I find myself, so that I can bring to the research setting a human being more fully conscious of her/himself and the meanings she/he assigns to the reality created.

This document is for those committed to the health and upliftment of all humankind and promotion of the understanding of African people throughout the diaspora and continent through constructive approaches to research that will enhance our psychological and general well-being. To support an agenda of good science, the following guidelines are offered based on knowledge of the history and experience of African people in America, as well as an understanding of the workings of the American educational, health care, political, economic, and other social institutions and systems.

GENERAL ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Underlying assumptions

Contrary to the prevailing assumptions in the United States, the interrelatedness and interdependence of popular social, economic, and political positions and the pedantry of psychology and social science research have been well demonstrated. For example, to the extent a society historically condoned the dehumanization of a people, an economic system that supported their enslavement, a political system that granted them no rights, and a health care system that labeled them insane should they try to escape their enslavement, the nature and pervasiveness of the mindset that adopted or participated in any of those positions can be predicted. To the extent vestiges of the underlying assumptions of that mindset continue to be widespread in the society and an integral part of the structure of its institutions, corollary relationships can be charted over time across the generations. Without the increased self-knowledge of those involved, the status quo of disparity is bound to be perpetuated. The subjective nature of consciousness and the social construction of reality provide points of reference which converge across cultural groups, from Western science to Eastern and African psychologies, each making evident the necessity of self-knowledge. Knowledge of self is desirable for the meaningful study of all people and requisite, along with self-disclosure, for the study of persons acknowledging African descent, because of the pervasive nature of the mindset of racism and its impact on Black people.

Demographic context

More than 34 million persons of African descent live in the United States. We are a diverse group. Many of us are the descendants of enslaved

Africans who built America without compensation, subjected to a chattel system of slavery. Some of us came to the United States later, as immigrants from colonized countries throughout the diaspora. Level of assimilation, acculturation, socioeconomic status, access to education, language use, personality, cognitive ability, and survival acuity are some of the many areas in which this heterogeneous group will show variability, as do all human beings. The study of African people is important because a complete understanding of humanity requires it and so many of their needs still go unrecognized. In addition, not much research acknowledging the complexities and incongruent cultural realities has been conducted, and, generally, research has involved theories developed largely on European/European descent populations. While it cannot be assumed that all persons of African descent experience their environment in the same way, outlined below are some of the critical issues to be addressed when conducting research with African people.

Race/ethnicity

People of African descent have been categorized as Negroid, or Black, in terms of race. However the concept of race is very arbitrary and typically hierarchical in application. White racism in America fosters belief in White superiority and a practice of systematic oppression of people of color based primarily on the pigmentation of their skin. The people of African descent having the greatest intensity of color are excessively stereotyped and are often victims of considerable discrimination. This society has historically utilized various rules to legislate racial identification. For example, initially, the "one drop rule" was applied, whereby anyone whose ancestry included Black people could

be identified as Black. Today, such persons might be referred to as biracial. Often, people previously designated by White society as Black were of mixed parentage and conceivably conflicted in their racial identity, as most people would become under the rigors of White supremacy. Members of this group have sometimes been identified by the mainstream society to represent and speak for the African collective, without benefit of experiencing the full richness of the Black experience. By the same token, for other individuals, biracial ancestry may have afforded the opportunity to interrogate more fully and experience more deeply an appreciation of the richness of our Black heritage. Many factors come together to determine race and racial identity. Therefore, research involving race as a variable should be considered in the context of these kinds of historical realities.

Sociocultural factors affecting performance

Issues of race and culture must be considered when examining variables that are potentially sensitive to economic and educational disenfranchisement, such as school performance, academic achievement, measures of cognitive functioning, predictable behavioral outcomes, and other factors. Researchers should be familiar with and sensitive to the dimensions of race, African/African American cultures, cultures of oppression, poverty, and racism.

Communication and language

Researchers should learn to understand and respect the language and communication styles of persons acknowledging African descent. The propensity to regard Ebonics as poor standard English or as an expressive style of communication or as too emotional or as evidence of poor self-control can only be corrected with

increased education and movement beyond a monocultural perspective and awareness. The multiple linguistic styles and languages found among people acknowledging African descent may require that research concepts be translated by a bicultural/bilingual translator. Back-translation by a second expert from the second language to first will help ensure that conceptual constructs serve the same purpose in different cultures.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES, ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES, AND CONSIDERATIONS

A social macrosystem of an alien and hostile nature due to discrimination, prejudice, stereotyping, and, ultimately, racism, leaves persons of African descent empirically and anecdotally misrepresented.

Not including culturally congruent orientations invalidates research. Research must include participation of appropriate culturally grounded African investigators or collaborators in order to substantiate an “insider’s” view.

Pan-Africanism should not be avoided if care has been taken to develop an understanding of the dynamics fostering or decreasing its applicability. Study on various levels—as human beings, as Africans of the continent or of the Diaspora, as well as individual differences (level of acculturation, language skills, ethnic identity)—can be valuable.

Cultural competence in research is established through supervised training and experience. Potential researchers must ask themselves if they truly are culturally competent and must be so validated by a panel of culturally proficient African American researchers. To conduct research with internal and external validity,

researchers must have received training in African psychology, multidimensional transformative learning, enlightened race relations, and other areas of relevance as designated by the Association of Black Psychologists.

RESEARCH DESIGN/QUESTIONS

Several questions should be addressed when conceptualizing a study with persons of African descent: What are the background and experience of the researcher, and what biases does s/he bring to the study? Is the researcher culturally competent? What is the motivation for the research? What is being hypothesized and why? Why are persons of African descent to be used as subjects? What impact is the study going to have on the African descent community? Is the research question/hypothesis culturally relevant, sensitive, and appropriate?

Is there cross-cultural equivalence in the research idea or topic in terms of cultural interpretation? Will there be metric equivalence? In other words will analysis of the same concept and same measure across cultures yield the same assumptions such that the scale of measures can be directly compared with validity (e.g., will a score of 100 on personality measure have the same meaning across cultures)? When conceptualizing the research, will cultural factors and the researcher’s background be taken into consideration, and will an expert in the area or a cultural informant be used?

Cultural sensitivity/appropriateness with measures and instrument selection

The following issues in terms of adequacy of measures and test development must be addressed: What approach to the study is to be used, and is a cultural congruent focus group to be used in item generation

or prototype development? What are the choices of measures, and are some more relevant and/or congruent than others? Has there been standardization of the measures on the population in question? On how many persons of African descent was the test normed, from which groups, from which socioeconomic backgrounds? Has biculturalism been taken into account? Does the test have validity and reliability with subjects of African descent? Should multiple measures or multimethod procedures be used to see if convergent results are provided? Is the cultural background of the subject or client understood well enough to place results in the proper context? Has the aid of consultants, informants, experts been utilized in order to inform the researcher of ethnic response sets or cultural factors that may affect interpretation, as well as the relevance of the topic to the group of targeted subjects and whether there are topics that would be considered off limits? Are the language usage and level appropriate, easily understood, and reasonable in length? Can the instructions be conveyed in an understandable manner?

Subject/participant selection

The following issues should be addressed regarding subject/participant selection: Why African Americans, why these African Americans, how will they benefit from the research? Has the research project passed a local human subjects or institutional review board that has members from the population of focus on it? Is the sample to be representative of the group, community, or all African American people? Will limitations attributed to sampling error be noted? Consider heterogeneity: Combining groups may or may not be inappropriate. Are the issues being examined thought to be characteristic of both

groups? Is the assumption of Pan-Africanism a goal or error? Has the degree of impact of socioeconomic standing, educational background, geographical, racial, and other issues been given proper consideration? If control group designs are to be used, are groups equivalent in all respects? Has sufficient consideration been given to the issue of biculturalism and levels of acculturation to the extent perceptions of environmental stimuli and the processing of those stimuli can be assumed equivalent?

Data analysis, interpretation, and information dissemination

Culturally nonproficient researchers must engage culturally proficient experts in their research to reduce bias to a minimum and assure that the research results are meaningful in racial and cultural context in order to avoid producing additional biased, if not racist, research. Researchers should be mindful of the following questions and issues: Is there a culturally congruent theoretical basis for the research? Does the study have meaningful practical and statistical significance? Has the usage of ANOVA-type analysis been too simplistic? Has use of the null hypothesis been avoided? Is the validity of this research questionable, such that the hypothesis should be used as the basis for future study versus conclusive evidence? In view of diversity of cultural backgrounds, should alternative explanations be considered? Is the researcher familiar with sufficient literature on persons of African descent, particularly literature that is quite congruent culturally but may not be considered mainstream? When drawing comparisons between groups, differences should not routinely be thought to reflect deviance or undesirable characteristics of Africans. Is a deficit model of interpretation being utilized? Have data collection

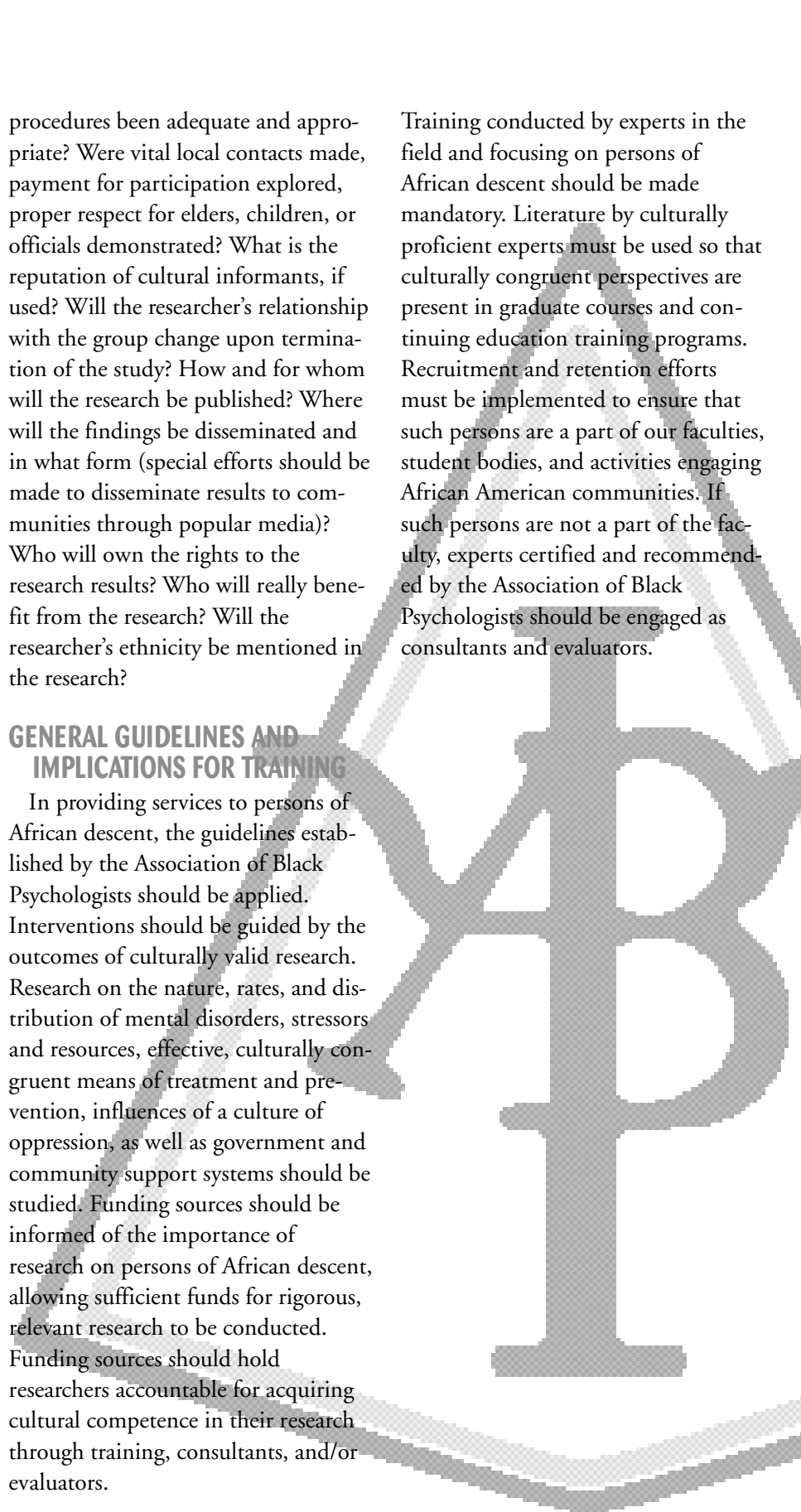
procedures been adequate and appropriate? Were vital local contacts made, payment for participation explored, proper respect for elders, children, or officials demonstrated? What is the reputation of cultural informants, if used? Will the researcher's relationship with the group change upon termination of the study? How and for whom will the research be published? Where will the findings be disseminated and in what form (special efforts should be made to disseminate results to communities through popular media)? Who will own the rights to the research results? Who will really benefit from the research? Will the researcher's ethnicity be mentioned in the research?

GENERAL GUIDELINES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TRAINING

In providing services to persons of African descent, the guidelines established by the Association of Black Psychologists should be applied. Interventions should be guided by the outcomes of culturally valid research. Research on the nature, rates, and distribution of mental disorders, stressors and resources, effective, culturally congruent means of treatment and prevention, influences of a culture of oppression, as well as government and community support systems should be studied. Funding sources should be informed of the importance of research on persons of African descent, allowing sufficient funds for rigorous, relevant research to be conducted. Funding sources should hold researchers accountable for acquiring cultural competence in their research through training, consultants, and/or evaluators.

Adherence to these guidelines will require that training for psychologists and students be improved to ensure cultural competence and proficiency.

Training conducted by experts in the field and focusing on persons of African descent should be made mandatory. Literature by culturally proficient experts must be used so that culturally congruent perspectives are present in graduate courses and continuing education training programs. Recruitment and retention efforts must be implemented to ensure that such persons are a part of our faculties, student bodies, and activities engaging African American communities. If such persons are not a part of the faculty, experts certified and recommended by the Association of Black Psychologists should be engaged as consultants and evaluators.



A MODEL FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH WITH HISPANICS

The logo for the National Hispanic Psychological Association (NHPA) consists of the letters "NHPA" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letters are dark grey with a lighter grey shadow effect, giving it a three-dimensional appearance.

Prepared by
Maryann Santos de Barona, PhD,
and **Andrés Barona, PhD,**
National Hispanic Psychological Association

INTRODUCTION

The Hispanic population in the United States currently exceeds 29 million, representing almost 11% of the U.S. population. Census estimates indicate this rapidly growing group will exceed 31 million by the year 2000 (Dey, 1996). Hispanics represent an extremely heterogeneous group with considerable variability in language use, cognitive ability, academic achievement, access to education, socioeconomic status, temperament, personality, race, and level of acculturation. Despite this diversity across numerous variables, language remains a common thread that holds this large group together. In fact, a report issued by the U.S. Census (1990) indicates that of all the many languages spoken by limited-English proficient groups in the United States, Spanish is spoken by more than 50% of these groups.

UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Although most Hispanics in the United States share a common language, individuals' facility and fluidity with the Spanish language may vary widely. It cannot be assumed that all Hispanic-surnamed individuals are Spanish-speaking or that they consider themselves to be Hispanic. Similarly, it cannot be assumed that non-Hispanic surnamed individuals are not Hispanic and do not speak Spanish.

Furthermore, it cannot be assumed that Hispanics experience their environment in the same manner as non-Hispanics. The manner in which Hispanics experience their environment often depends on whether they perceive themselves as belonging to the minority or the majority group. For example, Hispanics in Chile may experience psychological phenomena

very differently than Chileans in the United States.

METHODOLOGICAL AND SAMPLING ISSUES

In spite of a perception of increased attention to Hispanic issues within the psychological community, numerous methodological and sampling issues continue to be ignored and remain unaddressed. The subsequent brief description of issues is not exhaustive and is simply intended to alert both novice and experienced researchers to the potential pitfalls associated with conducting research with Hispanic populations.

Race/ethnicity. When conducting research with Hispanics, it is important to describe the sample as accurately as possible. For example, with respect to race, Mexican Americans may range from nearly pure Mongoloid, i.e., Indian, to nearly pure Caucasian. Similarly, Puerto Ricans and Cubans may range from nearly pure Negroid to nearly pure Caucasian. However, both of these groups often are described in the research literature as Latino or Hispanic. It also is important to note that in some instances ethnicity or country of origin rather than race may be the variable of interest.

Sociocultural factors affecting performance—issues of poverty and class.

Poverty, social history, and/or previous experiences rather than race or ethnicity, may be better predictors of variables such as academic achievement, cognitive functioning, or a propensity for violence. Therefore, researchers must differentiate between the impact of social economic status (SES), ethnicity/race, or other potential confounding variables on the variables of interest.

Language. It is important to determine the level of language (English/Spanish) that the subjects and researchers possess as well as the required level of fluency (English/Spanish) necessary to participate in or conduct research.

Reading ability/educational background. Hispanics vary widely in their educational backgrounds. It cannot be assumed that any given Hispanic sample will be homogeneous with respect to participants' ability to read English or Spanish. Therefore, researchers should determine both language dominance and reading skills if the research requires paper and pencil tasks. Researchers also should note that Hispanics' ability to communicate verbally in English might not reflect their English or Spanish reading or writing abilities.

Adequacy of measures Many current psychological instruments, ranging from measures of cognitive functioning to personality assessment, lack adequate information about the norming sample used and often grossly underrepresent Hispanics in their standardization sample. Issues of validity and reliability typically are not addressed for Hispanic populations. Researchers should ensure that the measures used have been proven to be reliable and valid for the population under investigation or should establish their efficacy for the use of such measures during their own investigation.

Use of translations/translators. Translated measures must be evaluated to ensure the continued validity of the instrument. Back-translation, which involves having one bilingual individual translate a document and then having a second bilingual individual translate the document back to the original language, should be

used to determine the accuracy of the translated material. Researchers must be confident that item difficulty of the instrument has not been affected and that constructs remain salient across translations. If translators are used, care should be taken to ensure communicative competence and accuracy. Translators should be familiar with psychological terminology and be able to appropriately communicate the strength and power of verbal statements.

Acculturation When conducting research with Hispanics, researchers should be aware of and describe their sample in terms of level of acculturation. For example, second generation New Yorkers may be much more acculturated to the U.S. mainstream than recent agricultural Mexican immigrants may. Any number of variations may apply in terms of level of acculturation.

Beliefs. Belief systems in the Hispanic culture often are associated with socioeconomic class and religion. Researchers are encouraged to begin exploring these important variables and to establish adequate research controls when doing so.

Failure to consider alternative interpretations. Historically, much of the Hispanic research conducted in the United States has been based on ethnocentric perspectives and stereotypes. For example, early research suggested that violence among Hispanics was due to deviant beliefs and values when compared to the normative values of the White middle class. Similarly, alcoholism among Hispanics often has been viewed from a machismo perspective rather than from the multidimensional views applied to White populations.

Communication styles Researchers should familiarize themselves with the various communication styles of Hispanic groups. Research methodology should not be designed to penalize samples for using nonverbal instead of verbal communication techniques or to misinterpret their intent when used.

REQUIRED SKILLS

Researchers must:

1. Be thoroughly grounded in an understanding of various Hispanic cultures;
2. Understand that Hispanics vary widely and that the results obtained from working with one group may not be reflective of the overall Hispanic population;
3. Possess considerable research methodology and research design skills;
4. Ensure that those involved in working with Hispanic subjects have satisfactory Spanish language skills and an understanding of the culture;
5. Be open to alternative hypotheses and not be limited by ethnocentric perspectives;
6. Be open to input from ethnic minorities within and outside their field of expertise to facilitate a Hispanic ethnocentric perspective to the interpretation of the research;
7. Be aware of and respect individuals' rights in maintaining strong, positive ethnic identities; and
8. Be aware of how their own values affect the conduct of research.

In sum, researchers must remember that cross-cultural competence, like any other skill, must be acquired through didactic and supervised experiential training. Researchers lacking adequate training and experience should seek the assistance of Hispanic colleagues or not conduct the research.

Additionally, researchers should be cautioned against assuming that Hispanic graduate student assistants have adequate research training and experience.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TRAINING AND INTERVENTIONS

Students and colleagues often resist efforts to be exposed to the nuances of diverse cultures. Perhaps the most difficult part of training is sensitizing students and colleagues to the need to learn how to conduct sound research with and develop culturally appropriate interventions for minority populations. Given that research with Hispanic populations is methodologically quite complex, it is necessary that students be exposed to research paradigms that incorporate critical ethnic (Hispanic) variables. A minimum of one 3-hour didactic course and a 3-hour experiential course on research and interventions with Hispanics and/or other minority populations should be required of all APA-approved psychology training programs.

A MODEL FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH WITH HISPANICS

Stage One—Conceptualization of the Study

1. Define your population precisely. Define your population by race/ethnicity, country of origin, level of acculturation, educational background, SES, and other salient variables.
2. Determine language ability. Determine levels of receptive and expressive language fluency in English and Spanish and the implications of this information for your study. Will translators be required? Will a translated version of the measures be used? Are adequate versions of the measures available? Does psychometric evidence support their use?

3. Determine level of acculturation.
4. Determine variable(s) of interest. Are the variable(s) salient cross-culturally? Or will the study be generalizable to Hispanics only?

Stage Two—Methods/Procedures

5. Determine appropriate methodology.
6. Determine appropriate measures.
7. Take culturally sensitive steps to ensure access to populations, i.e., address issues of community entry and acceptance.
8. Understand that it may be necessary to begin with descriptive studies and build on them to more sophisticated research designs.
9. Take steps to ensure adequate language abilities of participants and researchers.
10. Ensure that those involved with subjects, i.e., data collection, intervention, and implementation, have the necessary language skills and can interact in a culturally appropriate manner.

Stage Three—Interpretation/Dissemination

11. Request reviews from ethnic and nonethnic minority colleagues.
12. Consider alternative interpretations.
13. Increase the mainstream research outlets for minority research.

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A MODEL FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH WITH AMERICAN AMERICAN INDIAN PARTICIPANTS



Prepared by
Justin D. McDonald, PhD,
Society of American Indian Psychologists
(May 1998)

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This document consists of a model for use by anyone intending to conduct psychological research with American Indian and Alaska Native people. It is intended to apply to both reservation and urban American Indian communities as appropriate. The words and their intentions represent the collective wisdom and experience of many years of hard work by American Indian and cross-culturally competent non-American-Indian psychologists. This model was unanimously ratified by the full membership of the Society of Indian Psychologists at its annual meeting during June 1997 at the Utah State University Campus. This document is intended to be informative in nature and to inform potential researchers of all nations of the kinds of questions, obstacles, challenges, and important issues they must consider prior to engaging in psychological research with American Indian and Alaska Native people. The issues presented here are intended to act as a general model and are neither comprehensive nor entirely applicable to all tribes, clans, and family groups. Individual tribes, clans, family groups, or urban Indian communities may have additional requirements and issues requiring resolution prior to the initiation of such research.

Many important issues are presented as questions. The primary reason for this format is embedded within the notion that if a potential researcher cannot answer the question, that researcher should either: (a) Not conduct the research or (b) involve someone (preferably a local American Indian psychologist) who can provide

the appropriate amount of cross-cultural competency to the project. This model is presented with the intention that responsible and appropriate American Indian and Alaska Native mental health research is desperately needed, is an appropriate precursor toward establishing culturally appropriate treatments and community interventions, and is in the best interest of peoples of all nations.

GENERAL ISSUES FOR ANYONE CONSIDERING CONDUCTING RESEARCH WITH AMERICAN INDIAN PARTICIPANTS

1. American Indians have been misrepresented for 500 years. Take this into account!
2. More than 600 federally and state-recognized tribes exist in America, each with its own distinct oral history, tradition, and culture. Avoidance of unnecessary Pan-Indianism is therefore encouraged.
3. Not including tribal members or any American Indians in the development of the design, methodology, and information dissemination of research involving American Indian participants is a serious affront to those being studied and may very well invalidate any research "findings."
4. Cross-cultural competence in psychology training, research, and treatment is as significant an area of professional expertise as any other (i.e., neuropsychology, pediatric, etc.). Competence is established through supervised training and experience. Prospective non-American Indian mental health researchers must ask themselves if they truly have it.

RESEARCH DESIGN/QUESTION ISSUES, QUESTIONS TO EXPECT, AND COMMENTS

1. Why are you doing research with American Indian subjects? The old lines about the data being good for the population being studied and for the good of the field of psychology and “science,” etc., are no longer good enough. A researcher should have a well-considered answer. For example: “Many people are questioning whether or not there are significant differences between diabetes prevention behaviors of your tribal members and non-tribal members living off the reservation. Having access to this data could allow the tribe to develop diabetes-prevention programs through the Indian Health Service, the State, or other funding agencies. But we won’t know for sure until we have some data resulting from careful, responsible research.”
2. What impact, positive or negative, is your study going to have on this tribe/urban American Indian community? Are there direct benefits or risks, such as funding gain or loss, public relations (PR), or perceptual gains or losses, such as reinforcement of “American Indian” stereotypes?
3. Is the research question/hypothesis culturally relevant, sensitive, and appropriate? If the answer is “I don’t know”—quit, or get a significant American Indian consult. In essence, if the principal investigator of a research project does not know the answer to this question, he or she is not cross-culturally competent enough to conduct the project and should either dis-

continue it or involve others who can help.

METHODOLOGY ISSUES/CONSIDERATIONS

1. *Instrumentation selection* This is a sensitive/controversial topic in Indian Country. In general, one must consider the appropriateness of using psychological tests that lack sufficient standardization on or with American Indians. Specific issues:
 - a. Test development issues
 - (1) Authors: Who were the authors? Were they culturally competent?
 - (2) Item generation: What approach was used? Was an American Indian focus group used in the item-generation or prototype development process?
 - (3) Standardization: On how many American Indian subjects was this test normed? What tribes or urban American Indian communities were represented and from what economic strata? Was subject biculturalism taken into account?
 - b. Psychometrics Which of the following have been statistically determined for using this test with American Indian subjects?
 - (1) Validity (cultural, content, construct, criterion)
 - (2) Reliability (test-retest, internal, alternate forms)
 - c. Cultural sensitivity/appropriateness Some subjects/topics are strictly off-limits or completely irrelevant with some tribes or individuals, while others are acceptable. Is your instrument sufficiently informed by/equipped

with this knowledge?

- d. Language usage/level Is the language usage/level appropriate for use with the proposed subjects? Most instruments are not. Many exhibit reading levels and vocabulary that are either too high or difficult for bilingual speakers.
 - e. Length Is the instrument too long? Most are. If so, you will lose information and subjects. Many investigators make the mistake of abusing their research opportunity by piling on multiple and lengthy instruments. Others are too preoccupied with the mindset that more items and multiple measures will increase variance, statistical robustness, and psychometric power. Although this may be true, it also causes excessively high subject mortality among American Indian subjects, either torpedoing the entire effort or forcing overreliance upon the dangerously small sample size that remains. Two suggestions: (1) Don’t be greedy, and (2) make brevity and conciseness high priorities. For example, if two potential instruments are equally usable, culturally appropriate, etc., select the shorter of the two.
2. *Subjects/participants* Following are issues and questions about the sample to consider prior to conducting the research effort.
 - a. Why American Indians, why these American Indians, and how will we benefit? Potential researchers need to have good, informed, respectful answers to these questions if they wish permission to proceed.

b. Local human subjects committees/institutional review boards: Researchers should secure permission from local tribal or urban American Indian community human subjects committees, tribal councils, cultural committees, tribal college research departments, or another designated agency/group for permission to proceed. Without permission, do not proceed!

c. Sample size issues

(1) How many is “enough?”

Why? Be prepared for small sample sizes, both statistically and logistically. Some tribes and urban American Indian communities only have one or two thousand residents from which to draw a sample.

(2) Researchers should take the small size of the sample into account in data interpretation—use extreme care: It is important to consider that researchers may be dealing with a population, and not a sample. This idea is reinforced by the concept that each tribe is a distinct cultural and ethnic entity.

(3) Sample size: The population is seldom all American Indian people on this continent (although it is conceivable that some Pan-Indian designs might be appropriate—as a rule of thumb, they are not). More commonly, the population in question may indeed consist only of the members of one tribe, and some tribes are small. Therefore, small sample sizes in terms of numbers may actually be high representation in terms of percentage of available subjects

from a given population.

d. Representation: Aside from sample size, how adequately does the sample represent the clan/family group, the tribe/community, and all American Indian people?

(1) “Pan-Indianism”: Is this your goal, or a serious design/methodological/interpretive error? Be informed and have the answer a priori.

(2) SES stratification: To what degree does SES affect your domain of study with these American Indian subjects? Have you considered “class” effects?

(3) Geographical representation (reservation research): Some clans/family groups cluster together in certain areas. Many hold certain values and beliefs that may vary slightly, yet significantly, from that of other clans or family groups within the same tribe. These subtle differences often translate into behavioral differences. How will your study account for these differences or similarities?

(4) Racial issues (i.e., blood quantum): Race is never a valid predictor of anything nonphysiological, particularly cultural and ethnic values and related behaviors. “Traditional” American Indians are of many blood quantum levels. Studies that establish race as a significant independent variable can anticipate a great deal of controversy and interpretive difficulty, given the complexity and sensitivity of this issue.

(5) Control or comparison group designs: If you are using control groups, be sure they are equivalent in all respects to your experimental group. This is difficult to do, for most of the reasons already stated.

(6) Biculturalism/acclimation levels: Study designs must take bicultural competence into account. Reservations and urban American Indian communities are diverse in many ways, most notably in the degree to which their members are culturally knowledgeable and practiced in the value systems, norms, and behaviors of both their native and the majority cultures. The degree of cultural competence in both or either will significantly affect perception of environmental stimuli, subsequent information processing of those stimuli (including all the values, emotions, and beliefs that go along with it), and, ultimately, behavior.

3. *Procedures and related issues*

a. Local contacts are vital. Make sure you use the local talent in collecting data, making contacts, etc., as reputation is everything in American Indian communities. Make sure your confederates/assistants have good contacts because this may affect subject participation.

b. Conduct data collection procedures in an appropriate way.

(1) Respect: Show proper respect to elders, children, physically and mentally handicapped people, and tribal officials.

(2) Payment for participation: Some participants, particularly those more traditional participants, may be insulted by an offer of money for their participation, which they consider a sacred gift. Options: Offer tobacco, food, or other appropriate gifts, or, offer instead to donate money to benefit the community, such as to the local tribal college scholarship fund, etc.

(3) Relationship with the research group: How will your relationship with this group change upon termination of the study? Most outside researchers take the data and are never heard from again. It is advisable to have a plan to return to present your data, put on a “give-away” (or other appropriate ceremony), or do something else to show your appreciation and respect for what has been given to you.

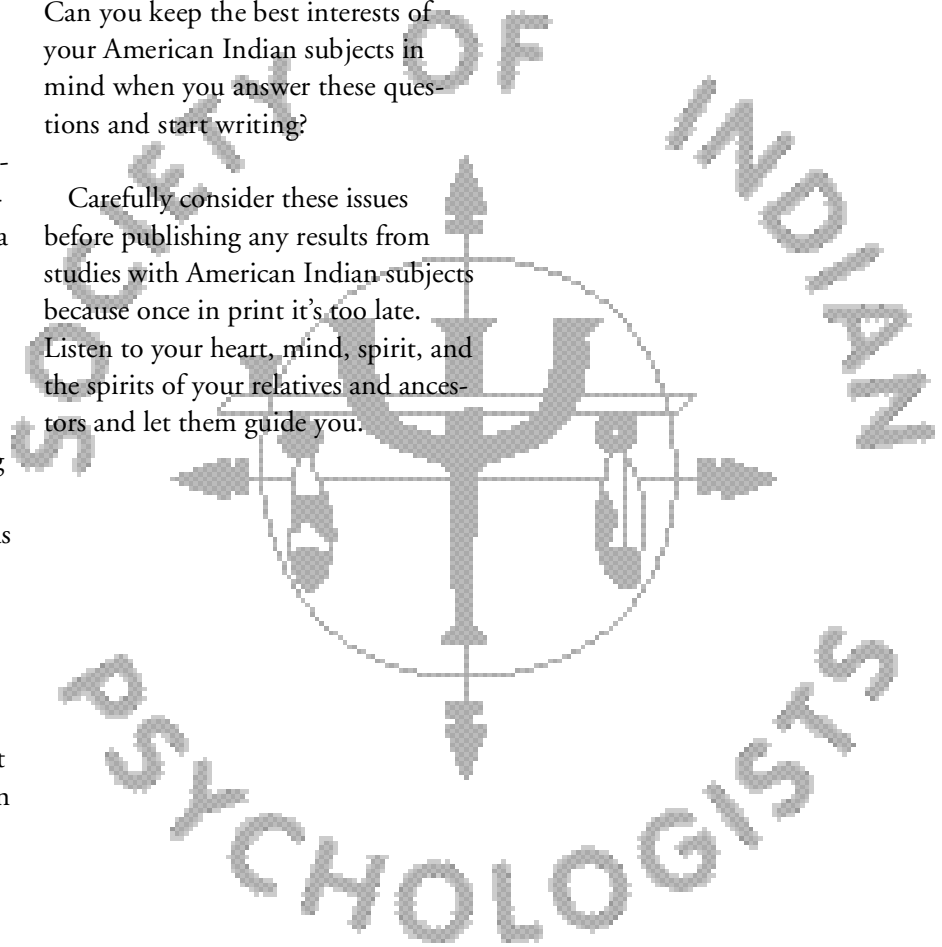
4. *Data analysis.* Are you analyzing your data in meaningful and appropriate ways?
- Take statistical and practical significance issues into account for data derived from American Indian subjects.
 - Avoid simplistic overuse of ANOVA-type analyses. Simple differences between groups, particularly differences between American Indians and non-American Indians, may be meaningless and even harmfully misrepresentative.
 - Theory-based research should be employed whenever possible. This significantly aids statistical analyses and interpretation.
 - The null hypothesis: Do not

reflexively shun the null hypothesis. Sometimes a demonstration of no significant differences can be very important, particularly in cross-cultural study.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Where and in what form will you publish your results? Who is the intended audience? What will you say? Who is really going to benefit, psychology, your subjects, or just you? Can you keep the best interests of your American Indian subjects in mind when you answer these questions and start writing?

Carefully consider these issues before publishing any results from studies with American Indian subjects because once in print it's too late. Listen to your heart, mind, spirit, and the spirits of your relatives and ancestors and let them guide you.



INFORMATION ON THE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATIONS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ETHNIC MINORITY INTERESTS*

AAPA- Asian American Psychological Association



The Asian American Psychological Association was founded in 1971 by Asian mental health professionals in California. AAPA seeks to (1) advance the welfare of Asian Americans by encouraging, assisting, and advocating research on and service to Asian Americans; (2) develop and apply theories of Asian American psychology, mental health, and cross-cultural competence; (3) conduct meetings, issue publications and other educational materials, and inform others of sociopsychological issues facing Asian Americans; and (4) perform other activities to further the advancement of Asian Americans in today's society.

AAPA's purpose is to:

1. Enhance the welfare of the Asian American community through the application and development of psychological theory and practice.
2. Advance psychology as a science.
3. Strengthen the repertoire of skills for those engaging in Asian American psychological research, teaching, clinical service, policy, and theory.
4. Foster professional relationships among psychologists with interests in Asian American psychology.

Gayle Y. Iwamasa, PhD
President, AAPA
University of Indianapolis
1400 E. Hannah Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46227
(317) 788-6141 (Office)
(317) 788-2120 (Fax)
E-Mail: giwamasa@uindy.edu

AAPA Office
3003 North Central Avenue
Suite 103-198
Phoenix, AZ 85012
(480) 230-4257 (Office)

Newsletter—*The Asian American Psychologist*
Contact the AAPA office.

*Year 2000 presidents and newsletter editors are listed.

ABPSI- Association of Black Psychologists



The Association of Black Psychologists was founded in San Francisco in 1968 in response to the need to begin to address the study of human behavior and the mental health of people of African descent from a cultural grounding congruent with the experiences and realities of the people themselves. The Association of Black Psychologists was founded by those African American psychologists who saw the necessity of developing a psychology expanding beyond the monocultural awareness, comprehension, and articulation of Western psychology and its current theories, thus increasing our understanding of human beingness.

The Association of Black Psychologists is an international professional organization whose mission and commitment to advancing psychology as a science, profession, and means to promoting human welfare has been reflected in its 25 year history of publishing the *Journal of Black Psychology* and its on-going, active involvement promoting an improved understanding of humanity and the nature and development of our potentials for human growth in the prevailing sociohistorical context, locally and globally. The association has been in the forefront of exploring and analyzing the interdependence of various institutions within society (e.g., family, educational, legal, religious, and political) and their effect on persons of African descent, and the relationships between those institutions and the social realities they foster. ABPsi is committed to supporting human strength and resilience through the following organizational goals:

1. Enhance the psychological well-being of Black people in America and throughout the world.
2. Promote constructive understanding of Black people through positive approaches to research.

3. Develop an approach to psychology that is consistent with the experience of Black people.
4. Define mental health in consonance with newly established psychological concepts and standards regarding Black people.
5. Develop internal support systems for Black psychologists and students of psychology.
6. Develop policies for local, state, and national decision-making which impact on the mental health of the Black community.
7. Promote values and a life style that support our survival and well-being as a race.
8. Support established Black organizations and aid in the development of new independent Black institutions to enhance our psychological, educational, cultural, and economic situation.

Mawiyah Kambon, PhD

President ABPsi
P.O. Box 1256
Wendell, NC 27591
(919) 231-2109 (Office)
(919) 212-2946 (Fax)

ABPsi Office


P.O. Box 5599
Washington, DC 20040
(202) 722-0808 (Office)
(202) 722-5941 (Fax)

Newsletter—*Psych Discourse*
Editor: Halford H. Fairchild, PhD
E-Mail: E2e4mate@aol.com

Journal—*The Journal of Black Psychology*

Editor-in-Chief:
Ann Kathleen Burlew, PhD
Department of Psychology
Mail Location #376
University of Cincinnati
Cincinnati, OH 45221
(513) 556-5541

NHPA-
National Hispanic
Psychological
Association



At a conference of Hispanic psychologists convened at Lake Arrowhead, CA, in November 1979, jointly sponsored by the Spanish Speaking Mental Health Research Center and the National Institute of Mental Health, it was agreed by those present to constitute the National Hispanic Psychological Association. The bylaws of the association state that its purpose is to:

1. Promote the development and understanding of psychology from the perspective of Hispanic culture, to generate and advance scientific psychological knowledge and foster its effective application for the benefit of the Hispanic populations.
2. Promote training programs that prepare Hispanic psychologists and facilitate cooperation among them.
3. Increase the number of Hispanic psychologists.
4. Promote and support the work of Hispanic psychologists and facilitate cooperation among them.

5. Influence institutional policy at the national, regional, state, and local levels of for the benefit of Hispanics.
6. Promote open communication with members of Hispanic communities at all levels for our mutual education.

Andrés Barona, PhD

President, NHPA
Arizona State University
College of Education
Psychology in Education
P.O. Box 0611
Tempe, AZ 85287
(480) 965-2920 (Office)
(480) 965-0300 (Fax)
E-Mail: barona@asu.edu

Newsletter—*El Boletín*
P.O. Box 85287-0611
Arizona State University
Tempe, AZ 85287
(480) 965-1352 (Office)
(480) 820-7774 (Fax)

DIVISION 45- Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues



The mission of the American Psychological Association is defined as “advancing psychology as a science, profession, and as a means of promoting human welfare.”

The mission of the Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues reflects that of the American Psychological Association. Specifically, the society serves as a means to promote: the development of knowledge and understanding of ethnic minority psychology; the application of psychological principles specific to ethnic minorities; consideration of how social concerns impact ethnic minority populations; and incorporation of the importance of diversity in society. In the spirit of promoting diversity of the human experience, the society, in its policies and practices, will attend to the concerns of ethnic minorities with special sensitivity to gender, sexual orientation, the physically challenged, class, age, and religion. In this society, ethnic minority groups (or people of color) include American American Indian/ Alaskan Natives, Asian Americans/ Pacific Islanders, Black/African Americans, Latina/Latino/Hispanics within the United States.

The purpose of this organization is to:

1. Advance the contributions of psychology as a discipline in the understanding of issues related to people of color through research, including the development of appropriate research paradigms.
2. Promote the education and training of psychologists in matters regarding people of color, including the special issues relevant to the service delivery issues relevant to ethnic minority populations.

3. Inform the general public of research, education and training, and service delivery issues relevant to ethnic minority populations.

Joseph Trimble, PhD

President, Division 45
Center for Cross-Cultural Research
Department of Psychology
Western Washington University
Bellingham, WA 98225-9089
(360) 650-3058 (Office)
(360) 650-6893 (Fax)
E-Mail: trimble@cc.wwu.edu

Newsletter—*Focus*

Editor: Candace M. Fleming, PhD
UCHSC
Psychiatry UNP AO11-13
4455 East 12th Avenue
Denver, CO 80220
(303) 315-9265 (Office)
(303) 315-9577 (Fax)
E-Mail: candace.fleming@uchsc.edu

Journal—*Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology*

Editor-in-Chief:
Lillian Comas-Díaz, PhD
Transcultural Mental Health
Institute
1301 20th Street NW
Suite 711
Washington, DC 20036

SIP-
Society of Indian
Psychologists



The aims and purposes of the Society of Indian Psychologists (SIP) include but are not limited to the operation of a national body organized for nonprofit, charitable, and professional purposes; to provide an organization for American Indian and Native people who are vitally concerned with improving the mental well-being of their people; to create, through an exchange of skill, expertise and experiences, opportunities for career development, positive inter- and intrapersonal relationships, and general personal enhancement of American Indian and Native peoples; to encourage all American Indian and Native people to become involved in improving the quality of their lives.

Carolyn Barcus, EdD

President, SIP
Utah State University
2810 Old Main Hill
Logan, UT 84322-2810
(435) 797-1465 (Office)
(435) 797-1448 (Fax)
E-Mail: cbarcus@coe.usu.edu

Newsletter—*Newsletter of the Society of American Indian Psychologists*

Editor: Patricia Alexandra, PhD

Department of Psychology
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK 74078
(405) 744-7591 (Office)
(405) 744-8067 (Fax)
E-Mail: pat@okstate.edu

APA-
American Psychological
Association



The American Psychological Association (APA), founded in 1892, is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States and is the world's largest association of psychologists. APA's membership includes more than 159,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants, and students, of whom more than 5,000 are persons of color who constitute the largest organized group of behavioral scientists of color in the world. Through its divisions in 52 subfields of psychology and affiliations with 59 state, territorial and Canadian provincial associations, APA works to advance psychology as a science, as a profession, and as a means of promoting human welfare.

Patrick DeLeon, PhD

President, APA
750 First Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20002-4242
(202) 336-5500 (Office)
(202) 336-6090 (Fax)

Henry Tomes, PhD

Executive Director
Public Interest Directorate
750 First Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20002-4242
(202) 336-5500 (Office)
(202) 336-6090 (Fax)

Bertha G. Holliday, PhD

Alberto Figueroa-García, MBA
Staff Liaisons to CNPAAEMI
Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs
(OEMA)
750 First Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20002-4242
(202) 336-6029 (Office)
(202) 336-6040 (Fax)
E-Mail: bholliday@apa.org
afigueroa@apa.org

Newsletter—*The OEMA
Communiqué*

Editors: Alberto Figueroa-García
and Bertha Holliday
See contact information above.



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242