



Creation of community as the "success" factor for Indigenous Tertiary Studies

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Introduction: (Acknowledge elders)

- **Research setting:** Considers "success" influences for Indigenous students who finished an undergraduate business degree only for Indigenous students [BSS(IS)].
- **Research Design:** Ontology; epistemology; theoretical perspective; methodology; methods
- **'Keeping community':** Akin to 'caring for country' & 'planning community'; 4 ways to keep community
- **Creating community:** A complementary community alongside learning and customary community in t.s.
- **Case study samples:** Complementary community formed to finish studies and keep community
- **Conclusion:** Creating complementary community has benefits and implications in tertiary setting



Research Setting:

- **Research Problem:** *“Family business”*: What are the influences that cause Indigenous student to succeed in Tertiary Business studies?”
- **Title/Purpose of course:** Bachelor of Social Science (Indigenous Services) [BSS(IS)]. A generic business degree for Indigenous students. To train students for career pathway with public, private and community-based organisations
- **Location:** Mount Lawley Campus, Edith Cowan University in Western Australia
- **Participants/Stakeholders:** Students; University bodies; Indigenous and Non-Indigenous teaching and support staff; Indigenous community.



Research Design

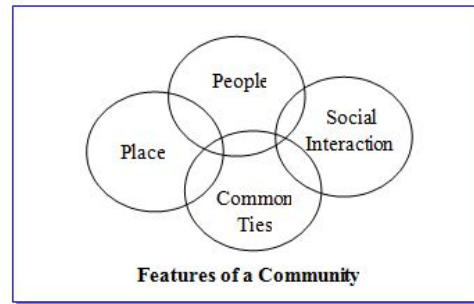
- **Ontology:** Primal realist position
- **Epistemology:** Caretakership
- **Theoretical perspective:** Qualitative, exploratory, phenomenological
- **Methodology:** Ethnographic case study mix with life history in educational setting
- **Methods:** Face to face interviews; semi-structured interviews; coding data by Nvivo software;

'Keeping Community' (1)

(= 'caring for country' & 'planning for country')

Defining Community:

- (i) = people living in a particular place, who share common ties & regularly have social interaction with each other (Hillery, G. A. 1955)
- (ii) = people group who share a set of relationships & operate within defined boundaries, locations and territories (Jary & Jary 1995)
- (iii) = people feel identity and belonging; human scale; Gemeinschaft; culture (Ife, J. 2002)

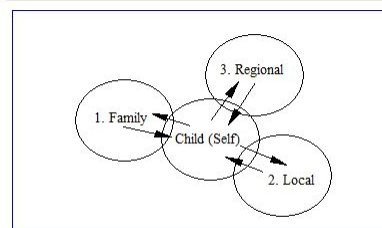
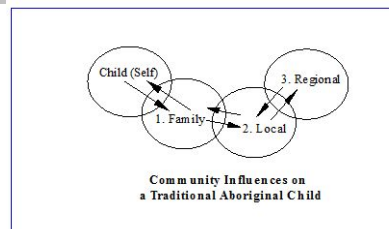


'Keeping Community' (2)

(= Traditional vs contemporary influences)

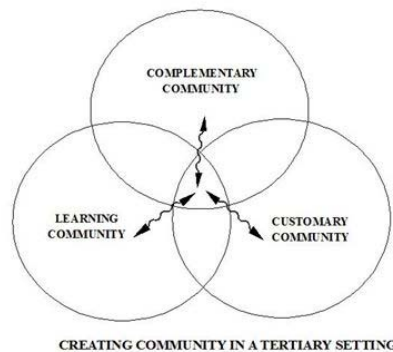
Community Influences on Indigenous Child/Parent:

- (i) *Traditional setting:* Cultural interact between 3 separate communities i.e. family, local and regional (Edwards 1999). Family acts as buffer zone.
- (ii) *Contemporary setting:* Order challenged and reversed due to access to media, internet, videos.



Creating Community (1)

- Indigenous students influenced generally by 2 communities in tertiary setting with reciprocal expectations
- A *complementary community* is created to cope and "succeed".
- A *complementary community* is elastic buffer zone between 2 communities with reciprocal expectations



Creating Community (2)

Values of Customary Community

Values of Customary Community	
<i>Community features</i>	<i>Values</i>
People	Respect eldership authority; Status quo sought;
Place	Sacred and generational attachment to land
Common Ties	Past orientation; Spiritual reality;
Social interaction	Doing business is driven by collectivist safety, certainty, security and continuity of links

Creating Community (3)

Values of Learning Community

Values of Learning Community	
<i>Community features</i>	<i>Values</i>
People	Respect authority of office; Change is desirable
Place	Secular and Mobile attachment to land
Common Ties	Future orientation; Material reality
Social interaction	Individual rights; Doing business is driven by Individualist risk, uncertainty, anxiety and open to discontinuity of links

Creating Community (4)

Values of Complementary Community

Values of Complementary Community			
<i>Community features</i>	<i>Values</i> (= 'it's all right to question'; 'thinking outside the square')		
	<i>Customary Community</i>	<i>Vs</i>	<i>Learning Community</i>
People	respect eldership authority; status quo sought	<i>Vs</i>	respect authority of office; change is desirable
Place	sacred and generational attachment to land	<i>Vs</i>	secular and mobile attachment to land; exploit the land
Common Ties	past orientation; spiritual reality	<i>Vs</i>	future orientation; material reality
Social interaction	kin obligations; doing business is driven by collectivist security, certainty and continuity of links	<i>Vs</i>	individual rights; doing business is driven by Individualist risks, uncertainty and open to discontinuity of links



Case Study Sample

– Customary Community Significance

- *In the community yes I did, I had a [non-indigenous] mentor who's still my mentor and that's __ __. He was at __ doing the Administrator role so he and I became very close because I was Acting President during some very turbulent times and then he moved on to the __ __ __, he's the CEO so you might've seen him on telly, the __ __ and he's still a mentor so he used to support me, he'd occasionally look over assignments and say 'yeh, you're on the right track' and reminding me what an investment I was making in my future financially, staying out of the workforce for 3 years was an investment!*
- A complementary community activated in her previous customary workplace/marketplace; turns into mentor role; good sign of capability to transfer into learning community (of tertiary studies)



Case Study Sample

– Learning Community Significance

- *I just looked up to my peers. Jill (Indigenous) was probably a role model and it was really weird because it was a shift because I was her boss at _ and now she was a Lecturer and I was a student so we had this kind of shift in our roles. Yeh probably looked up to a couple of the lecturers. I know I gave Jack (non-Indigenous) grief but at the same time there was a bit of respect there for him even though I'd get on his case about being a white man teaching Indigenous content. He may not have got the Indigenous content across to me but he got other stuff across to me.*
- Complementary community activated again to cope with change of roles, frustrations, stretching learning of learning community.



Case Study Sample

– Complementary Community Significance

- *I probably lent on peer support because that, as you know, I've had some stuff happen and I became single during that process and I lost my Mum as well so yeh I probably relied on peer support.*
- *Yeh it was. Yeh ___ became like a second mother to me because I didn't have my own and even though there's like 10 years between us, she just took on that role even though she was a friend she filled a bit of a void there and ___ kind of did that as a brother because my brother was very erratic and dysfunctional during my uni years so ___ and ___ did some of that brotherly stuff so yeh I probably relied on my peers more than anybody else.*
- Complementary Community support activated to cope with personal, family issues/trauma whilst living in between customary and learning community.



Conclusion

Success factor for Indigenous Tertiary students? (More than finishing course)

- = creation of a *complementary community*
- Benefits:
 - Akin to family support in various crises
 - Offers buffer zone between *learning & customary community*
 - Friendships can last a lifetime
- Implications:
 - Students study to "keep community"
 - Teachers consider a pedagogy of community; (*customary, complementary, learning*)
 - *Complementary community* becomes "imagined" (real) community during tertiary studies