Cultural values v. Collective efficacy: Robust predictors for reporting victimization?[i]

Julie C. Abril

Abstract

Within the previous decade, much inquiry has focused on the important theoretical construct collective efficacy when attempting to understand reporting crime within heterogeneous urban and suburban populations. Until now, little work has been done to determine if collective efficacy is the most robust predictor for understanding reports of victimization among homogenous rural populations. In the study herein, it was hypothesized that cultural values would be more robust predictors of reporting victimization than collective efficacy within a rural population. Based on Durkheim's (1893) notion that the law reflects the values held most dear to a society and that government services reflect the law, it was then hypothesized that greater satisfaction with tribal services would be positively associated with increased reporting of victimization. Using data from the Southern Ute Indian Community Safety Survey these research questions were explored. Through a variety of analyses, the cultural values measures were found to be slightly more robust predictors of reporting victimization than collective efficacy among the rural population in this study. Using measures that better reflect the values of the group under study may be a more robust method for predicting who reports victimization.

Keywords: reporting victimization / crime, collective efficacy, cultural values, police, court, satisfaction with tribal services

Introduction

When social scientists desire to determine a set of values with which to compare official reports of victimization, determining which set of values to apply to the research population becomes critical to the endeavor. Within the previous decade, much inquiry into the use of measures that make-up the important theoretical construct collective efficacy have been used to help understand crime reporting among a limited number of heterogeneous populations located within urban (Sampson *et al*, 1997 & 2005) and sub-urban (Browning *et al*, 2004; Goudriaan *et al*, 2006) areas as well as within international settings (Earley, 1999). Until recently, however, little work has been done to determine if the collective efficacy construct is the most robust

predictor variable for understanding reports of victimization across various homogenous populations (Davis and Henderson, 2003; Grucia and Herrero, 2007); although there have been some attempts to do so (Yagnik and Teraiya, 1999).

In a similar vein, much rhetoric surrounds reporting victimization occurring in Indian Country. Official government statistics, for example, are fraught with challenges to their validity and reliability (Pepinski, 1980). Other measures used by social scientists to correlate reporting crime with social- and community-level derived theoretical constructs such as collective efficacy and social cohesion may not be applicable to Native American Indian (hereafter, Indian) tribal groups because of their unique cultural-structural characteristics and physical locations within rural areas. In this article, measures of collective efficacy are compared to a unique set of Indian cultural values in an effort to understand which set of values are more aligned with reporting victimization among Indians who reside on a reservation located in the southwestern United States. Additionally, with a variety of methods, tests to measure the associations between reports of satisfaction with tribally-provided services to reports of victimization from members of this Indian tribal group were also conducted.

First, it was hypothesized that Indian cultural values would be more closely aligned and thus enjoy a positive relationship with reporting victimization than those that comprise the collective efficacy construct. That is, those respondents with higher cultural values scores will report more victimization. It was then hypothesized that those tribal group members who reported a higher level of satisfaction with tribally-provided services (such as the police, court and crime victim services) are more likely to report victimization and other types of crime than those who negatively perceive these services. That is, as satisfaction with tribal services increased so too would reports of victimization; again, that another positive relationship existed. These hypotheses were the by-product of Emil Durkheim's (1893) ideas about the law and that services provided by the law would be manifestations of those values held most dear to a society. In the present study, it was then assumed that tribal services would reflect the dearest values of this tribal society.

PREVIOUS WORK

SUICSS

The Southern Ute Indian Community Safety Survey (SUICSS) was a study of crime and violence occurring on and around the Southern Ute Indian reservation, located in rural southwest Colorado, USA. The nearest municipality to the reservation is Durango, Co. The SUICSS consisted of a 72-item questionnaire survey completed by 667 residents of rural Colorado and 85 structured personal interviews conducted with American Indian tribal members. The survey instrument was mailed to adult tribal members (those over the age of 18) whose addresses were obtained from the Southern Ute Tribal Council. A control sample of non-Indians was derived from the La Plata county voter registration list that contained only those adults over the age of 18. The sample contained 312 tribal members and other people who self-identified as Native American Indian as well as 355 non-tribal members who reported membership in varying ethnic groups, with the dominate group being Euro-American based.[iiiii] As tribal services are provided predominantly to tribal members only, in this manuscript only the perceptions of tribal members will be analyzed.

PHDCN

The Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (PHDCN) was a survey of 8,782 residents of 343 "neighborhood clusters" located in the densely-populated urban area of Chicago, Illinois, USA. The PHDCN sought to understand the reasons why geographic concentration of violence and its connection to neighborhood composition are related, as well as to understand which social processes help to mediate or explain this relationship. The basic premise of the researchers was that social and organizational characteristics of the neighborhoods explain the differing crime rates between neighborhoods (Sampson *et al*, 1997).

Measures

Collective Efficacy

Sampson and his colleagues (1997) measured collective efficacy using a ten item Likert-style scale. The ten items are bifurcated into two groups; one measuring community cohesion and the other measuring informal social control. Community cohesion was measured by these five items:

i. *People around here are willing to help their neighbors*;
ii. *This is a 'close knit' community*;
iii. *People in this neighborhood can be trusted*;
iv. *People in this neighborhood generally do not get along with each other*;
v. *People in this neighborhood do not share the same values*.

Informal social control was measured by these five items:

i. *How likely is it that your neighbors could be counted on to do something if children were skipping school and 'hanging out'?*;
ii. *How likely is it that your neighbors could be counted on to do something if children were spray painting graffiti on a local building?*;
iii. *How likely is it that your neighbors would do something if children were showing disrespect to an adult?*;
iv. *How likely is it that your neighbors could be counted on to do something if a fight broke out in front of their house?*;
v. *How likely is it that your neighbors could be counted on to do something if the fire station closest to your home was threatened with budget cuts?*

Native American Indian Cultural Values

Native American Indian cultural values were measured by a ten item Likert-style scale that asked the respondents to assign a predetermined value to ten different cultural values specific to Native American Indians. Respondents had the opportunity to evaluate the seriousness of each violation of cultural values. The possible responses for each violation ranged from 0 – 4, with 0 indicating *neither serious nor not serious*; 1 indicating *not serious;* 2 indicating *a little serious*; 3 indicating *serious;* and, 4 indicating *very serious*. With ten items, there was a possible range of scores from 0 – 40.

The ten values were then divided into two groups; crimes committed by Indians and crimes committed by Non-Indians. The first group measured crimes against Indian cultural values committed by INDIANS. These measures consisted of the following: *Indians selling Indian bones or other Indian cultural artifacts*; *Indians not respecting tribal elders*; *Indians taking natural resources such as plants, rocks, or other sacred items off of the*

reservation; *Indians hunting or fishing on the reservation without a tribal permit*; and, *Indians stealing money from the tribe*.

The second group measured crimes against Indian cultural values by NON-INDIANS. These measures consisted of the following: *non-Indians trespassing onto Indian ceremonial or burial grounds*; *non-Indians buying Indian bones or other Indian cultural artifacts*; *non-Indians hunting or fishing on the reservation without a tribal permit*; *non-Indians taking natural resources such as plants, rocks, or other sacred items off of the reservation*; and, *non-Indians practicing Indian spiritual ceremonies*.

Evaluation of Tribal Services

Satisfaction with tribal services was measured by seven (7) items that asked the respondents to evaluate several of the tribal services offered to community residents. The seven items were as follows: *How satisfied are you with the Southern Ute police department?*; *How satisfied are you with the Southern Ute Tribal Court*?; *How satisfied are you with the Southern Ute Crime Victim Services?*; *How satisfied are you with the Southern Ute Community Action Program (SUCAP)?*; *How satisfied are you with the Southern Ute Tribal Council?*; *How satisfied are you with the Southern Ute per capita payments?*; and, *How satisfied are you with the Southern Ute retirement benefits?* Each item asked the respondents to rate each service with a Likert-style scale ranging from 0 to 4; with 0 indicating *neither satisfied nor dissatisfied / no opinion*; "1" indicating *very dissatisfied*; "2" indicating *dissatisfied*; "3" indicating *satisfied*; and, "4" indicating *very satisfied*. The new combined variable was labeled "SWTS" (Satisfaction with Tribal Services).

The measures were then stratified into two groups to measure *services for crime victims* and *quality of life*. The items used to measure *services for crime victims* were: the police department, the tribal court, and the crime victim services. The items used to measure *quality of life* were: community action program, tribal council, per capita payments, and the retirement benefits. Because many of these services are available only to tribal members, I will focus only on the views of such by the INDIANS in this study's population.

Reports of Victimization

Victimization was measured by asking the respondents to report if they had been victimized in the previous 12 months. The respondents were asked to report if they had been victimized by specific types of crime that included; being threatened with a weapon, slapped or hit, beaten, kicked or bitten, pushed, grabbed or shoved, or raped (i.e., forced to have sexual intercourse). Any positive indication of a report of violence was marked as one report of victimization. The victimization reports were then consolidated into one (1) report per respondent. The measure of victimization then became a binary measure of "0" indicating no victimization and "1" indicating victimization.

Demographic Variables

Ethnicity, age, income, and gender were used as demographic variables in this analysis. ETHNICITY was measured by reports of an Indian identity. Those claiming an Indian identity were identified as INDIAN. All others were classified as NON-INDIAN. AGE was measured by checking a box that indicated the respondent's age in increments of about ten years (such as 17 *or younger*, 18 - 29, 30 - 40, 41 – 50, 51 – 60, and *over* 60). Annual household INCOME was measured by increments of about USD$10,000 from *less than USD$*5,000 to *USD$75,000*. GENDER was measured by the respondent indicating either MALE or FEMALE.

Data Analysis

The first level of analysis included identifying and describing the data. Of the total population sampled (N = 667), only the Indians (n = 312) were used in the remaining tests because it is predominantly only Indians who can participate in many of the services offered by the tribal government. Of the remaining sample respondents, most (n = 186) were female, between the ages of 30 – 40 years, and had annual household incomes that averaged about USD$31,419. The median annual household income for the area surrounding the reservation at the time of the study was around USD$39,313. Out of a total of 123 individual reports of victimization from both the INDIANS and NON-INDIANS from within the larger study, there were 88 reports from the INDIAN sample alone. Table 1 presents the descriptive data from these analyses.

Table I: Descriptive Statistics

Ethnicity and Gender (*N* = 667) Indian *n* = 312 Female *n* = 186 Male *n* = 124			
Age	< 17 yrs - > 60 yrs	Mean / *SD* 30 yrs– 40 yrs / 1.382	
Income	< *USD*$5,000 - > USD$75,000	*USD*$36,460 / USD$23,681†	
Positive Report of Victimization	*n* = 88		
No Report of Victimization	*n* = 224	Mean	*SD*
Cultural Values	0 – 50	41.05	9.007
Collective Efficacy	0 – 50	29.97	6.127
Satisfaction with Tribal Services	0 – 35	13.73	8.061
Quality of Life	0 – 20	8.81	5.204
Crime Victim Services	0 – 15	4.92	4.253
† = Median household income for La Plata County CO, USA at time of study was *USD*$39,313			

Hypothesis Test 1: A Positive Relationship between Cultural Values and Victimization

To test the first research hypothesis, that a positive relationship exists between Indian *cultural values* and *reports of victimization*, two separate ANOVA analyses were initially conducted to assess the variances between the two measures. The first set compared positive *reports of victimization* to *cultural values* (F = 3.738, sig. = .054); whereas the second set compared positive *reports of victimization* to *collective efficacy* (F = .247, sig. = .620). This set of analyses showed *cultural values* to have a somewhat more significant level of variances than collective efficacy when assessed with positive *reports of victimization*; yet still above the standard significance level of < .05. When examining the Levene Statistic, a good test of the equality of variances between samples, *cultural values* and *collective efficacy* were both statistically

significant but *cultural values* showed a smaller population group variance than did *collective efficacy* (Levene Statistic for cultural values = 1.938, sig. = .165 vs. Levene Statistic for collective efficacy = 4.642, sig. = .032). This means there was less variance in responses to *cultural values* than to *collective efficacy*. As a whole, the group responses for *cultural values* were closer, more united than those who reported *collective efficacy* scores, although both were highly significant in the overall tests (sig. < .05).

The second level of testing involved contingency table analyses to measure the degrees of association between *reports of victimization*, *cultural values* and *collective efficacy*. In this test, *cultural values* (X^2= 7.433, sig. = .115, *phi* = .154, sig. = .115) indicated a somewhat stronger association with positive *reports of victimization* than did *collective efficacy* (X^2= 3.638, sig. = .457, *phi* = .108, sig. = .457), although both constructs were not significantly associated with *reports of victimization* in these tests (sig. > .05).

The third level of examination involved conducting simple linear regression analyses to assess the direction and magnitude of the relationship(s) between the independent (*X*) and dependant (*Y*) variables. In these tests, *cultural values* and *collective efficacy* were the independent (*X*) variables and reports of crime were the dependant (*Y*) variable. In a linear regression model that <u>*excluded*</u> demographic variables, each measure was significant but there was a slightly more significant change in Model 1 (*F* = 3.738, *df*1 = 1, *df*2 = 310, sig. = .054) that included *cultural values* than was detected in Model 2 (*F* = .247, *df*1 = 1, *df*2 = 308 sig. = .620), the model that included *collective efficacy*. In Model 3 which included the demographic variables, both *cultural values* and *collective efficacy* resulted in significant positive relationships (sig. = .000). Examination of the β values will tell us the direction of the relationships between the variables. For *cultural values* (β = .058, *t* = 1.933, sig. = .054) we can observe a <u>positive</u> relationship as earlier hypothesized would occur. *Collective efficacy*, however, resulted in a <u>negative</u> relationship (β = -.021, *t* = -.497, sig. = .620). Examination of the squared curvilinear correlation (η^2 or eta^2) will tell us the effect size of these relationships. The formula for the (η^2 or eta^2) calculation for *cultural values* was as follows:

$$\eta^2 = \frac{SS_{between}}{SS_{total}} = \frac{188.823}{23.541.916} = .0080$$

The formula for the (η^2 or eta^2) calculation for *collective efficacy* was as follows:

$$\eta^2 = \frac{SS_{between}}{SS_{total}} = \frac{3.689}{11601.677} = .0003$$

According to Cohen's (1988) suggestion, both effect sizes are rather small (barely approaching .01). In summary, in this first hypothesis test, the research hypothesis of a positive relationship between *cultural values* and *reports of victimization* was supported by the test results. Table 2 presents the results from these initial linear regression models.

Table II: Simple Linear Regression Coefficients

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	*t*	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero order	Partial	Part
1										
Constant	.036	.130	-	.277	.782	-.219	.291			
Cultural Values	.058	.030	.109	1.933	.054	-.001	.117	.109	.109	.109
2										
Constant	.349	.139	-	2.503	.013	.075	.623			
Collective Efficacy	-.021	.042	-.028	-.497	.620	-.103	.061	-.028	-.028	-.028
3										
Constant	.116	.185	-	.629	.531	-.248	.479			
Cultural Values	.059	.031	.108	1.906	.058	-.002	.119	.106	.108	.108
Collective Efficacy	-.026	.042	-.035	-.622	.535	-.108	.056	-.028	-.035	-.035
4										
Constant	.625	.090	-	6.952	.000	.448	.802			
SWTS	.002	.019	.007	.116	.908	-.035	.039	-.016	.007	.006
Age	-.070	.019	-.214	-3.736	.000	-.109	-.034	-.246	-.212	-.208
Income	-2.589	.000	-.138	-2.390	.017	.000	.000	-.189	-.138	.133
Gender	-.032	.052	-.035	-.627	.531	-.134	.069	-.058	-.036	-.035
5										
Constant	.617	.089	-	6.934	.000	.442	.792			
Quality of Life	.006	.022	.016	.288	.775	-.037	.050	-.006	.017	.016
Age	-.071	.019	-.214	-3.737	.000	-.109	-.032	-.246	-.212	-.208
Income	-	.000	-	-	.017	.000	.000	-.189	-.139	-

	2.611		.139	2.406						.134
Gender	-.032	.052	-.035	-.621	.535	-.133	.069	-.058	-.036	-.035
6										
Constant	.635	.087	-	7.283	.000	.464	.807			
Crime Victim Services	-.002	.024	-.006	-.102	.918	-.050	.045	-.014	-.006	-.600
Age	-.070	.019	-.214	-3.734	.000	-.109	-.034	-.246	-.212	-.208
Income	-2.578	.000	-.137	-2.388	.018	.000	.000	-.189	-.138	.133
Gender	-.032	.052	-.032	-.611	.542	-.133	.070	-.058	-.035	-.034
Model 3 included demographic variables: AGE, INCOME, and GENDER										

Hypothesis Test 2: A Positive Relationship between SWTS and Victimization

To test the second research hypothesis, that a positive relationship exists between *satisfaction with tribal services* (SWTS) and *reports of victimization*, ANOVA tests were initially conducted to assess the variances between the two variables. In the first ANOVA test it was found that SWTS were significantly associated with *reporting victimization* (Levene statistic = 4.804, sig. = .000). Moreover, the *quality of life* measures (QUALITY) were also significantly associated with *reporting victimization* (Levene statistic 2.832; sig. = .025), though to a somewhat lesser extent. It should be noted that satisfaction with the *crime victim services* (CVS) were not significantly associated with *reporting victimization* (Levene statistic = 1.812, sig. = .145).[iv] The Levene statistic, which is a good test of the equality of variances between the samples, was significantly different for both SWTS (sig. = .000) and QOL (sig. = .025), with the exception of those that rated the *crime victim services* (CVS) (sig. = .145).

Because these tests indicated a significant association, Chi-square (X^2) tests were evaluated within contingency table analyses. The results for the SWTS (combined variable) were $X^2 = 5.289, df5, sig. = .382, Eta = .130, phi = .130, sig. = .382$. The results for the *quality of life* (QOL) were $X^2 = 2.418, df4, sig. = .659, Eta = .088, phi = .088, sig. = .659$. The results for the *crime victim services* (CVS) were $X^2 = 1.525, df3, sig. =$

$.677, Eta = .070, phi = .070, sig. = .677.$ There were no significant relationships were uncovered at this level of analyses.

The third level of analyses consisted of constructing simple linear regression models to assess the direction and magnitude of the relationships between the independent (*X*) and dependent (*Y*) variables. In these tests, SWTS, QOL, and CVS were the X and the reports of victimization were the Y. For these models, the variables were *satisfaction with tribal services* (SWTS), *crime victim services* (CVS), *quality of life* (QOL), and three demographic variables: AGE, INCOME and GENDER. These measures were placed together in the regression models with *reports of victimization*. It was found that higher satisfaction with *crime victim services* (CVS) (sig. = .000) and better perceptions of *quality of life* (QUALITY) (sig. = .000) were significantly associated with more *reports of victimization*. Furthermore, these tests revealed that as AGE and INCOME increased, there were a slightly higher number of *reports of victimization* (sig. < .05).

Examination of the β values will tell us the direction of the relationships between the variables. Model 4 showed that as AGE (β = -.070, *t* = -3.736, sig. = .000) and INCOME (β = -2.589, *t* = -2.390, sig. = .017) decreased, SWTS increased (β = .002, *t* = .116, sig. = .908). Model 5 also showed that as AGE (β = -.071, *t* = -3.737, sig. = .000) and INCOME (β = -2.611, *t* = -2.406, sig. = .017) decreased, satisfaction with the *quality of life* (QOL) efforts increased (β = .006, *t* = .288, sig. = .775). Finally, Model 6 showed that as AGE (β = -.070, *t* = -3.734, sig. = .000) and INCOME (β = -2.578, *t* = -2.388, sig. = .018) decreased, satisfaction with *crime victim services* (CVS) decreased as well (β = -.002, *t* = -.102, sig. = .918). Examination of the squared curvilinear correlation (η^2 *or* eta^2) will reveal the effect sizes of these relationships.
The formula for the (η^2 or eta^2) calculation for *satisfaction with tribal services* (SWTS) was as follows:

$$\eta^2 = \frac{SS_{between}}{SS_{total}} = \frac{.015}{63.179} = .0002$$

The formula for the (η^2 or eta^2) calculation for *quality of life* (QOL) was as follows:

$$\eta^2 = \frac{SS_{between}}{SS_{total}} = \frac{4.965}{61.429} = .0808$$

The formula for the (η^2 or eta^2) calculation for *crime victim services* (CVS) was as follows:

$$\eta^2 = \frac{SS_{between}}{SS_{total}} = \frac{4.952}{61.429} = .0806$$

According to Cohen's (1988) suggestion, the effect size for SWTS is rather small (barely approaching .01); whereas the effect sizes for both QOL and CVS were slightly above medium, surpassing the approximation of .06. In summary, in this second hypothesis test, the research hypothesis of a positive relationship between *satisfaction with tribal services*, *quality of life*, *crime victim services*, and *reports of victimization* was supported by the test results. Refer back to Table 2 for the results of these regression analyses.

Findings

Using multiple types of quantitative analyses, it was determined that the *cultural values* measures taken together were a slightly more robust predictor of reporting victimization among this rural population than were the collective efficacy measures. In this study of reports of individual violent victimization, it was found that those individuals who reported a higher level of satisfaction with tribal criminal justice services and greater satisfaction with the tribal government's efforts to improve the quality of life on the reservation were more likely to report crime and victimization than those who negatively perceived the tribal services and the reservation lifestyle available to them. Moreover, as the study participants aged and their incomes grew, they became more satisfied with the tribal services and were more likely to report crime and victimization. These findings suggest that it may be more beneficial for receiving accurate reports of victimization and crime if common misperceptions of the tribal criminal justice system were improved among the Native population.

Discussion

These findings are important because efforts to strengthen Native American Indian cultural values via federal mandates (including efforts to improve tribal criminal justice systems see *e.g.*, 42 U.S.C. Chapter 26, *Justice System Improvement*) to specific and/or targeted tribal groups may be more effective in reducing violent victimization (which may also result in increased reporting of victimization) within this population than would be efforts that only address the problem of under-reporting via generalizable, yet non-specific notions of community. Tribal groups have a vested interest in strengthening the perceptions of their services among their general membership. Because Indians centered on their own cultural values, it was thought they might then be more supportive of the services offered by their government. This idea is supported by the theoretical construct that posits shared community values might promote greater civic participation such that might include reporting victimization and other crime (Costa and Kahn, 2003). As tribal groups are vastly different in structure and function than those from which ideas about collective efficacy were derived, targeted policies to improve crime reporting that address their unique cultural characteristics may be more effective for indigenous tribal groups than in other groups.

Conclusion

Alternative methods than those provided to Euro-American community members for increasing crime reporting by ethnic minority group members may require intensive focused strategies such as increased efforts by the police to represent the communities in which they work. Other policies might include open public sessions with those who are younger and have lower incomes to become more aware of the benefits of accessing, and in doing so, reporting crime or victimization they might experience. Certainly, methods used by mainstream social scientists to correlate phenomena occurring among Native American Indian groups may need to be better aligned with the characteristics found in these ethnic groups. Using measures that better reflect the values of the group under study may prove to be a more robust method for predicting who in said group reports victimization.

Endnotes

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and opinions expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Department of Justice.

[ii] In this report, Euro-American is denoted generally as being non-Indian.

[iii] For a complete discussion of the methodology used to gather the original data, see Abril, J.C. (2009). Crime and Violence In a Native American Indian Reservation: A Criminological Study of the Southern Ute Indians. Forward by Gilbert Geis, Past President American Society of Criminology. VDM Publishing House: Mauritius.

[iv] Many Indian respondents reported that they were unfamiliar with the *crime victim services* (CVS) offered by the tribe. This fact might account for at least part of the lack of association or at least in the reduced number of responses to this item.

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42 U.S.C. Chapter 26, *Justice System Improvement.* United States Code.

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About the author

Julie C. Abril, Ph.D, is an Independent Social Scientist Durango, Colorado USA. She can be reached at Julie.Abril@yahoo.com