Evaluation of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe
Tribal Employment Program

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Introduction to Research Topic

This study is a formative evaluation of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Tribal Employment Program. The State of Minnesota contracted with the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) and four other Indian reservations to provide employment services to American Indians who are receiving services from the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP). The purpose of the MCT Tribal Employment Program is to provide services that would address the multi-barriers to employment that American Indians face and that would provide them with skills and knowledge as well as increase self-esteem and led to self-sufficiency. Some of these barriers are discrimination, availability of child support, housing, access to transportation, lack of work experience and lack of education. The MCT Tribal Employment Program as well as the other tribal programs hires employment counselors to provide MFIP participants with client assessment, vocation training, counseling, referral and job coaching as well as providing financial support. Financial support, or supportive services as it is referred to, funds the purchase of clothing for work and/or interviews and may also be used to pay for rent, utilities, car repair, telephone hook-up and transportation. The Human Services Subcommittee of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, the Human Services Manager and the Program Coordinator of the Tribal Employment Program, as well as the job counselors, will use this information to evaluate its program. This assessment would allow the MCT to gain valuable information on what services were beneficial to the participant and what improvements can be made.

This study includes a literature review that defines what poverty is and contains information on current legislative policy. The research describes government programs designed to alleviate poverty and illustrates in detail the Minnesota Family Investment Program and how it
is implemented in the state of Minnesota. The concept and implementation of federal programs for American Indians are also examined. The literature review also explores employment services programs and the role they play in providing assistance to MFIP participants.

**Literature Review**

*Welfare Reform.* In response to a new comprehensive plan to overhaul the nation’s welfare system, The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) was signed into law on August 22, 1996. PRWORA eliminated poor families’ federal entitlement to public assistance and imposed strict employment and training requirements (Anderson & Gryzlak, 2002). This Act created the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) which replaced Aid to Families with Dependant Children (AFDC). TANF gave the states authority to develop programs that would promote work, responsibility, self-sufficiency and strengthen families (Administration for Children and Families, 2003).

In order to fulfill the new TANF guidelines, the State of Minnesota on January 1, 1998, implemented the Minnesota Family Investment Program. The goals of MFIP were to increase employment and earnings, decrease dependency on welfare, and reduce poverty. MFIP includes financial incentives to support work and mandatory participation in an employment services program (Welfare Information Network, 2003). The employment services program is designed to encourage recipient participants to work while assisting them with childcare, medical assistance and food stamps. Minnesota required participants’ mandatory employment, which means they must be working or actively seeking work, unless they are exempt in doing so. For those participants who do not comply with work requirements they could be sanctioned, which would result in a reduction of their cash grant. There is a 60-month lifetime limit for receiving
money through MFIP, and there is no safety net for those participants who have already left MFIP (Institute on Race & Poverty, 2003).

Poverty. Poverty is a major concern in this country. Poverty can be defined as the lack of goods and services needed for an “adequate” standard of living. However, there is no universal standard definition for adequacy when defining individual or basic family needs (Levitan, 1985). The U.S. Census determines poverty according to earned income. According to reports by the U.S. Census approximately 34.6 million people were living in poverty in 2002 compared to 32.9 million in 2001, that is a difference of 1.7 million people. As defined by the Office of Management and Budget and updated for inflation using the Consumer Price Index, the average poverty threshold for a family of four is 2002 was $18,392 in annual income; $14,348 for a family of three and $11,756 for a family of two. The poorest of the poor are children under the age of 18 with a poverty rate of 16.7% in 2002, compared to adults (10.6%) and people over the age of 65 (10.4%) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003).

In 1999, about 26% of American Indians lived in poverty, compared to 13% for the United States as a whole and 8% of white Americans. American Indian men and women were roughly twice as likely as whites to be unemployed. American Indians are over-represented among the high need population in other areas. While American Indians represent less than 2% of the U.S. population, they constitute 8% of Americans who are homeless; the rate of violent victimization is more than twice the national average; and suicide is 1.5 times the national average (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001).

In Minnesota, compared to statistics for other racial groups, American Indians have a higher ratio of members in need of public assistance versus their total statewide population (The Minnesota Tribal Welfare Reform Task Force, 1999). They make up one percent of the
population in Minnesota but represent 9 percent of all MFIP recipients (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2003). American Indian recipients also have one of the longest welfare histories, averaging 51 months per case. After looking at all the people receiving MFIP assistance in January 1998, 55% of all American Indians were still receiving MFIP in May 2000. Only 35% of white participants were still receiving assistance, averaging 33 months per case. Other minority groups, such as blacks (34%), average 47 months (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2003).

Programs to address poverty. Much has been written about poverty, the causes of poverty and how to alleviate poverty. One way the government addressed poverty during the Reagan Administration in the 1980’s was by creating employment and training programs. These programs were designed to address the needs of many different groups of individual. Some of these individuals are unemployed due to lack of skills; others are qualified and skilled to work but unable to find work that matches their skill; there are some who are so discouraged from failure to find work that they stop looking; and another group are the working poor. Finally, there are those working part-time who need full time employment to lift them out of poverty. To help these individuals the federal government has sponsored a number of employment and training programs responding to their various employment needs. Some of these efforts included:

1. Outreach to identify the untrained and unmotivated as well as intake and assessment to evaluate their needs and abilities;
2. Adult basic education to remedy the absence or obsolescence of earlier schooling;
3. Vocational orientation to expose those of limited experience to alternative occupation choices;
4. Residential facilities for those who live in sparsely populated areas or who live in a debilitating environment that would adversely affect attempts to overcome their disadvantages;

5. Work experience for those unaccustomed to the discipline of the work place;

6. Job development and subsidized private employment;

7. Job placement and labor market information services; and

8. Supportive services – such as medical aid and child care centers for mothers with small children—for those who need assistance to facilitate entry into the labor market or to resume work (Levitan, 1985).

Few employment service programs offer all of these services and not all are targeted at the poor. Some programs focus on education and training; others focus on work experience; and still others try to match job seekers with potential employers. There is little evaluation research done focused specifically on employment service programs. However, there is some research that shows that when states offer a flexible, variety of services tailored to the needs of individuals that the chances of success are significantly increased (Rodgers, 2003).

Employment service providers vary throughout the state and include the Minnesota Workforce Centers, community action agencies, educational agencies, county agencies, non-profits and tribal employment providers. These providers also provide career and job counseling; resume writing; interview preparation; financial support and incentives; and assistance with job searches. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) reported from July 1, 2000 to June 30, 2002, that the number of MFIP recipients that received employment services grew from 49,500 to 57,100. The report also stated that the percentage of participants who left the employment services program with jobs decreased in those three years.
from 45% to 40% (Minnesota Workforce Center, 2003). This trend shows that the number of MFIP participants in need of employment services is rising and they are in need of assistance to improve their chances of getting off public assistance. However, it also shows the difficulty of finding and keeping jobs because the number of people leaving assistance with jobs decreased. Participants remain eligible for employment services until they earn up to 120% of the poverty level. In Minnesota, according to the 2000 U.S. poverty rates, twenty-six percent of American Indians were living below the federal poverty level. This can be compared to 22% of blacks and 8% of white (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2003).

Employment programs for American Indians. Federal programs have also addressed the special needs of the American Indian population. These programs provide a wide range of goods and services as well as income and employment for American Indians living on or near Indian reservations where the highest incidence of poverty exists in the United States. Because the federal government considers American Indians to be wards of the state, they have exerted more control over American Indians living on Indian reservations than any other citizen. Lacking significant private resources or economic development, American Indians on reservations must depend on federal support for essential goods and services. The absence of universal entitlement is a serious issue harming the well being of many American Indians. Historically, American Indian’s entitlement to federally funded health and social services was derived from early treaty negotiations between Indian tribes and the federal government. Many American Indians tribes traded their land for the right to government assistance or aid. The loss of entitlement is not seen simply as a loss of goods and services, but as a loss of community and loss of social support, which sustain people emotionally, as well as materially in difficult times. Human service
providers often attribute the high rate of alcohol and drug abuse, as well as high suicide rates and
despair, to loss of identity (Kramer, 1995).

The Minnesota Tribal Welfare Reform Task Force (Tribal Task Force) discovered that
American Indians face multiple barriers to reducing their dependency on public assistance. The
Tribal Task Force was created in 1996 in response to the dramatic changes made to welfare
reform. This Task Force is comprised of state officials, representatives from tribal employment
programs, and other interested parties. The Tribal Task Force initiated a report to address the
problems that American Indians on public assistance face. Some of these environmental
challenges are:

- High rates of poverty and low health status of Tribal member.
- Discrimination against American Indians in job markets in or near areas with substantial
  American Indian population.
- Lack of economic opportunity on or near reservations.
- Inadequate funding to develop basic infrastructure such as housing, public transportation,
  utilities, education, and training.
- Decades of Federal policies of paternalism in which Tribal governments were
  inappropriately deprived of the opportunity to fully control all federal spending on behalf
  of Tribal members and to determine what was appropriate for their needs.

The purpose of the Tribal Task Force is to maintain a partnership with the state to ensure that
American Indian issues are being addressed by the public assistance system. They wrote in their
report to the Minnesota legislator:

"Per Capita, the American Indian population today has the highest rate of
poverty, while at the same time, the least amount of individual economic
opportunities and the poorest standard of living than any other population in the State. The unmet need of the American Indian population as a whole is staggering when compared to other populations" (The Minnesota Tribal Welfare Reform Task Force, 1999).

Program design, funding resources and personnel are generally not able to meet these needs as well as the personal needs of families suffering from chemical dependency, mental health issues and domestic violence (Wilder Research Center, 2003). The percentage of American Indian families who have exemptions for family violence was 5.8% compared to 4.1% for blacks and 3.8 for whites. It is reported that mental health problems affect 48% of American Indians on MFIP (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2003).

*MCT Tribal Employment Program.* The focus of this report will be on the MCT Tribal Employment Program and how its program impacts its participants. A general profile of a Tribal Employment Program participant would consist of an individual who has had very little work experience, lacks a high school education, and is a solo parent with more than one dependant. Additionally, the participants would have job barriers like family violence, no access to transportation, and problems with substance abuse and legal issues (The Minnesota Tribal Welfare Reform Task Force, 1999).

In recognition of this problem, the State of Minnesota has contracted with the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) and four other Indian reservations to provide employment services to American Indians. The MCT Tribal Employment Program as well as the other tribal programs hires employment counselors to provide MFIP participants with client assessment, vocation training, counseling, referral and job coaching as well as providing financial support. Financial support or supportive services, as it is referred to, funds the purchase of clothing for work and/or
interviews and may also be used to pay for rent, utilities, car repair, telephone hook-up and transportation. (See brochure in appendix.)

The Tribal Employment Program offers “Job Club” for participants where they learn how to write a resume, fill out a job application and how to interview for a job. They also learn soft skills, such as proper grooming and how to dress for work. Parenting classes are offered, as well as nutrition classes and how to perform CPR.

Job counselors are trained on how to administer a self-screening tool to participants who may identify themselves with substance abuse. Job counselors also attend workshops on domestic violence and how to develop a safety plan.

The overall goal of the MCT Tribal Employment Program is to reduce the length of time American Indians are on MFIP by providing services that will meet their needs. American Indians comprised the largest percentages (39%) of long-term participants on MFIP (Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2003). The Tribal Task Force reported that statistically, the number of cases of American Indians on MFIP is moving in the opposite direction of the overall trend. The DHS has shown a decline in the total number of individuals receiving MFIP in Minnesota by 23% since 1994. However, the number of American Indian MFIP participants has risen by 1.77% statewide and by 12% in 21 counties with high populations of American Indians (The Minnesota Tribal Welfare Reform Task Force, 1999, p.12).

Significance to Social Work

Society has placed a value on individuals to become self-sufficient and working is one way to support oneself. However, there are barriers that people face when looking for employment. These barriers can be lack of job skills, no access to transportation, lack of child care and many others. Social workers must come up with strategies to overcome these barriers
and one way to do this is to be familiar with the many barriers to employment and how to work
with participants who have these barriers. Social workers also need to be familiar with
community resources so that referrals to other agency are a possible solution to some of these
problems. Social workers need to be aware that employment services programs need to address
the multiple barriers recipients face by providing specialized programs or extended support.

As social workers it is our goal to help people improve their lives. We must become
advocates for the poor and lobby for changes in legislation when they have a negative impact on
the people we serve. It is the responsibility of social workers to use this information to inform
the public of the stories of this specific group of people. It is important to inform the public of
their struggles and how they are harmed by policies, such as the five-year cut off date, the
sanction process or even how difficult it is to keep and maintain a job as a single mother with
children. These stories are important to tell in order to demonstrate the real challenges MFIP
participants encounter. We must be their voice. The NASW Code of Ethics calls on social
workers to “advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order
to meet basic human needs” (Anderson & Gryzlak, 2002).

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the MCT Tribal Employment Program to
gain information on what services were beneficial to the participant and what improvements can
be made. Information will be gathered from current participants in the program. The job
counselors, program coordinators and human services manager are interested in finding out if the
program is meeting the needs of the participants and how the program can be improved. This
group has developed two research questions: “How effective is the Tribal Employment Program
to be in meeting the needs of their participants?” and, the second question is, “What improvements can be made to the program?”

Methods

Sample/Population

The population is defined by the agreement that the MCT has made to the counties and the state of Minnesota and is as follows: The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe shall provide MFIP Employment services based on availability of funds, to persons eligible for such services and who meet all of the following conditions:

a. The person is an enrolled member or is eligible for enrollment in the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe;

b. The person has been identified as an MFIP recipient and eligible to participate in MFIP.

c. The person resides within the Tribal MFIP service delivery area of Aitkin, Becker, Beltrami, Benton, Carlton, Cass, Clearwater, Cook, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Koochiching, Mahnomen, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Norman, Polk, or St. Louis County.

The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Tribal Employment Program has over 400 participants in its Cass Lake and Duluth offices. It serves several counties and tribes in Northern Minnesota.

For the purposes of this study, data was gathered from a portion of the total population, which consists of 200 participants from the Duluth office. The sample consisted of approximately 12% of the Duluth participants or 25 individuals. The sample was selected by asking participants when they entered the office if they would take a survey. The secretary administered the test in a two-week period and gave each participant an incentive when the survey was completed. No one refused to take the survey. All participants were from St. Louis County.
Data was collected by the program secretary instead of the job counselors to protect the privacy of the individual and to improve the validity of the survey instrument.

**Design**

In this study, secondary data analysis using data collected from a survey instrument was used in order to answer research questions. Job counselors, program coordinators and human services manager had developed the questions for the survey. This is a cross-sectional study using Likert type scaled items and open-ended questions, and participants were asked about their experiences with the Tribal Employment Program. How the questions were answered is used to measure the level of participant satisfaction.

**Operational Definition and Data Collection**

The survey instrument (see Appendix) contains open-ended questions using the Likert type scaled items. The questions focused on the effectiveness of the program and ways to improve the program.

The first research question evaluates how participants perceived the effectiveness of the program in meeting their needs. Effectiveness is operationally defined by examining survey responses to the following questions:

- The services I received from the tribal employment program were beneficial to me.
- The job counselors and staff treated me with respect.
- The job counselors found possible solutions to problems I faced.
- The job counselors were available to meet with me when I stopped by their office.
- When you were eligible did you receive supportive services when you requested them?
- During overview the program requirements were completely explained.
- I found that the activities done in Job Club addressed the needs I had.
- I was referred to other community resources when I needed them.
- As a result of the program, I have identified specific steps to take to find employment? (For example, the program helped me develop my interview skills.)
- I feel my family and I benefited from the program.
- The job counselors returned by phone calls in a reasonable time.
- As a result of this program, I have found employment?
The second research question seeks information on how to improve its current services. Participants were asked five open-ended questions: “What do you consider a reasonable time?” (to return your phone calls); “How can the MCT Tribal Employment Program improve their services?” and “What can the MCT Tribal Employment Program do to increase your chances of getting and keeping a job?” The third question is: “What other activities would you like to see in Job Club?” and finally, “any additional comments?”

Data Analysis

Data were examined and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Results of the survey were analyzed by looking at the percentages of the sample that selected each response to an item. Frequency of the responses was calculated. Results were reported in a table and graph format listing the percentage of how participants answered each question. Responses for closed-ended questions were grouped according to effectiveness of current services and recommended improvements to the program. Open-ended questions were compiled, compared across subjects and grouped by common themes through qualitative analysis.

Results

Effectiveness of the program

Table 1 shows the results of the closed-ended questions. The majorities of participants, 76%, either agree or strongly agree that the services provided by the program benefited them (item 1). About 68% of the participants felt that they benefited from the program (item 14). A similar percentage also believed that job counselors returned their phone calls within a reasonable time (item 4) as well as gave them referrals to other community resources (item 11). A slightly higher percentage (72%) used these new resources to make more informed decisions (item 12).
Table 1 Participants Perception of Quality of MCT Tribal Employment Program
(N=25)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
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<th>D</th>
<th>NA/D</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The services I received from the tribal employment program were beneficial to me.</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5(20)%</td>
<td>14(56%)</td>
<td>5(20%)</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The job counselors and staff treated me with respect.</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>12(48%)</td>
<td>11(44%)</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The job counselors assessed my situation and found possible solutions to problems I faced.</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5(20)%</td>
<td>14(56%)</td>
<td>4(16%)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The job counselors retuned by phone calls in a reasonable time.</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7(28)%</td>
<td>12(48%)</td>
<td>5(20%)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The job counselors were available to meet with me when I stopped by their office.</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4(16)%</td>
<td>10(40%)</td>
<td>5(20%)</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. When you were eligible did you receive supportive services when you requested them.</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>2(8)%</td>
<td>4(16)%</td>
<td>8(32%)</td>
<td>9(36%)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I felt that when I attended overview that job search requirements were explained completely and that all my questions were answered.</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>4(16)%</td>
<td>14(56%)</td>
<td>5(20%)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I found that the activities done in Job Club addressed the needs I had</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>4(16)%</td>
<td>15(60%)</td>
<td>3(12%)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I was referred to other community resources when I needed them.</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7(28)%</td>
<td>13(52%)</td>
<td>4(16%)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. As a result of this program, I use new resources to help me make more informed decisions.</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6(24)%</td>
<td>13(52%)</td>
<td>5(20%)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. As a result of this program. I have identified specific steps to take to find employment? For example, the program helped me develop my interview skills.</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9(36)%</td>
<td>11(44%)</td>
<td>4(16%)</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I feel my family and I have benefited from this program.</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7(28)%</td>
<td>12(48%)</td>
<td>5(20%)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. As a result of this program, I have found employment?</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>10(40)%</td>
<td>6(24%)</td>
<td>6(24%)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Participants perceived the job counselors as assessing their situation and finding potential solutions to their problems, 72% (item 3). Participants (76%) also felt that during overview job search requirements were explained fully and all their questions answered (item 8). Approximately 48% reported they found employment (item 15) as a result of this program. A substantial number of participants (72%) found that the activities done in Job Club addressed their needs (item 9). Overall the participants' perception of the quality of services appears positive.

The mean for each of these questions ranged from 3.12 to 4.25 on a scale of 5.0 (see Table 1). It is interesting to note that many participants chose the “neither agree/disagree” category. The highest mean was 4.25; in which 92% of the participants agreed that job counselors and staff treated them with respect (item 2). The lowest mean was 3.1, in which 60% of the participants felt that the job counselors were available to meet with them when they stopped by the office (item 6).

There was one participant who had marked “strongly disagree” on all of his or her answers. However, this did not match his or her final comment: “I’m very happy and feel very welcome in the office and I’m grateful for all the help and understanding I’ve received.” It is believed that he or she circled a response other than what was intended.

Ideas for Improving the Program

Three open-ended items provided information about improving the program. One question focused on activities to be offered during Job Club (item 10). The responses to item 10 emphasized serving food. Food is culturally appropriate for our American Indian population. Responses to item 11 were to offer more training, have more groups, and more funding. Other ideas for improving the program that participants suggested were more advocating and having
more group talks about what do to and to encourage them to “stick with it” (item 17). Participants were also concerned that when they stopped by the office, job counselors were not available to meet with them (item 6). See Appendix B for a complete list of responses.

In summarizing the open-ended responses in terms of program effectiveness, the participants perceived the services to be beneficial. The response to the question about what other activities would they like to see in Job Club focused around serving food (item 10). There is really not a clear indication of how the Tribal Employment Program can improve their services (item 16). Some of the answers to how to improve services were: “offer more training,” “better location” and “none.” Questions #16 and #17 had no consistent response (see Appendix B). In the final question, participants answered the question with positive remarks (item 19). (See Appendix B for a complete list of responses.) It appears from the responses that participants are generally satisfied with the program.

Discussion

Interpretation of Results

A significant number of participants (92%) agreed that the job counselors and staff treated them with respect; this is an important part of the program considering that our participants encounter discrimination almost on a daily basis. According to the literature review, discrimination against American Indians occurs in job markets in or near areas with substantial American Indian populations (The Minnesota Tribal Welfare Reform Task Force, 1999).

The goals of MFIP were to increase employment and earnings, decrease dependency on welfare, and reduce poverty. Forty-eight percent of participate reported finding employment. The literature review also reflects on the fact that the American Indian population in Minnesota has the highest rate of poverty and the poorest standard of living of any other population in the
state; they also have the higher ratio of members in need of public assistance versus their total statewide population (The Minnesota Tribal Welfare Reform Task Force, 1999). The MCT TEP services are designed to encourage recipients to work while assisting them with supportive services. The survey results indicate that the Tribal Employment Program is offering the types of services that other successful employment service providers have, such as Job Club, referrals, resume writing, interview preparation, job search and supportive services and incentives (Levitan, 1985 & Rodgers, 2003). Seventy-two percent of the participants surveyed found that the activities done in Job Club addressed their needs (item 9). Another 68% answered that they were referred to community resources when they needed them (item 11). That same percentage (68%) received supportive services when they requested it. According to 60% of the participants, the program was able to identify specific steps for them to take to find employment, such as developing their interview skills (item 13). Participants commented that the MCT TEP is doing a good job and did not make any recommendations for improving their services (item 16). However, there were a substantial number of participants who were neutral in their responses. Neutral responses could be interpreted to mean that the participants were satisfied with the services provided or that they did not want to give negative feedback. While it is beyond the scope of this evaluation to determine if participants are finding jobs and achieving self-sufficiency, the results of the study indicate that participants are obtaining job skills, getting referrals and receiving supportive services that are necessary to finding and keeping employment.

Recommendations

It is recommended that food and beverage be offered during Job Club when there is going to be a large number of participants attending. To address concerns participants have regarding
job counselors unavailability, it is recommended a calendar be sent to participants notifying them of times when the job counselors will be available for office visits as well as when the office is going to be closed for holidays and special occasions. This calendar can be mailed out monthly. To address the need for more groups, it is recommended that a list of potential topics be presented to participants and topics that conjure up the most interest would be offered to participants on a weekly basis.

**Limitations**

The limitations of the study included lack of participation. The participants in the MCT Tribal Employment Program have been historically apathetic about getting involved and were only interested in completing the survey when an incentive was offered. Many are in sanction due to non-participation in employment services. American Indians have generally been afraid of authority and do not speak out if they feel they are being treated wrong; they are non-confrontational, which could have resulted in a low response rate. The survey instrument was also not tested for validity or reliability. The survey method may cause systematic error because the possibility exits that the participants could answer the questions in a sociably acceptable (e.g. social desirability) manner in fear of losing program services or being punished for their answers.

Another limitation to the study is the small sample. Many participants are frustrated with the MFIP program and have dropped out of the program or had their cases closed. Due to the new policy changes to MFIP in the last legislative session, MFIP participants are getting tighter restrictions when receiving their benefits. There as been a 60-month time limit imposed on welfare recipients, whereas none existed before. There are stiffer penalties for non-compliance by MFIP recipients. As of July 2003, a new policy began, whereby when a MFIP recipient
reached their 6th month of sanction or occurrences their case would be closed. Finally, all American Indian participants who receive a per capita from their Indian reservation due to casino profits will have their payment allocated over a 12-month period resulting in cases closing due to excessive income.

Future Research

A longitudinal study would give more accurate information than a cross-sectional study because a pre-test and post-test could be used and the employment services program would be the intervention. It would document more accurately the reason for the number of individuals entering and leaving the program as well as their length of stay on the program. The problem with this method is the length of time needed to do the study, as well as the need to have a control group and an experimental group, which may not be ethical if one group is denied services.

Future research could include gathering additional information in order to interpret other outcomes such as, keeping and finding jobs. Another outcome that would involve further research is whether or not earnings for participants increased as a result of this program which caused a decreased dependency on welfare.

Conclusion

However, the overall evaluation suggests that the participants of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Tribal Employment Program were satisfied with the services provided and have benefited from them as well. Some suggestions were made for improvements, but there was no consensus on what they should be.


APPENDIX
Appendix A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Minnesota Chippewa Tribe
Tribal Employment Program
Program Evaluation Questionnaire

1. The services I received from the tribal employment program were beneficial to me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<th>Neither Agree/Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

2. The job counselors and staff treated me with respect.

<table>
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3. The job counselors assessed my situation and found possible solutions to problems I faced.

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4. The job counselors returned my phone calls in a reasonable time.

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5. What do you consider a reasonable time?

6. The job counselors were available to meet with me when I stopped by their office.

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7. When you were eligible did you receive supportive services when you requested them.

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8. I felt that when I attended overview that the job search requirements were explained completely and that all my questions were answered.

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9. I found that the activities done in Job Club addressed the needs I had.

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10. What other activities would you like to see in Job Club?

11. I was referred to other community resources when I needed them.

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12. As a result of this program, I use new resources to help me make more informed decisions.

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13. As a result of this program, I have identified specific steps to take to find employment? For example, the program helped me develop my interview skills.

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14. I feel my family and I have benefited from this program.

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15. As a result of this program, I have found employment?

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16. How can the Tribal Employment Program improve their services?

17. What can the Tribal Employment Program do to increase your chances of getting and keeping employment?

19. Any additional comments:
Appendix B

Written Questions

Question #5: What do you consider a reasonable time?
1. 1-2 days – (3)
2. Before they left for the day – (3)
3. Same day – (2)
4. 10:00 a.m.
5. Don’t have a phone
6. ½ hour to 15 minutes or so
7. Within a couple hours or same day
8. 2 hours – (2)
9. Two weeks
10. Any time of day, afternoon mostly cause then I’d be their to take the call
11. Within 1-2 hours. They (Don) called back within 15 minutes

Question #10: What other activities would you like to see in Job Club?
1. I don’t know
2. Pizza day
3. Never attended - (2)
4. What to say in an interview and not what to say
5. Doughnuts
6. More at home job search by computer
7. Treatment referrals quick

Question #16: How can the Tribal Employment Program improve their services?
1. Offer more training
2. Their doing a good job
3. None – (2)
4. Have more groups
5. More funding
6. Good just the way it is
7. Better location
8. None really because I always asked someone else

Question #17: What can the Tribal Employment Program do to increase your chances of getting and keeping employment?
1. I am going to keep my job
2. Keep on our ***!
3. Have more groups talk about thing what do to and stick with it
4. More advocating
5. None – (2)
6. I don’t know (I’m new 3 weeks)
Question #19: Any additional comments:
1. Not really.
2. Keep up the great work!
3. Jim is a great counselor.
4. I'm very happy and feel very welcome in the office and I’m grateful for all the help and understanding I’ve received.
Our trained staff can assist you with:

- Career and Job Counseling
- Job Search
- Accessing Educational Funds
- Resume Writing
- Interview Preparation
- Accessing the Internet
- Job Search
- Networking Services
- Accessing the Internet
- Education
- Employment Networks

Emergency services are available to participants that are working on goals to gain self-sufficiency. To be eligible, participants must follow an approved employment plan.

To be eligible, participants must be following an approved employment plan.

Education and networking are keys to success. "Network" means networking and "relationship building" means building relationships.

Tribal Employment Office Locations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota Workforce Center</td>
<td>616 American Avenue N.W., Bemidji, Minnesota 56601</td>
<td>(218) 759-8215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloquet, Minnesota Workforce Center</td>
<td>715 Cloquet Avenue</td>
<td>(218) 873-1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloquet, Minnesota</td>
<td>820 North 9th Street, Suite 120, Virginia, Minnesota</td>
<td>1-800-662-5711 Ext. 208</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arrowhead Economic Opportunity</td>
<td>820 North 9th Street, Suite 120, Virginia, Minnesota</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tribal Employment Program</td>
<td>525 Lake Avenue South, Suite 101, Duluth, Minnesota</td>
<td>(218) 765-0321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Services Division</td>
<td>P.O. Box 217, Cass Lake, Minnesota 56633</td>
<td>1-888-902-8543</td>
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I. The Enrollment Process

1. Attend the scheduled Overview session with MCT.

II. Developing an Employment Plan

1. Call your Job Counselor to inquire about times and meeting places.

The Tribal Employment Program provides Employment Services to Band members of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe.

II. Supportive Services

- Mental Health Services
- County and Tribal Social Services and Public Health Programs
- Child Protection
- Tribal Employment Program

We can assist you with your goals.

Note: Family Violence Waivers are also available to individuals.

We collaborate with numerous County and Tribal Social Service Agencies.

We consider your situation and work with you to establish an Individualized Employment Plan.

If you have questions about ways we might be able to assist you overcome obstacles, we will talk about the support of the Tribal Employment Program.

Many times there are barriers that might stop you from seeking full-time employment. Ask your Job Counselor about ways we might be able to assist you overcome obstacles.

We will develop an Employment Plan together.

We will consult with the Tribal Employment Program to work together and discuss resources available to assist you with things like child care, transportation, clothing, energy assistance, housing.

The following is a list of services that you may currently be accessing. This program can help you coordinate services with many of these programs and more.

- Child Protection
- Child Support
- County and Tribal Social Services and Public Health Programs
- Mental Health Services
- Supportive Services
- Job clubs are offered on a regular basis for participants to gain support while working on job searching.

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