

Web Content and Digitization Patterns of Tribal College Libraries Within the Great Plains Region

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Abstract: The Web content and digitization patterns of twenty-three tribal college libraries from the Great Plains region were examined to determine what types of services, programs, digital resources, and social media were promoted on their websites. The results of this study differed from a previous 1998 study by Kaya, which found that tribal libraries merely support the institutions and are ‘not recognized as an integral part of the activities of a tribal college, that is, as an equal partner in the academic endeavor’ (p. 245). Kaya noted that the success of students enrolled in tribal colleges was not contingent upon libraries and the resources they provide. Findings of this study indicate that today, the library is an integral part of the tribal college and the surrounding communities they serve and they promote lifelong learning and literacy in the community.

Keywords: Archive, Digital Collection, Digitization, Native American, Tribal College, Tribal Library, Website

1. Introduction

Native Americans have long been an underrepresented group in librarianship (Burke, 2007). It is important for library systems to recognize all patrons and their respective needs. There has not been much literature or research conducted about this minority group in terms of library use. Native American tribes across the United States consistently rank near the bottom of all minority groups in this respect. Deeper insight into library resources that are used and needed may help to minimize the gap. This study’s aim is to help researchers gain a deeper understanding of academic library websites, specifically those that belong to Native American tribal colleges, to better serve patrons, and provide resources and outreach.

2. Problem Statement

Web design and digitization of collections is a relatively new field, especially for Native American communities, colleges, and libraries. This study performs a

content analysis of tribal library and college websites to discern which websites promote digital resources such as social media and cultural preservation through the use of digital collections and exhibits. The study also aims to determine if any patterns emerge in the manner in which information is presented on tribal college websites based on the programs, services, and information that is promoted to their users.

3. Research Questions

- R1: Which types of digital resources, such as databases, collections, and interlibrary loans are provided on tribal college library websites?
- R2: Which types of social media are made accessible via tribal college library websites?
- R3: What percentage of tribal college library websites in the study offer online digital exhibits relating to Native American culture?
- R4: What programs or services are offered via tribal college library websites?
- R5: What types of information do tribal college library websites promote to its users?

4. Limitations

This study used *The Tribal College Librarians Professional Development Institute (TCLI) Directory* (2012) from the Montana State University website. For the purposes of this paper, the tribal college and library websites were limited to sites that are physically located in the Great Plains region: Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Wyoming, and Texas.

5. Assumptions

It was assumed that the tribal websites provided current information and working links. Although some variations were to be expected among the tribal college libraries across the United States, it was assumed that the sample of tribal college libraries derived from the *TCLI Directory* is representative of tribal college libraries in general.

6. Importance of the Research

Although there are several Web content analysis studies concerning academic libraries, few, if any, can be found that analyze the resources of tribal college libraries. This study will allow researchers to make note of popular trends in e-resources and social media networks. This study will be useful to those looking to improve websites and online resources for Native American students, especially those enrolled in tribal colleges.

7. Literature Review

Tribal College Libraries

In *Gender and Education: An Encyclopedia*, it is noted that the first tribal college for Native American students appeared in 1968 in the form of the Navajo Community College in Tsaile, Arizona. The need for a tribal college arose when the attrition rate of Navajo students attending colleges off of the reservation rose to ninety percent. Thus, the founding members created the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCUs) movement. A major problem that tribal colleges and universities face is the underfunding of the institutions (Stein, 2007). The mission of TCUs is 'to protect and enhance their own cultures including values, traditional stories, and languages while at the same time embracing many of the same tools of standard postsecondary education' (Stein, 2007). Legislation such as the Indian Education Act of 1972 has continued to expand policies and further develop tribal colleges (Shamchuck, 2010). Funding for most tribal colleges, one the most challenging issues in developing and maintaining tribal colleges (Stein, 2007), comes from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Tribally Controlled College Act as well as many other outside sources.

According to Kaya's 1998 research, tribal colleges are almost always located on a federal Indian reservation and many are largely underfunded. The major ideals that come from tribal colleges are supporting of American Indian students, sustaining Native American traditions, providing services for the enrichment of native communities, and becoming institutions of research and scholarship. Thus, it can be said that the main goal of tribal colleges and libraries is 'to rebuild cultures, and, in the end, create new and stronger nations' (Kaya, 1998).

Dilevko and Gottlieb (2004) conducted a study to reveal the purpose of a tribal college library in serving both the institution and Native communities. This role was evaluated by surveying the staff of tribal college libraries through questions (both open and closed-ended) about job satisfaction and work-related experiences. Their findings established that there were no tensions between Indian and non-Indian employees, and all employees, clerical and professional, have a hand in the educational contribution to the students. Through their extensive study on several aspects of working in a tribal college library, they indicate that the primary roles of tribal college libraries are to help Native Americans achieve their goals whether they are collegiate, career-oriented, or other and to serve patrons within the institutions as well as the 'surrounding non-college community'.

Shamchuck's 2010 article indicated that tribal colleges and their respective libraries collaborate on common goals such as, 'preserving and communicating tribal culture... [and] facilitating literacy development and career and skill upgrading and supporting personal and social activities'. It is the library's responsibility to help the college attain these goals by providing services and collections, including those relating to the tribe. According to Burke (2007), many Native Americans have inadequate access to libraries and informational

services and resources. Native Americans are likely to utilize the tribal college library for career services or resources since they are often acting as the public library as well.

Due to the special nature of tribal colleges and the regulations concerning tribal sovereignty and legislation, there are several issues tribal college and their libraries face. Many of these issues are similar to any standard public or academic library, including limited staffing, space, and resources (Shamchuck, 2010). One unique issue that arises is tribal college libraries will often act as the public library due to the rural location of tribal colleges and communities. Because of the funding issue, technology resources are frequently inadequate. Staffing is a particular problem due to the remote locations of tribal colleges. The turnover rate is typically high because salaries are low and benefits are feeble. Funding comes in unpredictable forms and is complicated by tribal sovereignty regulations, treaties, and federal legislation.

Many of these tribal college libraries have a cultural preservation mission illustrated by the collection and display of historical photos, pottery, and other artistic works; recordings and videos of elders sharing memories and folklore; story times with Native storytellers; and other involvement with cultural artifacts and the transmission of tribal culture (Burke, 2007). Archives serve the important function of preserving historical and legal documents, treaties, and other materials relating to federal and tribal agreements. Other projects facilitated by the library may include language preservation tools and oral histories (Shamchuck, 2010). The preservation of language is of particular importance; audiotaping and videotaping are typical formats for recording for preserving language and knowledge of tribal elders (Burke, 2007).

During the 68th International Federation of Library Associations and Institution Conference, Susan Allen, the Chief Librarian of the Getty Research Institute, spoke about how the distinctions of libraries, museums, and archives blur together on the Internet because users typically do not care where the information comes from or how it is identified as long as it is from a credible, trusted source. In the past, it was thought that libraries contained documents for research and recreation, museums provide artifacts and items to visitors, and archives provide information and documents to specific researchers. However, digitization of all formats obscures the distinctions among these fields. According to Allen (2002), 'there are serious institutional cultural differences' between the three groups. It is likely that while the research is being carried out on the tribal college library websites, there will be difficulty discerning the differences among libraries, archives, and online exhibitions since they will likely be grouped together on one Web page.

Website Analysis

Researcher Noa Aharony conducted a study of academic library websites over the span of ten years (2000-2010). According to his research, library websites have transitioned greatly to meet the needs of their users over the years and they

‘provide information about libraries and library services as well as access to online catalogues, electronic databases, digital collections, and different library tutorials’ (Aharony, 2012). Today, modern websites allow users to virtually interact with the library staff, ask reference questions, place interlibrary loan requests, and research various topics through the electronic databases and journals. Aharony notes that the design of the websites is most crucial in ensuring that the following areas are well-planned: content, navigation, and usability.

In Bao’s (2000) study of library home page links and database use, it was determined that in competing for attention along with a variety of institutional information on the Web, the location of the library home page link on its parent institution’s home page and whether or not the library provides online databases, becomes a problem that will affect how the faculty and students access and use library resources. According to the findings, 57.3 percent of institutions had library home page links on the first level of the website and 76.2 percent of the libraries provided links to commercial databases. Bao’s findings indicate that if library home page links are not listed at the top of the institution’s website in the first level, it is difficult to locate them in unconventional locations.

Annelise Ynez Sklar (2003) conducted a website analysis of tribal college libraries specifically for health related information sources. In her literature review, she noted that library website design is constructed for specific and general users who must be kept in mind when developing the site interface and how information will be organized. Typically, college library websites are used for the following general purposes: information, reference, research, and instructional resources. Sklar identified fifteen tribal colleges with an active library and offer health science programs as listed by American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) and the Department of Education’s College Opportunities Online. Over the course of two months, she evaluated the websites by analyzing sixty-two elements in the following categories: library and information services, reference and research resources, instruction criteria, function and design, and health sciences information. The criteria set for evaluation was compiled and percentages were computed. She found that tribal college libraries had ample links to free resources to their user; however, they were often lacking in instructional resources. Overall, organizational schemas needed to be updated for easier utilization, and there were a large number of broken links on the websites.

8. Methodology

The methodology of this study used a checklist similar to Aharony (2012) and added a category pertaining to Native American cultural preservation. The evaluation tool and organizational method were similar to Sklar’s 2003 study. The tribal college library websites included in this study were those in the Great Plains region listed in the *TCLI Directory*:

1. Aaniiih Nakoda College, Harlem, MT
2. Blackfeet Community College, Medicine Spring Library, Browning, MT
3. Cankdeska Cikana (Little Hoop) Community College, Valerie Merrick Memorial Library, Fort Totten, ND
4. Chief Dull Knife College, Dr. John Woodenlegs Memorial Library, Lama Deer, MT
5. College of the Muscogee Nation, Okmulgee, OK
6. Comanche Nation College, Lawton, OK
7. Fort Berthold Community College, Fort Berthold Library, New Town, ND
8. Fort Peck Community College, James E. Shanley Tribal Library, Poplar, MT
9. Haskell Indian Nations, Tommaney Hall Library, Lawrence, KS
10. Little Big Horn College, Crow Agency, MT
11. Little Priest Tribal College/Public Library, Winnebago, NE
12. Lower Brule Community College, Lower Brule, SD
13. Nebraska Indian Community College, Macy & Santee Campus, Virtual Library, Macy, NE
14. Oglala Lakota College Academic & Public Library & Archives, Woksape Tipi, Kyle, SD
15. Pawnee Nation College, Pawnee, OK
16. Salish Kootenai College, D'Arcy McNickle Library, Pablo, MT
17. Sinte Gleska, Mission, SD
18. Sisseton-Wahpeton Community College, Virtual Library, Sisseton, SD
19. Sitting Bull College, Fort Yates, ND
20. Stone Child College, Box Elder, MT
21. Turtle Mountain Community College, Belcourt, ND
22. United Tribes Technical College, UTTC Library, Bismarck, ND
23. Wind River Tribal College, Fort Washakie, WY

Each website was checked to ensure that the links given in the directory were working and contained pertinent information regarding the college's library. Through the use of previous case studies involving similar methodology, such as Aharony (2012), a checklist was developed to categorize data into eight categories: site description, currency, website aids and tools, general library information, library resources, links to E-resources, added-value resources, and Native American cultural preservation (see Appendix). Each category was broken up into 47 subcategories. The websites were evaluated according to the categories and results recorded on individual checklists and tallied.

9. Results

R1: Which types of digital resources, such as databases, collections, and interlibrary loans are provided on tribal college library websites?

Of the 22 library websites in this study, all provided bibliographic databases to their users. The most frequently listed databases included: *Medline Plus*, *EBSCO*, *Credo Reference*, *PubMed*, *WorldCat*, *JSTOR*, *ProQuest*, and *ERIC*.

Databases related to Native American culture such as American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) and *American Indian Experience: The American Mosaic* were widely promoted to their users. Other databases relating to genealogy such as ancestry.com were included on many websites.

Seventy-three percent of websites discussed the nature of their collection. This often ranged from how many books and the types of media the library housed to the special collections within the library. The special collections typically fell into three categories: children's collections, collections specifically about the tribe, or general collections on Native American culture and literature. Six tribal college libraries did not mention anything in regard to their collections. Fifteen libraries recommended the use of their Interlibrary Loan system if the library's collection could not meet their needs. A link to the Interlibrary Loan was usually provided; however, some websites simply mentioned that it was a service offered to their users. Other resources that were identified in the checklist included: plagiarism guides, reference tools, Internet sources, tutorials, career readiness resources, ebooks, ejournals, and links to search engines.

Only 4 libraries displayed links or resources relating to plagiarism guides, 3 libraries provided information pertaining to defining and avoiding plagiarism, whereas the other site listed resources dedicated to citing sources. Seven websites provided other reference tools, usually links to online encyclopedias and dictionaries such as the *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*. Seventy-seven percent of websites displayed links for Internet sources, which ranged from tribal information sites to sites relating to academics, government, and health outreach. Three websites offered tutorials such as database research skills, using the catalog, using the Interlibrary Loan, improving grammar and writing skills such as Grammarly@edu. Only one website in Montana promoted career readiness resources.

Ebooks and ejournals were often provided via library catalogs; some websites had separate Web pages for ebooks or ejournals. Eighty-six percent of websites in the study provided access to ejournals, whereas 64 percent provided access to ebooks and 23 percent displayed links for search engines. Among the most popular (each cited at least twice) were *Metacrawler*, *AskJeeves*, and *Yahoo*. *Google* and *Google Scholar* were linked five times.

Table 1: Digital Resources

<i>Category</i>	<i>Total #</i>	<i>Total %</i>
Bibliographic database	22	100
Ejournals	19	86
Internet sources	17	77
Library collections	16	73
Interlibrary loan	15	68
Ebooks	14	64

Reference tools	7	32
Links to search engines	5	23
Plagiarism guide	4	18
Linked tutorials	3	14
Career readiness resources	1	4

R2: Which types of social media are made accessible via tribal college library websites?

The checklist specifically determined how many colleges provided links to Facebook and Twitter accounts because these sites are two of the most widely-used forms of social media on college and university websites. Sixty-four percent of tribal college library websites displayed Facebook icons somewhere on the page, whereas forty-five percent of the websites displayed Twitter icons and thirty-two percent offered some other form of social media. Only six of the twenty-two college libraries promoted all three: Facebook, Twitter, and some other form of Web 2.0. Other forms of social media that were included on the sites included *YouTube* channels, *Google Plus*, *Ustream TV*, and *LinkedIn*. *YouTube* was the most used form of social media in the other Web 2.0 subcategory. The other forms were only listed once respectively. The *Ustream TV* link provided by Pawnee Nation College was broken.

Table 2: Social Media Links

Category	Total #	Total %
Facebook	14	64
Twitter	10	45
YouTube	7	32
Google Plus	1	4
Ustream TV	1	4
LinkedIn	1	4

R3: What percentage of tribal college library websites in the study offer online digital exhibits relating to Native American culture?

Of the 22 websites analyzed, nine websites (41%) offered at least one link to a digital collection or archive, eight of which were directly related to Native American culture; Blackfeet Community College linked to the *Blackfoot Digital Library*; Cankdeska Cikana Community College provided a link to the *nDigiDreams*, part of the *Spirit Lake Nation Digital Storytelling* for the National Library of Medicine that showcases Native American oral history projects. Oglala Lakota College offered a link to the Adam Matthew Collection *American Indian Histories & Cultures*, which houses primary source items from Native American tribes and from around the world; Pawnee Nation College provided access to the *Indian-Pioneer Papers Collection* via the University of Oklahoma.

Upon browsing the site, users can backtrack to the *Western Histories Collection*, which exhibits several other collections specifically relating to Native American culture. Sitting Bull College displayed links to photographs from the Library of Congress and American-tribes.com of the iconic Dakota chief for whom the college was named. Comanche Nation College was the only website that offered a link to a digital collection not relevant or exclusive to the tribe - the Balboa Park Commons, an online library comprised of items from museums in Balboa Park, San Diego, California. Aaniiih Nakoda College provided a link to the *National Science Digital Library* as well as other collections, some relating to Native American culture.

Three of the eight collections relating to Native American culture contained tribal newspaper archives. Salish Kootenai College displayed the link for the *Char-Koosta News*, the newspaper of the Flathead Indian Reservation roughly covering the 1950s through the late 1980s. Aaniiih Nakoda College provided a link to the *Char-Koosta News* and Turtle Mountain Community College gave access to the *Turtle Mountain Star* archive, which dates back to the early 1900s. The other four collections included links to digital libraries or special collections pertaining to oral histories, field notes, documents, photographs, recordings, manuscripts, and other materials specific to American Indians. Of the nine linked digital collections, eight were open access. The Adam Matthew Collection *American Indian Histories & Cultures* required login information to access the records.

Table 3: Native American Related Digital Collections

<i>Category</i>	<i>Total #</i>	<i>Total %</i>
Native American digital collections	8 (of 9)	89
Open access	8 (of 9)	89
Digital exhibits/collection	9 (of 22)	41
Tribal newspaper archives	3 (of 8)	38

R4: What programs or services are offered via tribal college library websites?

To observe which types of services libraries were promoting on their sites, the checklist included the following items: online catalogs, new arrival sections, hours of operation, policies and procedures, contact information, study/meeting rooms, events calendars, staff directory, links to other departments and branches, chat with librarian feature, blogs, newsletters, mobile sites, and RSS feeds. Nineteen out of the twenty-two tribal college library websites offered their online catalog to users and several sites offered the option to visit state or other university library collections via links to the tribal college library catalog. Along with the catalog, seven libraries provided links for new arrivals to the library’s collection. One library offered both a ‘What’s Hot’ and ‘Featured’ section for new arrivals. The new arrival sections varied from links within the catalog to posted images on the library websites.

For hours of operation, seventy-seven percent of library websites provided this information for their users either on the website's main page or through a subsequent page on the site's map. This was also the case for policies and procedures - fifty percent of libraries listed their policies and procedures somewhere within the website. The contact information was broken up into three sections: email, mailing, and phone number. Sixty-eight websites provided an email address, seventy-seven percent listed a mailing address, and ninety-one percent of libraries, a phone number. Contact information was accepted if it pertained to the college or library itself. Fifteen libraries offered a direct email address or link to the library or library staff. One website made an effort to promote an 'Ask a Librarian' feature in which users could directly email a librarian by clicking on a link. One library website was not counted as providing an email address; however, it displayed a contact box where users could input their information and a question or comment that would be directly emailed to a librarian but did not give access to the address. Sixteen websites provided phone numbers to the library's main line, front desk, or to library staff with extension numbers. Only seven websites provided a mailing address specifically relating to the library.

Five libraries offered study and/or meeting rooms for patrons. Other libraries may have had these accommodations, but this information was not featured on the website. Eight libraries provided links to academic calendars or posted an events calendar specific to the library on the library's home page, but four did not have any current events posted. They were still included because there is possibility that events could be added in the future.

Eight-one percent of libraries posted links or included staff directories on the main page. There was a mixture of how the information was presented to users - some posted library staff information on the main page or included a link to the library staff. Other sites chose to include the library staff within the college directory. The college directory had to be linked within the library's web page or in the site map to be included in the checklist results. Seventy-three percent of websites contained links for access to other branches or departments. This was typically found in the site map or at the top or bottom of the page. Often, links to other branches could be found in multiple locations. None of the libraries had a 'chat with librarian' feature on their websites. One college had a newsletter linked on the library website that was available for viewing or downloading; however, once either link was clicked, a page not found error was displayed. One tribal college library promoted the use of its blog, which was dedicated to books within its collection. It appeared to be updated frequently with at least one entry per month.

Using an iPhone 6, each library was checked to see if it provided a mobile site for its users. Twenty-seven percent of library websites had mobile site capabilities. In two cases, the college website had a mobile site but not the library. Twenty-seven percent of websites also displayed links or icons for RSS feeds. In terms of programs offered to library users, ongoing projects and language resources or websites were checked on each of the websites. Four

libraries acknowledged some form of ongoing projects within the library or college. One library discussed its ongoing digital storytelling program for students. It provided a link to the company and website used for this project. This particular library also mentioned its summer reading program for children with the theme ‘Every hero has a story’. Another library displayed information concerning its ongoing book club, which aimed to promote lifelong learning and adult literacy within the community. The fourth library provided discourse on their digital news project and information about its children’s programs and federal depository program.

Seven websites included Native language resources including dictionaries, oral literature, and grammar guides. Another site gave a link for the National Museum of Language under its list of recommended websites for Native American information. Other sites listed a language chart, word of the week infographic, research databases, and websites pertaining to culture, history, and language.

Table 4: Programs and Services

<i>Category</i>	<i>Total #</i>	<i>Total %</i>
Phone number (college or library)	20	91
Online catalog	19	86
Staff directory	18	81
Hours of operation	17	77
Mailing address (college or library)	17	77
Library phone number	16	73
Links to branches and departments	16	73
Email (college or library)	15	68
Library email	15	68
Policies and procedures	11	50
Events calendar	8	36
Library mailing address	7	32
New arrivals section	7	32
Language resources	7	32
Mobile site	6	27
RSS feed	6	27
Ongoing projects	6	18
Study/Meeting room	5	23
Blog	1	4
Chat with librarian	0	0

R5: What types of information do tribal college library websites promote to its users?

For this study, it was important to note what types of information was being promoted and in what manner. This was done by looking at the site description, the currency of the tribal college library websites, and what types of Internet sources the libraries included on their websites. For the site description, observations about the interface and design of the websites was done by recording the use of graphic and images, specifically those relating to the library and collegiate environment and Native American culture, and by identifying site search, site maps, homepage links, and the use of a Frequently Asked Question section. All twenty-two sites in the study used some sort of graphics, none of which had a visible text-only option available. Forty-five percent of websites displayed an image of the library, which could include images of the building or images of the library's interior as the focal point. Eighteen percent contained images of the tribal college itself; twenty-seven percent exhibited images of activities going on in the library, Native American art on display, new arrival books, cultural ceremonies, library staff, nature, or college classrooms. Seventeen library homepage websites displayed an image or graphic relating to the college's tribal affiliation or Native American heritage; sixteen used graphics and three used images.

Fifty percent of tribal college websites in the study offered a site search box. All sites were considered to have menu-driven interfaces that displayed some sort of site map, which included dropdown menus, tabs, and table of contents. Nineteen websites provided users a link to the tribal college's homepage. The links were placed in various locations at the top or bottom of the page. Others were included in the site map or among the table of content tabs. A few home pages could be accessed by clicking on the school's name. Only one website supplied a Frequently Asked Questions page; however, it pertained more to the tribal college itself than to the library. It was included because it was listed as a tab on the library's table of contents.

As for the currency of the websites, thirteen libraries proffered copyright dates. Two websites listed the latest update date; one was updated within four weeks of the current date and the other displayed the same date as the current date. Eight of the websites offering copyright dates had a current year. Currency is an important aspect of the type of information that is promoted because it lets users know how accurate and up-to-date the information is on the website.

For Internet sources, the checklist included other library websites, links to tribal websites, and links to other Native American related websites. Seventy-seven percent of library websites in the study included library selected Internet sources to promote to users. These sources consisted of but were not limited to: tutoring guides, government facts and statistics, other college or state library websites, health resources, education guides and websites and historical maps. Eighteen percent of libraries offered a link to the website of the college's tribal affiliation. Fifty-five percent of libraries displayed links to other sites and sources relating to Native Americans such as those related to Native American history, culture,

language, Indian health care services, tribal laws and treaty resources, and the American Indian Library Association (AILA).

Social media also played a predominant role in tribal college library websites. Each of the websites offering links to social media used small standard-sized buttons. All but three sites used the standard icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube. One site displayed Facebook and YouTube in red coloring; another displayed Facebook in a pale gray. The third site presented the Facebook icon in a black circle. However, regardless of the deviations in color, the icons showed the traditionally recognized image for each social medium. Placement for the icons appeared in one of three places within the websites: top, bottom, or in one of the side margins.

Table 5: Promoted Information

<i>Category</i>	<i>Total #</i>	<i>Total %</i>
Use of graphics	22	100
Link to home page	19	86
Images relating to tribe or heritage	17	73
Links to other Native American related Web sites	17	73
Copyright date	13	59
Site search	11	50
Image of library	10	45
Copyright date: current year	8	36
Other images	6	27
Image of college	4	18
Links to tribal Web site	4	18
Frequently asked questions	1	5
Last update	2	9

10. Discussion

It is important to note that as websites change and are updated over time the findings in this study may not accurately reflect the current state of the tribal college websites. Based on the data collected in the study, it appears that tribal college libraries play an integral part in ensuring students and faculty are kept abreast of current information and technology resources. This notion was best demonstrated by the consensus of providing databases in each of the library websites within the study. Even websites with minimal amenities and resources provided at least one database for users to access. Many of these tribal colleges offered students a degree in Native American Studies so it is reasonable that the colleges should provide databases relating to Native American culture and heritage. Many of the libraries chose to promote *The American Indian*

Experience: The American Mosaic as a primary database. Another occurring trend was the *Tribal College Journal*, which is the *Journal of American Indian of Higher Education*. Several of these colleges also included language preservation and classes relating to the respective tribe so dictionaries and other language resources were often found within the library websites. These databases and resources were likely deemed useful by the library staff to accommodate those aiming to further their knowledge of Native American culture and tribal preservation.

The high number of websites that promoted the Interlibrary Loan system could be because many of these tribal colleges are small in enrollment and in somewhat isolated, rural locations that serve both students and the public alike. The Interlibrary Loan systems can help meet the needs of users that the tribal college libraries cannot meet within their collections. Due to their small size and remote locations, tribal college libraries do not have the volume and extensive collections and resources that larger and state-funded college libraries typically have. Therefore, it would make sense that Interlibrary Loans would be considered a valuable asset to tribal college libraries. For that matter, they could also be seen as valuable to other colleges and universities for their extensive collections in Native American literature and research resources.

A noticeable trend was the sheer number of tribal college libraries that mentioned they served as a dual library for those within academia and to those in the surrounding community. This facet of tribal college libraries could be seen a deciding factor in many of the resources provided on the websites. Because of the high volume of tribal college libraries serving the public of surrounding communities and reservations, the trend of providing information from governmental sources was understandable; tax forms and links to the Internal Revenue Service were commonly seen within many websites. It was expected that there would be a heavy reliance on career-building resources as indicated in Burke's 2007 study. However, only one website was attributed to providing such resources to its users.

It should be noted that several websites included many health-related resources, including websites and databases, some of which were specifically related to Native Americans. As noted in Sklar's 2003 study, there are high percentages of diseases such as diabetes and alcoholism within the Native American community so it is reasonable that many of the library websites dedicate resources to benefit the public in terms of awareness and prevention.

Facebook and Twitter were the most commonly used and promoted types of social media, which is not surprising considering that many college and universities have Facebook and Twitter accounts to keep current students and alumni informed with updates about the school. Only one library website included a LinkedIn account. It could be deemed beneficial for tribal colleges to set up LinkedIn accounts since this form of social media aims to connect users to potential employers and many tribal colleges and their libraries aspire to help

students achieve their career goals. By increasing the use of LinkedIn, tribal colleges could aid their students in finding jobs and lifelong careers.

Other noticeable trends included the use of the word ‘tipi’ as a reference to the library or college homepage. The word *tipi* would be familiar to many of the users because the Great Plains Indians have been historically known for building tipis as their primary type of lodging. Additionally, many libraries featured donate icons or links to a donation page set up by the college or library for general support or to aid in the preservation of cultural items within the library’s special collections.

Based on the literature review, some of the findings were not surprising. The literature clearly states that many tribal colleges and their libraries suffer from a lack of funding, support, and high turnover of staff. These troubles would likely account for why some items on the checklist were not included on many of the websites even though they often had the capabilities to provide items like a calendar or chat-with-librarian feature. It seemed that it may be more a matter of what the staff was able to organize and maintain than a lack of technology or resources. Tribal colleges have minimal numbers in terms of enrollment in comparison with their state colleges and universities counterparts. Tribal colleges within the sample study were randomly selected, and their enrollment totals were observed. The total number of students enrolled in colleges in this study ranged from 700-900. With this finite number of students, it is likely that an on-call librarian or chat-with-librarian feature is not necessary or viable. Furthermore, the literature surrounding tribal college libraries clearly indicates that many of the libraries’ patrons do not have computer access at home, therefore some of these electronic features would be superfluous to provide.

It should be noted that just because the website did not mention a particular item does not mean that the library itself does not provide said service or resource. For example, there was no link or mention of the Interlibrary Loan for some libraries in the study, but it does not mean that those libraries do not provide this service to users. The majority of libraries within the sample provided excellent services to their users in a clear and concise manner that was reflective of the college and its goals.

One of the resources in the checklist was the promotion of digital collections. Though the majority of tribal college libraries in the study did not provide a digital collection, it was clear that there was no shortage of resources relating to Native American culture and preservation. In fact, many of the libraries and colleges had archival collections that patrons could access on campus – only a few tribal college libraries provided access to digital collections. It appeared that only two colleges were directly related to the digital collection on their website: Salish-Kootenai College and Turtle Mountain Community College both referenced digital archives relating to their tribe’s newspaper. The other libraries provided collections that were linked to other websites and were not necessarily reflective of those respective tribes.

11. Implications

One challenge in this study was in locating the items on the checklist for each site. It can be said that no two websites are the same. All had different layouts, designs, and interfaces, which made it difficult to determine where items were located. Some items were obvious places, in plain sight; others became a game of hide-and-seek if they were even to be found at all. One frustrating aspect was the discovery of an item after it had been deemed to not be within a particular site. Thus, it showed the importance of going back and carefully reviewing each of the websites for missed items. For future similar studies, it is recommended that researchers map out the items they are looking for with precision. It is important to have definitive descriptions and characteristics and to document what should and should not be counted within the checklist.

12. Conclusions

It has been nearly twenty years since Kaya's 1998 article was published and it seems that over time a very important change has occurred. Kaya initially noted the success of students enrolled in tribal colleges was not contingent upon libraries and the resources they provide. Based on the findings in this study, it would appear the library is an integral part of the tribal college and the surrounding communities they serve. As far as supporting the academic endeavor, these tribal college libraries have aimed to promote lifelong learning and literacy among all patrons who cross their threshold. As technologies change and as the world becomes more digitized, it can be expected that tribal college libraries will follow suit regardless of the obstacles and challenges these intuitions face. Tribal college and their libraries are as resilient as the culture they are so fiercely trying to preserve.

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Appendix. Website Category Items

Site Description

1. Use of graphics
2. Text-only version
3. Image of library
4. Image of college
5. Other images
6. Link to the home page

Currency

1. Copyright information
2. Last update

Website Aids and Tools

1. Site search
2. Frequently asked questions
3. Site map

Library General Information

1. Library collections
2. Library services
3. Library catalog
4. Hours of operation
5. Policies and procedures
6. Contact information (phone number, email address, physical address)
7. Study/Meeting rooms
8. Staff directory
9. Chat with librarian
10. Newsletter
11. Ongoing projects

Library Resources

1. Plagiarism guide
2. Other reference sources (dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc.)
3. Library selected Internet sources
4. Links to branches and departments
5. Bibliographic databases

6. Linked tutorials
7. Career readiness resources
8. Interlibrary loan

Links to e-Resources

1. Other databases
2. E-journals
3. E-books
4. Links to search engines

Value -added Services

1. New arrivals section
2. Events calendar
3. Mobile site
4. RSS feed
5. Twitter
6. Facebook
7. Blog
8. Other Web 2.0

Native American Cultural Preservation

1. Digital exhibits/collections
2. Language Resources
3. Links to other Native American related websites
4. Links to Tribal websites
5. Images relating to Tribe or Cultural Heritage