

## Introduction

- Based on prior studies, self esteem has shown to be a factor in determining academic performance.<sup>1</sup>
- Being one of the most underrepresented groups, young Indigenous people are at a high risk for developing low self-esteem, which can then affect their studies during their years spent in college.
- Recent studies on demographics of student retention rates found approx. 53% of AIAN students dropout of college in the US.<sup>2</sup>
- Native American students lack support and resources, which makes college a difficult transitional time.
- There is a lot of gaps in the literature about the Native American population. This study hopes to fill that gap and provide more resource for the Native community.



## Objective

To determine if perceived self-esteem has an effect on perceived academic performance in Native American college students in Southern California.

## Methods

- An online survey was distributed to individuals and groups affiliated with Native American Student programs throughout colleges/universities in southern California. All participants were kept anonymous.
- The survey included 7 demographic questions, 3 perceived self-esteem questions, and 3 perceived academic performance questions.
- With the data collected, bivariate tests were run using an one- samples T-test on SPSS.
- Independent t-tests were ran comparing self-esteem with academic performance.

## Results

N	44
Age Range	
18-21	21
22-25	16
26-29	3
30+	4
Gender	
Female	30
Male	12
Nonbinary	1
Qariwarmi	1
First Generation College Student (Yes)	22
Childhood Community	
Very Rural	12
Partially Rural	13
Suburban	13
Metropolitan	6
At Some Point, Lived On Tribal Land (Yes)	23

Table 1: Demographic information

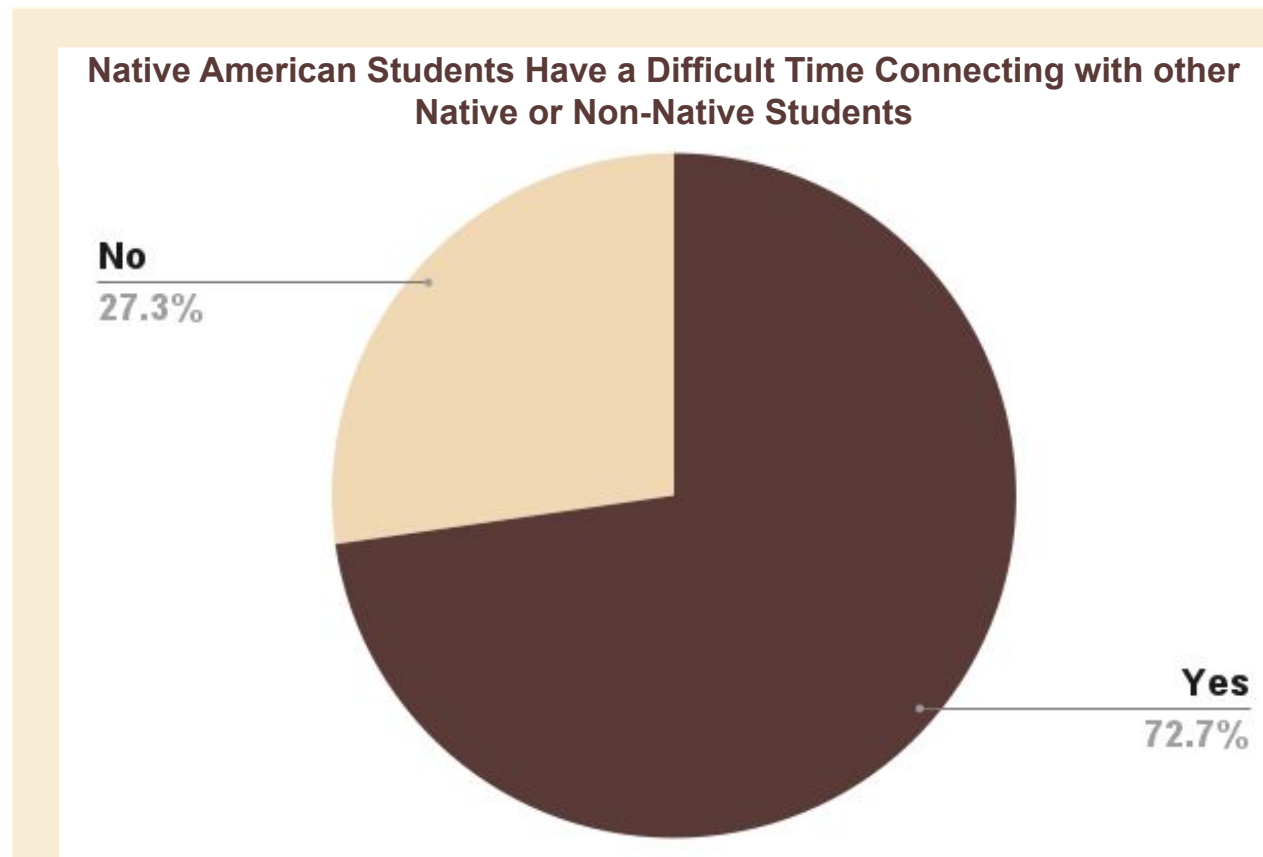


Figure 1: Result from a self-esteem survey question

Based on **Figure 1**, 72.7% (N=32) of students found it **difficult** to connect with other non-Native/Native students.

- A one-sample t-test was ran comparing self-esteem question in **Figure 1** and academic performance question in **Figure 2**: **results showed a statistical significance (p < 0.033).**

NA had positive attitudes towards school	Grew up on a reservation/rancheria	
	Yes	No
Strongly Disagree	2	1
Disagree	10	5
Neutral	9	8
Agree	2	6
Strongly Agree	0	1

Table 2: Comparing attitude toward academic and if participant grew up on reservation/rancheria

Based on **Table 2**, students who lived on reservation/rancheria at some point were **more likely to disagree** about having a positive attitude towards school.

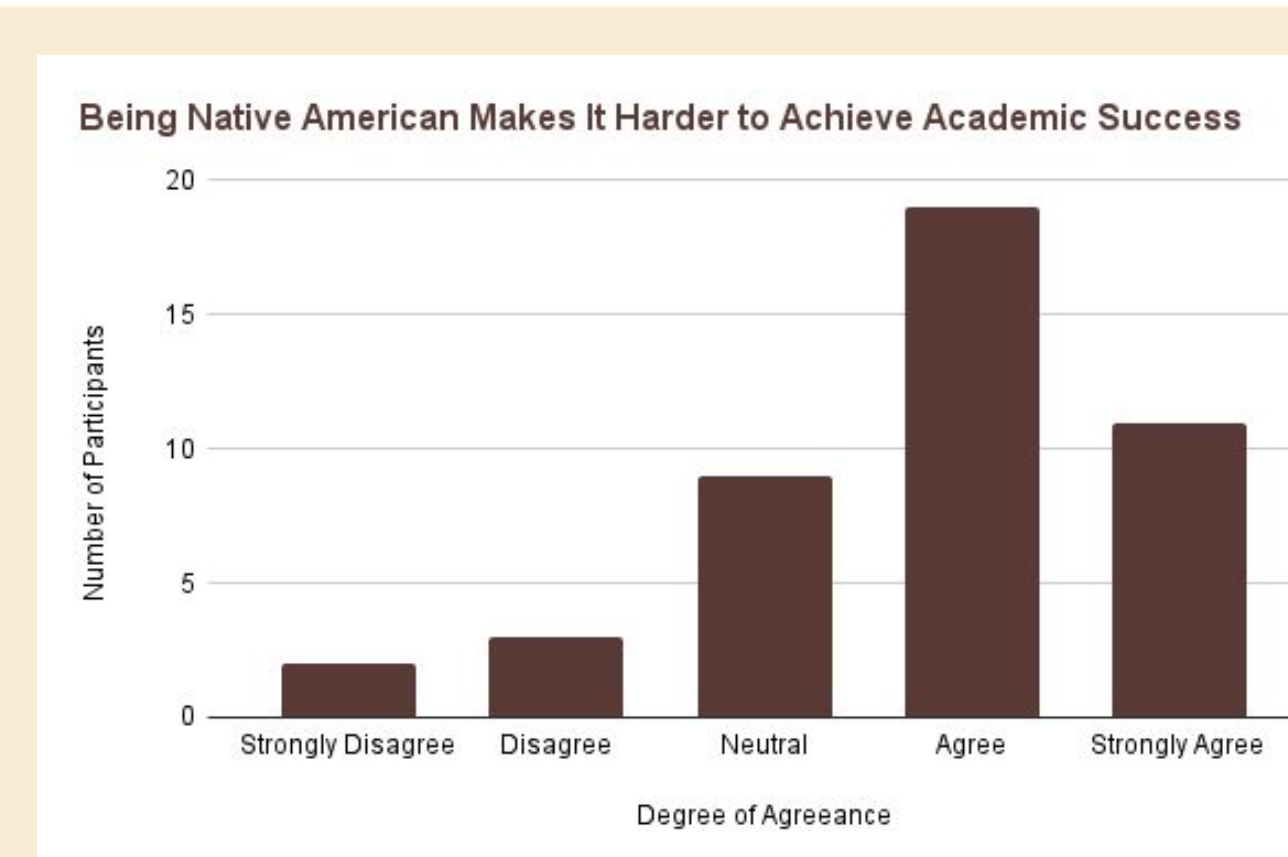


Figure 2: Result from an academic performance survey question

Based on **Figure 2**, 68.2% (N=30) of students felt that being Native American made it **harder** to achieve academic performance in college.

## Limitations

- The communities in which the participants grew up in, gender, and other intersectionalities can affect an individual's responses and not accounted for because it was not the focus of the study.
- Low amount of participants due to the fact that the target population is extremely small compared to other student bodies.

## Policy Implications

- Building a sense of community on campus through mentorship programs and more faculty representation to help support Native American students as they navigate higher education.

## Conclusions

- Self-esteem has a significant effect on academic performance, supported by National Conference of State Legislators.
- Growing up on a reservation/rancheria affected personal attitude towards academics.
- Native American students do not have a positive attitude toward school and find it more difficult to achieve academic success based on their identity.
- Self-esteem and academic performance and amplifies the need for support for AIAN students in higher education.<sup>3,4</sup>

## Acknowledgements

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***"I think that because there are so few Native students on college campuses, we have a hard time finding/connecting to other Native Students and may not feel super supportive at huge institutions. Also, I feel like there is sometimes a lot of pressure for us Native Students to perform well and represent our families and respective tribes as well."***

**- Anonymous NA Student**

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Afran Ahmed, Aarushi Kaushal, Tatyana Cruz, Yusuke Kobuse, & Kristen Wang. (2020). "Why is there a higher rate of impostor syndrome among BIPOC?" (2022) "College Dropout Rates." *tinkimpact.com*
- <sup>2</sup> Booth, M. Z., & Gerard, J. M. (2011). Self-esteem and academic achievement: a comparative study of adolescent students in England and the United States.
- <sup>3</sup> *Striving to achieve - national conference of state legislatures.* (2008.). Retrieved May 27, 2022, from <https://www.ncsl.org/Portals/1/documents/statetribe/strivingtoachieve.pdf>