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ABSTRACT

In the spring of 1971, pertinent literature was reviewed and a small survey conducted on the Crow Indian Reservation to find more effective ways to develop Indian youth through 4-H programs. Twenty-five people, mostly Indian, were surveyed using a semi-structured interview form. Comments were solicited following each of the structured questions. Some conclusions drawn from the study and from the review were: (1) The data indicated that 96% of the persons interviewed were interested in having 4-H clubs on the Reservation; (2) Respondents felt that individual development is more important than completion of 4-H projects; (3) Projects in which respondents were most interested included Crow legends, clans, environment, and native foods; and (4) It would be of value if Reservation Extension staff had a background in human relations training or if they could attend educational conferences, do graduate work, or take part in educational courses related to Indian culture and people. Recommendations for improving this program covered encouraging Indian college students interested in youths to work on Reservations under the work-study program and involving Crow Indians in all phases of a program's development, its support, and its leadership responsibilities. (HBC)

AN EVALUATION OF THE CROW 4-H PROGRAM

A Summary Introduction

by Robert A. Weber, Crow Reservation Extension Agent

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In the spring of 1971, pertinent literature was reviewed and a small survey was conducted on the Crow Indian Reservation in an effort to find more effective ways to develop Indian youth through the medium of 4-H. Traditional 4-H has not seemed adequate on the reservation. Indian adults have seldom been willing to participate in 4-H either as leaders or as parents. Likewise, the majority of Indian youths have shown little interest in joining and sticking with 4-H. Feelings of inadequacy had often been noted in both youths and adults who were asked to participate in 4-H.

The review of literature briefly investigated what other reservations are doing in 4-H, whether language tends to be a problem in 4-H work, what is happening in Indian education, what can be learned from other disadvantaged groups, what cultural differences are involved, and what is known about cross-socialization in such situations.

Twenty-five people, mostly Indian, were surveyed using a semi-structured interview form. Comments were solicited following each of the structured questions. This proved to be very useful. Respondents were purposely selected on the basis of their knowledge of 4-H or of youth work in general. Most were what one would consider leaders, many being professional and semi-professional workers. Many were, or had been, 4-H leaders and/or parents of 4-H'ers.

This study was made under the assumption that the more that the Crow Extension Agents know about Indian people, their values attitudes, goals, and expectations of 4-H, the more effectively they can be in guiding and serving 4-H.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Some conclusions drawn from this study and from the review of literature are as follows:

1. The data indicates that there was an interest in having 4-H clubs on the Crow Reservation by most of the persons interviewed (96.0 percent), but there was a definite lack of potential 4-H club leader volunteers. There is a lack of parental concern and support among Indians (according to white values) on reservations in both Montana and South Dakota as well as in the Central City Minorities youth programs.

2. Respondents were of the opinion that individual development is more important than completion of 4-H project work. Project work is often overrated or meaningless to Crow youth. Project literature needs to be explained more in detail to Crow youth. Crow 4-H members need to be shown how to do project work or to learn skills.

3. The respondents in the survey felt that Crow youth in 4-H could compete for project achievement awards. This response did not agree with literature cited by South Dakota and the Central City Minorities 4-H program directors, concerning 4-H completion. By emphasizing intrinsic rewards, 4-H leaders might overcome some of the limitations and drawbacks of extrinsic rewards.

4. The main reason given by the respondents (80.0 percent) for Crow 4-H members not completing their project work was that parents do not know what their children are expected to do in 4-H, and Extension Agents and 4-H leaders need to help youth to understand what is expected of them.

5. ~~The respondents expressed the opinion~~ that they are interested in ~~4-H club projects~~ other than "foods, clothing, beef and gardening," ~~the "star" examples of the standard 4-H projects now offered.~~ The respondents (80.0 percent) were of the opinion that the skills they would like for their youth to learn as 4-H members are of a human relations nature, similar to Crow cultural values. This may require some adjustments in future 4-H projects in order to include the human relations projects.

6. The Crow clan system does not seem to be a major problem in 4-H, however, there is a very high interest in having a 4-H project in which 4-H'ers could study the Crow clan system. 4-H projects available to white youth should also be available to Crow 4-H members, but some adjustment should be made to take into account the differences in ethnic background and the language barrier of Crow youth.

7. The respondents selected the following Crow culture projects from a suggested list as the ones in which they were most interested. They were Crow legends, Crow clans, Crow environment and nature, and Crow native foods.

8. Respondents indicated that they approved of 4-H programs including issues that make news today.

9. Crow adults (22.0 percent) said that they do not know what is expected of a 4-H leader. Respondents (52.0 percent) said they are afraid of making mistakes and being criticized or laughed at. Crow adults felt they would feel "out-of-place" as a 4-H leader with white 4-H leaders.

10. Small group training meetings would be of value if held for Crow 4-H leaders to develop their leadership skills and to help them adapt 4-H projects and the program to the needs of their members.

11. There is a need for Crow 4-H members and leaders to be encouraged to take part in out-of-county 4-H events to help develop personal confidence and overcome cross-socialization problems.

12. It seems that the time and place to teach an Indian youth the approach "how to use his values" in which he becomes even more Indian in taking advantage of educational opportunities and becoming self-supporting, would be at a time and place when he is most susceptible to learning, when he is young and in school and a member of youth groups, such as 4-H.

13. It would be of value if Extension staff members who work with Indian people had a background in human relations training or if they could take every opportunity to attend educational conferences, do graduate work, or take part in educational courses related to Indian culture or working with Indian people.

14. Cross-socialization is a problem that may partly be overcome by organizing informal 4-H groups, either discussion groups or action groups with a leader of the youth's choice or acceptance. Projects for this type of 4-H club organization could include topics that make news today, community service, helping old folks, or helping others in school and culture-to-culture youth camps or conferences.

15. There is a rigid mold of existing 4-H programs. This mold may be defined as community leaders, local groups, county staff, state staff or some combination of these. Any changes in this mold would tend to rock the boat and there are some clubs with small 4-H programs of high quality that are unwilling to let just anyone in for fear they will jeopardize their status.

16. Organizational hierarchy in 4-H tends to determine what is proper subject matter and methodology based on their appraisals, not the needs of low-income people nor the possible resources available.

17. Many people feel that an informal Indian 4-H program is not proper and that Indian 4-H programs need to keep in line with the other segments of the existing program.

18. It can be concluded that there is a definite 4-H interest by Crow parents. Twenty (80.0 percent) would like to have their

youth learn skills related to Crow culture. Crow cultural skills which the respondents are most interested in are group kills; how to get along with others; and being able to contribute as a family member. The Crow culturally-oriented 4-H projects the respondents expressed an interest in are: fifteen (60.0 percent) Crow legends; fourteen (56.0 percent) Crow clan system; twelve (48.0 percent) Crow foods and, eleven (44.0 percent) Crow nature and environment.

19. Participation and achievement would probably be improved if the Crow 4-H projects and program were more closely related to the Crow Indian culture.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the data collected in the 4-H survey form and related literature, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Montana Cooperative Extension Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Crow Tribal Officials should consider the feasibility of placing additional extension staff on the Crow Indian Reservation. With additional staff and aides, more time could be spent to develop a 4-H program and to work with individual leaders, parents and assist with club meetings.

2. Crow Indian Extension Aides should be trained to work with youth and to assist with the 4-H program.

3. Indian college students interested in youth work should be encouraged to work on Indian reservations under the college work-study program. They could be trained by the Extension State Staff and 4-H and other youth specialists. Some arrangement could be made so that they would receive college credit for their training and work experience.

4. A program similar to the International Farm Youth Program should be developed to encourage college students or 4-H junior leaders in Montana to experience cross-socialization relations with Crow 4-H families by organizing and conducting Indian 4-H club activities during the summer.

5. Those agents who cooperate with the boy scout programs could initiate a similar type of program for Eagle Scouts.

6. High School seniors could be employed as junior Extension Aides to assist with the 4-H program in the summer, so as to have a work experience which may encourage them to become Extension Agents, interested in working with Indian youth.

7. Extension Agents who work with the Indian youth should be encouraged to promote culture to culture youth camps or conferences to develop cross-socialization understandings between Indian and white youths.

8. Indian Extension Agents should be encouraged to organize Indian 4-H councils so the Indian 4-H leaders may develop 4-H programs for their youth.

9. Indian Extension Agents should be encouraged to do graduate study in fields of education related to working with Indian people.

10. The Montana Cooperative Extension Service should employ qualified Indian people as Extension Agents to work with Indian youth.

11. The Extension Agents should encourage Indian leaders in each community to become involved in planning, advising, promoting and assisting in the development of the 4-H program and its projects.

In addition to project and program development with the Crow people, community meetings should be held for parents to promote the 4-H program and parent understanding of it.

12. Home visits with Crow parents should be made with Extension Aides assisting, to explain 4-H programs and literature and to show how project work can be accomplished with what is available.

13. When working with the disadvantaged start with the individual and family. What counts with these people is your personal interest and concrete help on immediate matters. Keep a major focus on youth. Develop a sense of "our" program from their viewpoint and "their" program from your point of view.

14. The educator or change agent must adjust the educational or 4-H programs to the way of life of the various cultures they are trying to reach.

15. Efforts should be made in future educational 4-H leader training programs on the Crow Reservation to keep in mind that Crow people do not like to be placed in positions of authority over other Crows.

16. Future 4-H leaders should be selected from young adults and Crow parents who can explain 4-H project literature in both Crow and English.

17. Any youth specialist or county agent who assists the Extension staff on the Crow Reservation with 4-H or youth programs should have some understanding of the Crow way of life and make the instruction appropriate to their culture, so that it can be easily understood.

18. One of the biggest challenges on the Montana reservations is to really build up a concern and a commitment for developing 4-H programs with the reservation communities and the young Indian people who have not been knocking on our door. This concept of reaching out to Montana Indian people who do not ask for help or who do not know how to ask for help, has become increasingly significant.

19. The 4-H program has to be developed by the Indian people themselves, centered around their particular needs. Nothing will really move until they are ready to move themselves and they adapt the 4-H program to meet their needs. When they are ready to make this move, the professionals promoting the 4-H program should be ready to provide the assistance needed to develop an Indian 4-H program, characteristic to the needs of each tribe in Montana.

20. The Cooperative Extension Service has assisted seventy countries in the world to adopt the 4-H club idea and develop the 4-H program to their needs. The Indian people on the seven reservations in Montana should have the same opportunity for both white and Indians to strive to this end.

21. It is recommended that the 4-H program on the Crow Reservation include 4-H projects and program activities that are more closely related to the Crow Indian culture. Also that the Crow Indian people be involved in all phases of program development, its support and leadership responsibility.

"The old chiefs are gone; the young men are to be found in school rather than in the woods, but the lesson is clear. It is not just the Indian who has to learn from us, there is much to be learned from him. Some of the things which white men could learn are the values inherent in group identity; respect for nature, the right of men to participate in the institutions that affects their lives; and that no policy or program, regardless of how well intended, will succeed without his approval."¹