SUPPORTING PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENT SUCCESS IN HIGHER
EDUCATION THROUGH CULTURALLY SUSTAINING LEADERSHIP

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by

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San Francisco, California

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CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

I certify that I have read *Supporting Pacific Islander Student Success in Higher Education through Culturally Sustaining Leadership* by Nancy Ellen Martinsen, and that in my opinion this work meets the criteria for approving a dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree: Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership at San Francisco State University.

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SUPPORTING PACIFIC ISLANDER STUDENT SUCCESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH CULTURALLY SUSTAINING LEADERSHIP

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2017

Students with Pacific Islander (PI) heritage have among the lowest bachelor attainment rates with four-year degrees at only 15%. This study seeks to identify the strengths of Pacific Islanders (PI) by examining their experiences at Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISI), and then identifying how leaders at AANAPISI institutions can better support PI students' academic goals. This qualitative study used narrative inquiry methodology to present students' counter-narratives using data collected from seven focus groups at AANAPISI designated community colleges and four-year universities in Hawaii and the San Francisco Bay Area. The study's conceptual framework integrates three dynamic tensions: (de)colonization, (in)visibility, and hybridity providing a lens to help leaders better serve PI students as they encounter cultural strain in Western settings. Three findings emerged: 1) PIs actively experience colonization; 2) PI invisibility occurs at various educational levels; and 3) PIs address intricacies of identity through hybridity. Five forms of leadership theories are discussed highlighting Hattori's (2016) culturally sustaining leadership from a PI perspective. Recommendations include legislative, policy, and institutional actions. In conclusion, Hattori's Chamoru values of belonging and the primacy of natural environments are highlighted as key for promoting PI student success.

I certify that the Abstract is a correct representation of the content of this dissertation.

Chair, Dissertation Committee

Dec. 5, 2017
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Chapter One: Pacific Islanders in Higher Education

In 1964, federal mandates under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act restricted the distribution of federal funds to higher education institutions that discriminated based on race, color, or national origin. The government intended to force colleges to open their doors to students of color. Unfortunately, five decades later, the promise of an equitable educational opportunity for all lacks fruition (Chang, 2000). One group not receiving equitable access to educational opportunities in the United State are students with Pacific Islander heritage. Pacific Islanders (PI) are people who have ancestral origins to geographic locations across a broad region of the Pacific Ocean that includes the area of Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia (Uehara, Chugen, & Staley Raatior, 2017). Higher education institutions must be accountable for supporting and promoting inclusivity toward Pacific Islander students. As a student service professional, I have observed firsthand incidents where postsecondary institutions have not met the needs of Pacific Islander students. Therefore, as a researcher writing a dissertation on an asset-based view of Pacific Islander student experiences at designated Asian American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISI), I captured the counter-narratives of tenacious students who have discovered how to persist in higher education.

This research study proposes to address the problem by answering three questions: 1) What is the Pacific Islander student experience at AANAPISI designated institutions? 2) What can leaders at AANAPISI designated institutions do to better

support Pacific Islander student academic goals? and 3.) What effective leadership theories should educators practice to increase institutional equity? This study, therefore, contributes to the scant literature on AANAPISIs, which are the newest nation-wide culturally based higher education initiative to enhance academic performance rates. This study captures the meaning PI students assign to their experiences in educational institutions that are designated AANAPISIs. If an institution is AANAPISI designated, then it should be more inclusive to all students who identify as Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI). The study seeks to uncover if and how this inclusivity takes place. The second research question addresses effective leadership needed to ensure that designated AANAPISIs are addressing disparities regarding AAPI retention and graduation. The third question explores strength-based leadership approaches to advocate for and holistically support Pacific Islander students.

I have chosen a form, organization, and written style for this dissertation intended to best address the research questions. Therefore, the dissertation is written in a non-standard format, organized into four chapters that serve to emphasize the analysis and the recommendations for leadership. Chapter One begins by framing the educational problem and my personal and professional positionalities. I provide context for Asian American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions where data for this study were collected. I describe the study's methodology protocol and introduce the conceptual framework. The chapter concludes with a review of relevant literature. Chapter Two uses the students' counter-narratives to present the findings related to PI students' experiences. Chapter Three draws

on my personal narratives as a leader to identify the leadership theories that influenced my professional growth and increasing responsiveness toward the Pacific Islander community. The dissertation concludes with Chapter Four, which contains recommendations for action that are written to address all AAPI leaders on college campuses with specific regard to AANAPISI programming staff.

Educational Problem

Pacific Islander students have particularly low attainment rates in college settings, with a four-year degree rate of 15% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015b) in comparison to the total population, where approximately 30% hold a four-year degree or more (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). This trend has gone unnoticed for far too long and on social justice grounds, cannot continue. In describing the nature of this lack of equity in access to education for Pacific Islanders, educational institutions and much of educational research invokes a cultural deficit model, which are based upon racial and ethnic stereotypes. Specifically, the cultural deficit model claims that minority cultural values, instilled by families of origin, are inferior to those from the dominant culture and that these cultural values attribute to the low academic attainment of non-mainstream groups (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001). This study refutes the cultural deficit model that identifies the student as the problem. Instead it seeks to identify the strengths of Pacific Islanders and places responsibility for lack of access and opportunities on the colleges and universities that have structural impediments to PI student success. Higher education leaders can utilize a

strength-based approach to increase Pacific Islander retention and four-year graduation rates by advancing cultural inclusivity.

The Pacific Islander student experience has regularly been an ignored and untold story within educational discourse. It is difficult to accurately measure the academic performance of PI students, due to their small population size. The 2010 U.S Census reported that there were 1.2 million Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders in the United States, which makes up approximately, one percent of the total U.S. population. The federal government combined Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) under one label to simplify the allocation of funds and to categorize people in government analysis (Hune & Nomura, 2003). As a group that “did not fit the system neatly,” Pacific Islanders “got to be Asians” (Wright & Spickard, 2002, p. 106).

As a combined group, AAPI demonstrates the highest academic achievement profile of any of the ethnic groups tracked by the federal government. AAPIs have an 80% high school graduation rate and an over 45% Bachelor’s degree or higher attainment rate (Teranishi, 2008). Although the AAPI grouping is far from monolithic, the success of the broad group has contributed to scant research specific to the Pacific Islander population (Teranishi, 2012). Over the past decade, Asian American or Pacific Islander college students were specifically highlighted in only one percent of articles written in five of the most widely read peer-reviewed higher education academic journals (Museus & Kiang, 2009). The lack of adequate research on the strengths and needs of Pacific Islander students means that reform efforts to increase equity in educational policies and

practices are, therefore, unlikely to directly serve Pacific Islander students (Teranishi, Behringer, Grey, & Parker, 2009).

The federally funded AANAPISI grant programs were created to increase retention and graduation rates through various academic support services for Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander students. Students under AANAPISI comprise of 48 different ethnic subgroups (CARE, 2015). Although the recent AANAPISI grants appear to address the shortage of educational focus on Pacific Islanders, campuses that are awarded funding will only concentrate on PI research if their institutions are serving high concentrations of PI students. This study exposes the urgency in supporting PI students within higher education and introduces a distinct conceptual framework to guide and enhance their academic achievement. I will later identify my conceptual framework and demonstrate how understanding dynamic tensions is the most fitting frame to use when critiquing the Pacific Islander experience in higher education.

In 2010, the Pacific Islander population increased more than three times faster than the total U.S. population back from 2000, and in California, the Pacific Islander population increased about 30% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The AAPI population in the United States is expected to continue to increase to over 47 million by 2060, yet they are the most understudied racial group in the country (The White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, 2012). Currently, there is an increasing number of Pacific Islanders who are departing the islands to live in the continental United States. In

addition, Native Hawaiians are leaving Hawaii and immigrating to the mainland, mainly due to cost of living and lack of competitive employment. In 2012, 1,417 Hawaii residents migrated to the mainland (U.S. Census, 2012), this figure increased drastically, almost eight times as much, where in 2015, 10,952 Hawaii residents migrated to the mainland (U.S. Census, 2015a). California is a primary relocation state for Native Hawaiians, so much so that there are currently more Native Hawaiians residing in California than in Hawaii (Halualani, 2002).

Similarly, citizens of Pacific island countries and territories are immigrating to the United States because college graduates are seeking better career opportunities (Docquier, Lohest, & Abdeslam, 2007). In more extreme cases Pacific island residents vacate because they have encountered environmentally influenced migration (Farbotko & Lazrus, 2012) due to sea level rising, coastal erosion, coral bleaching, and climate pattern changes such as drought and storm surges (Mimura et al., 2007). The expansion of research on Pacific Islanders is needed due to their continuous migration and to the projected increase in population in the continental U.S., particularly in the state of California.

Personal and Student Service Professional Positionalities

I am a Filipina-American and growing up I identified as both Asian and Pacific Islander. From the beginning of my identity memories, I have always known controversy in the quest to label Filipinos as either Asians or Pacific Islanders because Filipinos feel strongly about identifying as one race over the other. Filipinos who prefer being

associated with the Asian label choose this association because as an aggregate group, Asians are high performing in many aspects of life. Filipinos who identify as Pacific Islander like to remind naysayers that the Philippines are indeed islands in the Pacific, and because the country is made up of islands, there are many similarities that they share with other Pacific Islanders regarding way of life, customs, and traditions. Soon after I moved to the Bay Area, I attended a Pacific Islander conference. At that time, I identified as Pacific Islander, and in the beginning of the conference they welcomed everyone in all the different Pacific Islander languages. Expecting to be included, I noticed with confusion that Tagalog was not one of them. The program had pictures of all the different Pacific Islander flags and again the Philippines was not included. I then realized that the people at this conference did not identify Filipinos to be one of them, a Pacific Islander. I was slightly embarrassed but nonetheless, decided to stay. I was invited to this conference by a Chamoru elder who worked on campus. I thought he invited me to attend the conference because it concerned my own identity, but then I wondered if he invited me to come so that I would strengthen my role as an ally.

At the conference, Dr. Victor Thompson, the first Pacific Islander Superintendent in the U.S., and Executive Director of the National Education Network, spoke of the unfavorable statistics of Pacific Islanders in his school district. He revealed that only one in ten PI students graduate from high school. Of that 10% with a high school diploma, only one in ten would go on to higher education, and of that 10%, that only one in ten would earn a four-year degree. Dr. Thompson is from the Long Beach school district.

Data collected by the California Department of Education (CDE) through the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) reveals that one Long Beach high school located on the East side, had devastating high school drop-out rates. A four year-cohort of students were tracked from 2011/2012-2014/2015, which represents grades 9-12. The first year had the largest high school drop-out percentage of 37.5% of Pacific Islanders leaving without earning their high school diplomas. In the second year of the cohort, 20% of students. The third year had the smallest percentage with 6.1%, and then in the cohort's fourth year of high school 25.9% of Pacific Islander students dropped out. In his plea to ask the conference attendees to help him fix this dire situation his voice cracked, revealing how heavyhearted he was that these statistics were describing his peoples' youth. At that moment, whether I was a Pacific Islander or not, I vowed to help him.

My career in education first began as an undergraduate working for Upward Bound during their summer program. I recall vividly when one of the high school students who was working on a video project requested that I be interviewed. I happily agreed to be part of the film. His first question had to do with how I felt about student tracking. At that time, I had never heard of the term "student tracking." I asked him to give me examples of what other people had said so that I would not repeat anything, but in truth, I was ashamed that I was unfamiliar with his project's topic. He explained student tracking to be the phenomenon that takes place when certain students are tracked to either be college bound or tracked to simply graduate high school without taking

college preparatory courses. I began to realize that I was not knowledgeable in this subject because I was privileged enough to have been tracked to attend college. I always knew that I was college bound and the awareness that not all students grew up with that mind frame and encouragement was disheartening and unsettling.

I graduated with a B.A. in Journalism, although during my undergraduate college years I worked as a student assistant with two federal TRiO programs. These were Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search and my experiences there ignited a passion to advocate for marginalized student populations and to campaign for educational equity. After graduation, I sought out a position at CSU Monterey Bay in the Outreach and Admissions department. I craved the opportunity to counter tracking by presenting to high school classes and informing students about the college preparatory requirements and the steps they would need to take to be eligible for California State University (CSU) admission. Therefore, I have worked in student services for most of my adult life and in total, have worked in this role within the California State University system for slightly over a decade.

My longest-term position was as a counselor in the Office of Prospective Student Services for nine years at Cal State East Bay. This position afforded me opportunities to travel to heavily populated Pacific Islander educational environments. As the only AAPI counselor in my department, I was designated to specifically attend all conferences and fairs that focused on recruiting Asian and Pacific Islander students. I was also assigned as the state of Hawaii recruiter, which allowed me to visit the state twice a year for

recruitment purposes and to personally learn more about the PI culture and community. I was the admission representative for the state of Hawaii for six years. Through this experience I learned cultural norms. The biggest lessons I learned stemmed from the impact of coming from a collectivist community. I observed how the decisions of whether to attend college and where to go to college were decided as a family and not by the individual student. I therefore learned the value of building meaningful relationships with prospective students, their families, and school personnel. Through my work with admissions, I also learned that Pacific Islanders did not participate in small talk. If I asked them a question, they would respond and then genuinely inquire about my life to establish a connection. I struggled to accept that email correspondences were not prompt, but that if someone said that they would help that they meant it.

In January 2017, I began a new position as the Cal State East Bay's Asian Pacific American Student Success (APASS) Coordinator. My tasks include closing a previous AANAPISI funded grant program and launching the new AANAPISI funded grant program we were recently awarded. The new grant is called Transfer Asian Pacific American Student Success (Transfer APASS) and focuses on the AAPI transfer population. The goal of Transfer APASS is to recruit 100 students each year, with enrollment beginning in the Fall quarter. There are various components to the grant, which allow students with hectic schedules to still participate.

The CSU system mandates a University Writing Skills Requirement (UWSR) for students to demonstrate writing competency at an advanced level. All Transfer APASS

students will be encouraged to partake in a writing boot camp to better prepare them to pass the WST exam, which will meet the UWSR. The CSU system also mandates that all students complete three upper-division general education (GE) units. Transfer APASS offers a General Education cohort with three upper-division Asian Pacific Islander themed GE courses, and then a one-unit General Studies (GS) transfer success course, which will focus on campus resources, AAPI identity, and career development. These students will take one GE and GS course per quarter for three quarters. If students' schedules do not permit them to participate in the General Education cohort, they will still be able to participate in the grant's student services. The student support services include academic advising, peer-mentoring, tutoring, loan laptop services, career advising, internship placement assistance, scholarship opportunities, cultural events, and community building.

Apart from the Transfer APASS program, my new role assists with any of the university's AAPI initiatives such as facilitating and organizing AAPI culturally relevant campus programming. I strive to educate the campus and create a university-wide comprehension regarding who our AAPI students are and examine how the university can effectively address the needs of this student population. I also support and foster the personal and professional well-being of AAPI faculty and staff. I am most excited for the opportunity to put my dissertation to beneficial use by transforming my findings into practice.

Setting: Asian American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISI)

The White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI) specifically focused on Pacific Islanders due to unfavorable statistics regarding limited English proficiency, military casualty rates, health, poverty, low educational attainment rates, employment, and housing insecurity (White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders, 2012). One of the components of this initiative is the AANAPISI program. The AANAPISI mission is geared toward expanding college institutions' capacities to serve Asian Americans and Native American Pacific Islanders residing within the United States and its territories. An institution awarded with an AANAPISI grant, is financially supported to increase resources toward AAPI students with the intent of increasing retention and graduation.

The AANAPISI initiative is one of the newest additions to the category of educational establishments within the minority-serving institutions (MSIs). The designation and funding for AANAPISIs emerged in 2008 and launched in 2009. The stipulations required for consideration of federal designation and grant funding is a minimum enrollment of ten percent full-time Asian American and Pacific Islander students, within this group of students, 50% must be low-income. Low-income is defined by the federal government through Pell grant eligibility (Teranishi, Alcantar, Martin, Nguyen, 2015a).

In 2009, there were 116 institutions eligible for AANAPISI designation, twelve designated institutions, and six funded AANAPISIs (Teranishi, Martin, Bordoloi, Pazich, Alcantar, & Nguyen, 2015b). An institution with the designation label implies that they

met the criteria listed above, whereas, a funded institution is a designated institution that applied for grant based funds and was scored and selected to receive them by the U.S. Department of Education. The designated institutions enrolled and awarded nearly 9,500 associate's and bachelor's degrees to AAPI. AANAPISI became the sought-after solution for high enrollment AAPI institutions to provide focused interventions to specifically address the needs of this student population. In 2012, just a few years after its inception, the number of AANAPISIs soared to 153 eligible, 78 designated, and 21 funded AANAPISIs (Teranishi et al., 2015a). AANAPISI programs reflect an increase in the AAPI populations especially within concentrated geographic regions. Today, more than 50% of all AANAPISIs are situated in the Western and Pacific regions of the United States (Chaudhari, Chan, & Ha, 2013).

A closer examination of the institutions that qualify for AANAPISI funding, revealed that in 2007, these colleges enrolled 75% of all low income AAPI students within the U.S. (Dortch 2009; Teranishi et al., 2015b). Data analysis concluded that numerous AAPI students who are enrolled in AANAPISIs come from first generation, low income homes and low performing schools, which has resulted in their lack of preparation and ability to operate at the college level. The low levels of academic preparation force a large majority of AAPI students to begin their higher education journey via a community college track (Teranishi, 2012), and therefore, more than 50% of all AANAPISIs are community colleges (Teranishi et al., 2015a).

The AANAPISI initiative has become one of the most momentous and efficient federal government investments to aid AAPI students through their college experiences. The AANAPISI program has resulted in three advantageous revelations. First, it reframes the narrative of AAPI students, which allows institutions to be better informed about the struggles this student population encounters throughout their journeys toward their educational goals. Second, it demonstrates how an increase in intended resources can have a remarkable effect on academic performance for AAPI low-income students. Third, it has provided campuses with data to affirm that they play an integral role with the implementation of their policies and services; colleges can help AAPI students successfully combat institutional barriers toward college completion (Teranishi, 2012). The U.S. Department of Education recognized the need to support the AAPI student population and as a result, colleges are discovering best practices regarding how to fully utilize resources.

Methodology

This dissertation uses a qualitative approach, and specifically is grounded in narrative inquiry (Boylorn, 2011; Clandinin, Pushor, & Orr, 2007) to highlight the counter-narratives of the Pacific Islander students who participated. At first, I contemplated conducting interviews for the data collection, because I believed this method would capture more in-depth stories. My mentor, Dr. Mary Hattori, who serves as the Director of Communications from the Center of Pacific Islands Studies department

at the University of Hawaii, Manoa, reminded me that Pacific Islanders are a collectivist community and that organizing focus groups would be the most culturally relevant method to collect data on this population.

I initially hypothesized that the tiny number of enrolled Pacific Islanders in California negatively contributed to their low academic performance rates; however, despite the increased PI student population size in higher education institutions in Hawaii, low educational attainment rates are comparable to the higher education institutions in California. Therefore, a higher percentage of PI students in Hawaii colleges and universities represented increased physical visibility, but did not equate to higher academic performance rates. This common pattern encouraged me to examine educational institutional structures across the two states. California and Hawaii have the highest PI concentrated populations within the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014), and since I had opportunities to collect data in both states, I incorporated both geographic regions to my study design.

Study design. I conducted seven focus groups: four in Hawaii and three in the Bay Area. All participants were: 1) 18 years of age or older; 2) Self-identified as being of Pacific Islander descent; and 3) Attending a two-year or four-year college with the intention of earning a four-year degree. The duration of the focus groups lasted between forty-five to ninety minutes. In Hawaii, I gained access to conduct four focus groups, two with community college students and two with four-year university students. In the Bay Area, I organized three focus groups, one at a community college and two at four-year

universities. At each location, I intended to conduct focus groups of four to six participants and I offered small incentives, which included pizza or five-dollar Starbucks gift cards. All the student participants attended AANAPISI designated colleges.

The recruitment process centered on personal connections. I set up my focus groups solely utilizing the relationships I formed through various AAPI settings. I was apprehensive that my outsider positionality might negatively affect my ability to recruit participants. Pacific Islanders highly regard trust, which was most evident in Hawaii. I was very fortunate to have found educational allies who supported me enough to encourage students to respond to my invitations and participate in my focus groups. In both states, I communicated with numerous AAPI faculty, staff, and student leaders regarding my study. I was only able to secure confirmations and conduct focus groups at institutions where I had a connection with someone who could give assurance to the students that I was trustworthy.

Focus group preparation. This study comprised of seven focus groups for a total of thirty-five participants. I created a safe space for students to speak openly about their educational journeys. The primary approach of communication among many Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders is a form of oral communication, which can culturally be referred to as “talk story” (Taosaka, 2002). Talk story is a form of oral communication or co-narration. It is the joint presentation of firsthand experiences, information, and interpretations of an event by two or more storytellers (Taosaka, 2002; Affonso, Shibuya & Frueh, 2007). Pacific Islanders did not have a written language until

they were colonized. Therefore, knowledge has been passed down through storytelling. The phrase “talk story” derives from Native Hawaiian culture. In Hawaii, the phrase is commonly used by many residents and describes the action of Pacific Islanders verbally sharing narratives with one another.

For the focus group participants to feel comfortable sharing their stories with me, I discovered I needed to be more culturally sensitive. Pacific Islanders value connecting with people and building relationships. I found from my first focus group in Hawaii, that it was inappropriate for me to begin the focus group without first trying to establish a relationship with the participants. I learned that before every focus group started, that I needed to take time out to talk story with the students and share a little bit about myself to help make them feel more relaxed and to ensure that I was trustworthy.

As previously mentioned, I was nervous about conducting focus groups, especially in Hawaii, because of my outsider status. I thought I needed to pass as someone who grew up in Hawaii, to successfully collect data. Through my work at Cal State East Bay as the Hawaii state pre-admission recruiter for over six years, I used to travel to Hawaii, twice a year. After the first few years, I realized that I altered the way I spoke once the plane landed on Hawaiian soil. I talked slower and developed an accent that in my mind sounded local, and it was passing, at least to the other tourists on the islands. I also paid mindful attention to what I packed. I did not want to wear anything that revealed that I was a visitor because I did not want to show up as a colonizer and appear like I was trying to advertise a higher status. On my first trip to Hawaii, I packed a

pair of slacks, a nice blouse, a cardigan, and black closed toed dress shoes for my first school visit, which is what I typically wore when I recruited at high schools. The high school counselor took one look at me and said, “Wow, you are not from here!” After that trip, I learned to only pack dresses and “slippas” (flip flops) for Hawaii visits. All the cultural customs I have learned over the years weighed heavily on my conscience in preparation of my Hawaii focus groups.

Although, I did struggle with securing access for one of the California focus groups, I was a lot less anxious, and felt much more confident about conducting them in the state of California. I am actively involved in serving the Asian American Pacific Islander community, especially regarding higher education. I have taken leadership roles as the co-staff chair of the Asian Pacific Islander Faculty Staff Association, and served as a consultant for the previous AANAPISI grant at Cal State East Bay. I presented at multiple Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education (APAHE) conferences. I am also the President of the Northern California chapter for the National Pacific Islander Education Network. My commitment to the AAPI community has allowed me to engage and network with countless AAPI faculty, staff, and students. It was not difficult for me to secure the first and second focus groups because of these connections. I confirmed my third focus group, with the help of a previous student, who knew of my background and supported my work. Some of the students who were in the focus groups had previously met me in settings where I was advocating for our community. Unlike Hawaii, I was not

concerned about the outfits I wore for the focus groups in California. Overall, I was not worried about being viewed an outsider, which allowed me to be more relaxed.

The focus groups served as an introduction to the student participants and their stories. They also allowed me to actively participate and engage in Pacific Islander culture. I offered food to establish a sense of community. I prioritized relationship building at all the focus group settings. Students mentioned the phrase “respect your elders” in every focus group in both states. When I asked a question, I witnessed the younger participants yielding the floor to the elders in the group. I experienced the cultural value of reciprocity (Misco & Lee, 2012) and learned that for the student participants to share their stories with me and to trust me with their narratives, that I needed to be open and talk story about my firsthand experiences.

Data collection. I researched the colleges the participants attended to build a profile for each campus. I searched college websites for data on PI enrollment and academic attainment rates. During my analysis process, I collected the hand-written reflections from focus group participants and triangulated these responses with my data memos and the themes I pulled from the focus group transcriptions. Narrative inquiry is the most appropriate design for this study, because it allows me to structure experiences and give it meaning, and the telling of, and retelling of, stories is a culturally relevant practice of Pacific Islanders (Taosaka, 2002).

Focus group access in Hawai'i. I was confident that it would be easy for me to locate AANAPISI designated campuses in Hawaii, since designation means that an

institution has enrolled minimally 10% AAPI students, and that 50% of this student population are considered low-income. I learned from my Hawaii state college recruitment experience that most Hawaii residents were AAPI, which reflected their college enrollments. I conducted two focus groups at the community college level, although neither of these institutions were awarded AANAPISI grants. I also conducted two focus groups at the four-year university level, where one of the institutions was awarded an AANAPISI grant. Although, I do not live in Hawaii, negotiating access was not difficult due to the help of a previous CSUEB student, my mentor, Dr. Mary Hattori, and an associate that I met at an AANAPISI conference. There were five participants in the first focus group, two participants in the second; the third focus group contained five participants, and the last one was comprised of ten participants.

Focus group access in California. California has concentrated numbers of PIs in Northern California, specifically within the greater Bay Area (U.S. Census, 2010). Several Bay Area colleges meet the AANAPISI designated requirement. My recruitment began with contacting AANAPISI program staff. In the Bay Area, I conducted one focus group at a community college and two at four-year universities, all three institutions were awarded AANAPISI grants. It was easier for me to exercise trust with the California groups, because I had previously established connections with most of the participants.

Six students participated in the first California focus group. I had previously met a few students from a campus tour at Cal State East Bay and at the Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education (APAHE) conference. The gravity of forming trusting

relationships was reiterated with this comment from a focus group participant, “Well, I wouldn’t have came, if I didn’t know you, it’s because I know you, so it was like alright, Nancy is cool people, so I’m gonna go to this focus group.” As noted earlier, personal connections were how I secured all my focus groups. The second focus group was at a four-year university with five participants, and my third focus group at a four-year university with two participants.

Focus group process. The focus groups were all audiotaped. I took sparse notes during these conversations to capture some visual details concerning body language and environment. I wrote data memos after every focus group. I asked all participants to write a brief reflection where they could write sentences, bullet points, or draw images that represented barriers and supports regarding their college experience. I also asked them to write down advice they would give to an incoming student beginning college. I had an audio-recorder and used my cell phone as a backup device to ensure recording redundancy in case my recorder malfunctioned.

I collected all data and conducted all focus groups between October and November of 2016. Throughout the different focus groups, students would ask me what I was going to do with their stories and how many people would read my dissertation. As related questions kept being asked, I realized that the students were holding me accountable. I appreciated the honor of having them share their stories with me. I also accepted the responsibility of being action-oriented by using their stories to create data-based and practical recommendations for institutions to adopt.

My positionality. I was conscious about being viewed an outsider, and did not want my status to negatively affected the level of comfort students felt in sharing their stories. To address this concern, I asked an authoritative or familiar figure whom the student participants trusted, like their professor, advisor, friend, or family member to help me recruit focus group participants. When a familiar contact recruited for me three things happened: 1) It showed the students that I received approval; 2) It showed that I could be trusted; and 3) It established that the focus group environment was safe (Poasa, Mallinckrodt, & Suzuki, 2000).

Narrative inquiry. This qualitative study was designed as narrative inquiry (Boylorn, 2011; Clandinin, Pushor, & Orr, 2007) and focused on the experiences of participants and the meanings they made of their lived realities. I was attracted to narrative inquiry because Pacific Islanders culturally value storytelling, and so I wanted to create a space for them to share their storied lives. The student narratives in Chapter Two portray Pacific Islander human experiences in higher education settings. A collection of PI narratives can be used to gain a better understanding of this population. A dissertation cannot be submitted through oral discourse, and therefore, narrative inquiry is the most appropriate format to honor and retell the stories of Pacific Islander students.

Bruce (2008) reminds researchers that historically marginalized populations have experienced being silenced, and have not been included in the research process, which may make them hesitant to share their stories. This was evident in one of my focus groups at a university in California, where a participant shared that this was the first time

she had ever been invited to a space, solely, for Pacific Islanders. In two focus groups in Hawaii, students shared that this was the first time anyone had asked them about their college experiences. Narrative inquiry promotes equality through the understanding that both participants and researchers have a voice. I was considerate of giving students the appropriate time and space to share their full stories. Narrative inquiry involves mutual storytelling; as a researcher, I needed to establish a caring relationship where both the students and I were invested in the reciprocal process of sharing our stories with each other (Clandinin, Pushor, & Orr, 2007).

Narrative inquiry is an interactive process between the researcher and participants or co-researchers. Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) describe four turns that researchers experience that result in a change of direction from one way of thinking: 1) A change in the relationship between the researcher and research participant; 2) A move from the use of number toward the use of data; 3) A change from a focus on the general and universal toward the local and specific; and 4) A widening in acceptance of alternative ways of knowing. In the first turn, the concept of reciprocity is the main theme of this turn. It is the understanding that both parties will learn and change from this experience. The second turn serves as a reminder that the numbers represent real people. Only 15% of Pacific Islanders have earned their four-year degree (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015b); these university graduates have narratives that can deepen the understanding of how they progressed toward their academic attainment. The third turn allows me to narrow in on the students who participated in the focus groups and how they encountered the

constructs of this study's conceptual framework, (de)colonization, (in)visibility, and hybridity. In the final turn, the concept of multiple ways of knowing was most evident through the varied PI higher education experiences represented in this study (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007).

Narrative inquiry promotes visibility, one of the constructs of the conceptual framework that will soon be discussed, and offers the semblance of truth, as its interpretive power. Narrative inquiry focuses on telling the whole story (Clandinin, Pushor, & Orr, 2007), and the rendering and sharing of the overall understanding of human experiences. Narrative inquiry incorporates me as the researcher, and provides me with a space to expand the narrative to share my own lived experiences. I wanted my story and the stories of the students from the focus groups to serve as counter-narratives to the cultural deficit model. I also hoped that through sharing their stories aloud that the student focus group participants would acknowledge their perseverance.

Data analysis. I completed data collection by November 2016. I enjoyed reliving my focus group experiences through transcribing. I generally transcribed word for word, skipping only small sections that did not address the research questions. My analysis did not rely on extensive multiple rounds of coding (Saldaña, 2012), instead I took a similar approach, where I read through all the data and pulled out common themes. I discovered ten recurring themes and then eliminated themes that overlapped and themes that did not relate to my research questions. Drawing on narrative inquiry approaches that prefer the

holistic to building the whole from parts, I decided to go in-depth with six participants' narratives out of the thirty-five total participants.

It was very challenging to choose which students I specifically wanted to highlight for Chapter Two. I aimed for a set of students who accurately depicted the strengths and struggles PI students experience in college. When choosing the students to highlight, I knew I wanted to select students from both two and four-year colleges. Before I had narrowed down my scope to six, I was looking at ten students who had shared powerful experiences. I chose six students who epitomized the conceptual framework, had vastly diverse experiences, and who I felt educational leaders could learn the most from. I selected student profiles that best represented the collective of focus group participants in the study and the diversity of this student population. The six students are from five out of the seven focus groups, however the two focus groups that did not have a selected highlighted student were still represented through brief stories shared within specific student narratives. The six students I selected varied in ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, and residency statuses. They each had different majors and levels of campus involvement. Their primary commonality was that they all attended AANAPISI designated institutions and they were all incredibly proud to be Pacific Islanders. Table 1 depicts the demographics of the six participants whom I selected to highlight. I provide detailed student profiles of these focus group students in Chapter Two and a demographic breakdown of all participants in *Appendices B and C*.

Table 1

Focus Group Participant Demographics

FG Participant	Ethnicity	Gender	CA/ HI	2YR/ 4YR College	Major
Kupono	Native Hawaiian	Male	HI	2 YR	Hawaiian Studies
Steven	Chamorro	Male	CA	2 YR	Sociology
Masina	Tongan	Female	CA	4 YR	Ethnic Studies
Lani	Native Hawaiian	Female	HI	4 YR	Ethnic Studies
Lika	Samoan and Mexican	Female	CA	2 YR	Criminal Justice
Chris	Samoan	Male	HI	4 YR	Communication

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework consists of three circles, each designating a tension that influences the Pacific Islander student experience in higher education (see Figure 1). This framework guided the dissertation's review of literature, analysis of the focus group data, analysis of my leadership turning points, and the final recommendations.

Figure 1. Influences on Pacific Islander students' educational experiences

The outer and largest circle represents colonization and decolonization. Pacific Islanders have been victims of colonization for about 500 years (Feyrer & Sacerdote, 2009). Social constructs created through colonization are still used in the (dis)placement of Pacific Islanders as outsiders. This study highlights the importance of understanding how the deep-rooted effects of colonization relate to Pacific Islander students' low academic attainment rates. Decolonization is the other half of the first circle's binary. Decolonization is a complex construct. In this dissertation, decolonization is not defined as the rejection of colonization, but rather the undoing of colonization. It is the intricate process of replacing the dominant ideology with the culture of the marginalized (Sium, Desai, & Ritskes, 2012).

The middle circle exhibits the binary tension between invisibility and visibility. This study will showcase the many facets of invisibility, which include exclusion from physical spaces and educational discourse. Pacific Islander students experience invisibility in educational settings through their scarcity in course content, small enrollment population, stereotypes, and missed classes. They also encounter invisibility with their absence in research literature and in educational policy decisions. Visibility is the other half of this binary. It is demonstrated through a curriculum and knowledge based presence in the classroom and participation in campus engagement.

The inner circle presents hybridity as its own complex binary. Hybridity coherently acknowledges the power relations engrossed in intercultural mixtures (Mabardi, 2000). Hybridity can be perceived as a problem or a threat and in contrast, it can be viewed as an instrument of liberation (Appadurai, 2006). The focus group participants present both positive and negative narratives that address the intricacy of dueling identities. Hybridity recognizes that Pacific Islanders are placed in a PI culture/Western practice binary. This binary can result in feeling pressured to take on a hybrid identity that praises the replacement of their cultural heritage with an Americanized one. However, if given the correct tools, it is possible for students to successfully navigate both worlds.

Analytical significance of the conceptual framework's constructs. The three constructs that make up the conceptual framework for this dissertation -- (de)colonization, (in)visibility, and hybridity -- are not novel constructs for scholars who

are using a critical lens to focus on the experience of marginalized groups. What is new is this combination of constructs applied to better understand the higher education experiences of Pacific Islanders. In my search for relevant literature I worked with San Francisco State University's library research commons staff and I completed searches in ERIC (EBSCO) and Google Scholar, and was not able to locate literature that linked all three conceptual framework constructs with Pacific Islanders. These intertwined constructs create a more accurate lens for focusing on the PI experience because they provide educators with an awareness of how PI students arrive and exist in college. This clearer understanding should inform the practices colleges adopt to better support the PI student population. I will examine how other scholars have utilized components of this study's conceptual framework as a comparison to demonstrate why and how the framework provides the best fit for the PI demographic.

The first tension in the conceptual framework is (de)colonization. Edward Said's (1978) book entitled, *Orientalism* depicted patronizing cultural representation of the East. Said showcased the scope and extent of colonial dominance and how Western ideology created and reproduced knowledge from its worldview in ways that misrepresented and oppressed the colonized. Orientalism rationalizes Western ideology; this perception disregards an urgency to reexamine higher educational structures because they were established using Western principles. Specifically, Said debunked Western construction of Eastern identity as being backward, uncivilized, and inferior, a stance that created a rationale that Eastern civilizations needed to be rescued by the West. This mentality

remains prevalent today with Pacific Islander communities in terms of the United States' government intervention and military occupation on their islands. Although, these military occupations are utilized for self-defense of the U.S., because they are the nation's military outposts on the other side of the world, the U.S. Government has placed constraints on the U.S. citizenship statuses for all residents of the islands, except for the state of Hawaii.

Another renowned author who wrote about the impact of colonial influence was Frantz Fanon. Fanon was a revolutionary and theorist who critically analyzed the psychology of colonized peoples and their path toward liberation (Fanon, Sartre, & Farrington, 1963). He wrote that true decolonization will not occur without a violent struggle on the part of the colonized to free themselves from their ingrained inferiority complex. Fanon wrote about the difficulty of combating decolonization and theorized that the colonized must first re-discover self-worth (Fanon, Sartre, & Farrington, 1963). This self-love process was described enthusiastically in Chapter Two's focus group narratives, from student participants who learned about their cultures in their college classrooms, which resulted in a greater appreciation of their native heritages.

The conceptual framework defines decolonization as an undoing of colonization and the destruction of the placement as outsiders (Sium, Desai, & Ritskes, 2012). The framework pinpoints education as the medium to promote decolonization. The review of relevant literature found later in this chapter describes current decolonization practices, which incorporate culturally sustaining pedagogy, decolonizing educational programs,

Ethnic and Culture Studies programs, and campus involvement and engagement. The narratives in Chapter Two incorporate lived experiences of the literature in Chapter One, which demonstrates how students were experiencing decolonization regarding culture-based courses and campus involvement.

The second element of the frame is (in)visibility. Indeed, there is vast literature on the invisibility of marginalized populations. A classic example is Ralph Ellison's (1952) novel, *Invisible Man*, that demonstrated how racism is an obstacle to individual identity, which leads to invisibility. He described invisibility not through a physical condition, but rather the result of the refusal of others to see him. In Chapter Two, one student described feeling like her culture was watered down when she went from a 2-year to a 4-year. She expressed her thoughts on the AAPI label being used to appease PIs as if they were being served too, but they were not. She yearned to have been given an opportunity to take one Pacific Islands course and would have settled for an online course. A more modern example of racial invisibility is from Franklin and Boyd-Franklin (2000), who are from the field of Psychology. They formulated "invisibility syndrome" to convey the effects of racism on African-American males. They investigated the subjective sense of psychological invisibility through an examination of inner beliefs that personal character and abilities are not recognized or valued by others due to racial prejudice.

Another example is the work of Prokhovnik (1998), who comes from a political science background and wrote an article in the *Feminist Review* that confronted gendered invisibility. She illustrated the invisibility females endure through the recognition of

gendered subjectivity and the pursuit toward full citizenship. She disclosed that access to citizenship is highly gendered and women, unlike men, are often forced to earn their citizenship by participating in activities in the public realm such as, entering the workforce or claiming state benefits. Pacific Islanders who live on American Pacific territories, apart from Hawaii, are treated as second class citizens with specific stipulations assigned to their residency statuses. As another example, Makadon (2011) exposed invisibility caused by sexual orientation. Invisibility within the LGBTQ community is most prevalent in health journals, which describe significant health care disparities and limited health data (Makadon, 2011). Physicians contribute strongly to this invisibility due to a discomfort they may have with asking patients about sexual health, identity, and behavior (Cahill & Makadon, 2014).

Overall, the work of these scholars and theorists establish that when someone is not from mainstream culture, they experience invisibility when they are spoken for, dehumanized, and are excluded in public policies and community building initiatives. The conceptual framework portrayed invisibility as being unseen through unfamiliarity, othering, and physical absence. Discussion located in the review of relevant literature and student narratives demonstrate how invisibility is countered through, the promotion of PI cultural presence in education institutional practices and students' ability to participate and engage in their ancestry, traditions, family, language, and cultural pride.

The third construct within the conceptual model is hybridity. Research on hybridity was initially affiliated with race (Collins, 1990). Racial constructs of black and

white have inconsistently indicated that people can be “between two cultures” or “neither one colour nor the other,” and have identities, which are “both/and” or “either/or” (Phoenix & Owen, 2000). In one focus group student narrative, a student struggled with her Samoan identity when she moved to American Samoa because she was perceived as being too Americanized, but when she moved back to California her initial set of friends teased her for being a young adult who still abided by her parents’ strict rules, she was viewed as being too islander. Bhabha (1994) is a seminal author of hybridity, who considered hybridity as a form of “in-between” space, which he terms “third space.” Bhabha does not place importance on tracing memories, which stem from two original spaces to form a third space; instead he describes hybridity as a third space where a new identity emerges. Ahmed (1999) also wrote about hybridity, and like Bhabha, it is not conceptualized as a struggle between two racial identities, but as traversing through and between identities.

Ahmed (1999) is a scholar whose areas of study include black feminism, post-colonial theory, and postmodernism. Specifically, Ahmed depicted a black woman passing as white, which demonstrated hybridity through the act of traversing between two races by passing into mainstream culture in space and time. The conceptual framework for this dissertation acknowledges the complexities of the hybridity discourse, while the student narratives in Chapter Two portray hybridity in numerous ways. A few students described hybridity when they shared experiences where they felt deprived of both their Pacific Islander and Western cultures until they enrolled in Ethnic or Cultural Studies

courses. This finding suggest that PI students need more classroom spaces where their cultures are validated. Hybridity has also been described as a connecting space (Bhabha, 1994), and therefore, if educational leaders can create spaces for students to harmonize their cultures, this could result in PI students learning how to navigate both worlds, which can improve self-perception and enhance academic success.

Hybridity has also been described as a conceptual tool for neutralizing and normalizing cultural differences (Kompridis, 2005). It acknowledges that there are multiple identities that may not necessarily be harmonizing, but are coexisting. When Bhabha writes about adaptation, he names hybridity as the tool to assist with the process of translating and trans-valuing cultural differences (Bhabha 1994; Hutnyk, 2005). Hybridity positively affects the capacity for agency (Bauhn & Tepe, 2016). The dual awareness allows individuals to evaluate the positives and negatives of both cultures and select the most progressive qualities to keep (Hutnyk, 2005); it could also serve as a mediator and bridge gaps within two cultures (Bauhn & Tepe, 2016).

Prior to this study, colonization, invisibility, and hybridity have been combined in other scholarship including work focused on hybridity formations within Asian male queer hybrid identities (Munoz, 1995), women of color and lesbian/bi-sexual hybridity (Trepanier, 1998), and hybridity and whiteness (Latimer, 2005). Internationally, these three constructs have been used to analyze nomadic indigenous communities in Mexico (Watkins, 2012) and a form of Protestant Christianity in Korea (Kim, 2008). Thus, these three constructs can be found together in literature, but as previously mentioned, my

searches of literature have not revealed that the three constructs have been combined to examine Pacific Islanders in higher education. (De)colonization, (in)visibility, and hybridity are distinct elements, although when they are interwoven to research the lived experiences of Pacific Islanders, educational leaders can develop a deeper understanding of how Pacific Islanders experience college, and more importantly, can modify institutional practices to better serve this growing population in higher education.

Relevant Literature

The emerging themes from the student narratives align with the conceptual framework constructs, which guides the search for relevant literature and informs educational leaders with promoting campus inclusivity. The conceptual framework closely examines and provides insight on how Pacific Islander students show up to college. The review of literature analyzes PI historical and cultural experiences by first using a colonization and invisible lens, and then investigates the student responses of coming from those backgrounds through an examination of the decolonization, visibility, and hybridity constructs. The scope of the literature covered in this chapter provides examples to institutional leaders of how PI students have felt excluded and included in their college campuses, which can inform educational leadership regarding adopting best practices to increase feelings of belongingness. The literature also demonstrates patterns of scant PI representation and how students combat their cultural anonymity through participating in social justice driven, on-campus student engagement opportunities.

Epeli Hau'ofa (1993) was a Tongan and Fijian writer and anthropologist who wrote an essay entitled, "Our Sea of Islands" where he promoted a positive perspective centered around being Oceania. His essay demonstrated how outsiders view the Pacific Islands as, islands in a far sea. This view depicts the islands as small and remote. The second view of the Pacific Islands is as a sea of islands. This latter view is an Oceania view and takes a holistic approach in recognizing the existence of connected relationships. Oceania refers to the lands and people from the Pacific islands (Thaman, 2001). The review of literature is organized by incorporating Hau'ofa's two perspectives from his essay (1993) with constructs of the conceptual framework. The first view, islands in a far sea, is the perspective that will be used to address colonization and invisibility within the PI community. The second view, a sea of islands, will guide the discussion on decolonization and visibility within education. It is important for educational leaders to understand both perceptions to check their own biases and if needed to use the literature to, identify current inequitable practices within their institutions and to uncover how to cultivate a more inclusive campus community.

Islands in a far sea. Colonization is the exploitation and subjugation of indigenous people in one territory by a political power from another territory (Chilisa, 2012). The Pacific Islander population has endured the ramifications of colonial rule since the 16th century (Feyrer & Sacerdote, 2009). Colonization is enforced and reinforced through systemic structures that position Pacific Islanders as outsiders. This

section clarifies how colonization continues to frame Pacific Islanders as inferior through a discussion of the historical context of colonization, religion, military, and nationhood.

Colonization is not new to marginalized populations; however, colonization is unique to Pacific Islanders in that less than half of the countries in the Pacific Islands are sovereign (Fischer, 2013). In many instances, colonizers continue to live on native lands and govern, such as in the American territories of the Federated States of Micronesia, American Samoa, Guam, and Hawaii. In 1521, Guam was “discovered” by Europeans while they were on a quest to find a western route across the Pacific Ocean (Feyrer & Sacerdote, 2009). Guam was the first of the Pacific Islands to be colonized by the Europeans, although many more followed.

Colonization often occurred because of trade routes and wind. Therefore, several islands within the Federated State of Micronesia had been, for the most part, left alone because they had calm winds and were not positioned in a location that benefited the Spanish trade route. In contrast, Guam proved to be very desirable, because it was directly on a trade route and the wind and currents in this area allowed for easy travel. By the 16th century Guam served as a popular port for Spanish ships on the Mexico to Philippines route. Over the centuries, the Pacific Islands have been colonized by many nations, including Spain, German, Japan, United Kingdom, France, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States (Fischer, 2013).

Native Hawaiians consider themselves to still be under colonial rule. Native Hawaiians who reside in the United States’ fiftieth state, describe their native lands,

Hawaii, to be occupied (Kauanui, 2005). In 1893, Queen Lili'uokalani the monarch of the Kingdom of Hawaii, was overthrown by a coup d'état organized by the U.S. Minister of Foreign Affairs. The queen did not realize that the attack on her throne, which led to her removal, was permanent. She believed that the U.S. government and President Harrison would right this wrong, but months after the attack Grover Cleveland became president. President Cleveland investigated the overthrow and deemed it unlawful. He recommended that the transitional government step down, but they refused. President Cleveland did not prioritize restoring power back to the queen. In 1894, the Republic of Hawaii was established with Sanford Ballard Dole who served as president, until his government secured Hawaii's annexation by the United States. On August 21, 1959 Hawaii was officially named the United States' fiftieth state (Kauanui, 2005).

Economic gain sparked initial interest in the Pacific Islands, but immediately after merchants arrived the missionaries followed. In 1668, Spain established a group of Jesuit missionaries in Guam. Missionaries became the first colonial residents on the Pacific Islands (Feyrer & Sacerdote, 2009). Missionaries utilized education to spread their religion and the colonial governments used schooling to convey power and force their language and values on to Pacific Islanders (Fischer, 2013). The Pacific island regions encountered heavy impacts from missionaries from 1780-1850, as they traveled throughout the region to influence the natives' religious and cultural practices (Allen & Heppner, 2011; Fischer, 2013). As a result, Pacific Islanders practice a variety of different denominations. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) was

notably influential in the South Pacific region through their missionary services. The LDS Church was especially desirable to Polynesians due to specific doctrines that identified them as the Lord's chosen. These teachings also supported a collectivist lifestyle that matched Pacific Islander cultural and family values (Allen & Heppner, 2011).

Thus, Western religion has become an integral part of PI identity. Two identifying markers that everyone in Samoa has are their name and their village, yet for people who leave the island, a third identifier of church is added to one's identity. The church has transformed into the new village for Pacific Islanders who have left their physical villages. It is a place for them to build community and to continue to practice their culture (Aina, 2002). A qualitative study gained the perspectives of Pacific American high school students and their parents regarding family, culture, community, and school (Vakalahi, 2009). Religion was the centrality of the focus for group participants. Their narratives highlighted church as an integral part and positive influence of family dynamics, cultural duality, peer group influence, cultural roots, peer interaction, and the prevention of dropping out of school.

In contrast to the Pacific Islands having a strong religious presence, the United States has a formidable military occupation in certain locations of the Pacific Islands including Hawaii, American Samoa, and Guam. The U.S. involvement in the Philippines was also a military excursion, but Filipinos are not considered PIs under the U.S. Census, and therefore, are not the focus here. There are five military branches in Hawaii: Marine

Corp, Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard. According to the U.S. Department of Defense there are 161 military installations in Hawaii (Niheu, Turbin, & Yamada, 2007). Chamorros lost a series of land-use battles with the U.S. military resulting in military bases occupying one-third of Guam's land (Natividad & Kirk, 2010). The U.S. military has a strong influence on American Samoa, which will be discussed soon in more detail. Given these trends our military involvement has led to high rates of immigration from Hawaii, Guam, and American Samoa, which has resulted in these three islands being the most populated.

Polynesian males, especially Samoans, are praised for their masculinity (Tengan & Markham, 2009). The recruiting station in Pago Pago, American Samoa's capital, was ranked 1 out of 885 Army recruiting stations. They have the highest rate of military enlistment of any U.S. state or territory. The six Army reserve detachments in American Samoa were established for capabilities to train infantry and chaplain positions (U.S. Army Reserve, n.d.). American Samoans die in Iraq and Afghanistan, per capita, at a higher rate than troops from anywhere else in the U.S. or its territories. According to a review of military casualty and other records, American Samoans have died while serving in the military at a rate of 1 in every 6,422 residents, whereas the death rate for U.S. residents serving in the military is 1 in every 850,000 residents. Samoans are one of the PI groups that have higher than-average poverty rates and lower per capita incomes than any other racial group. They have a per capita income of \$14,936 (U.S. Census, 2010). The U.S. presence in American Samoa has not acted to assist with the prevalent

poverty levels in this country, making joining the military one of few economical options for residents (Scharnberg, 2007).

The last example of systemic colonialism that places PIs as inferior is the U.S. immigration status process, which is determined by Pacific Island of birth. American Samoa is an American territory, but the citizens born in this country are not U.S. citizens they are U.S. Nationals (EPIC, 2014). They can live and work in the U.S. legally and can serve in the military, but cannot vote and must obtain citizenship like other immigrants to attain U.S. benefits. The three Freely Associated States - Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau are Compact of Free Association migrants, and are referred to as nonimmigrants. They can legally work in the U.S. They are not eligible for most federal benefits, but they are eligible to serve in the U.S. military (EPIC, 2014).

There are many layers regarding residency and immigration status of PI students, due to the militarization and colonization of their islands. The status of PI students can range from American citizen, U.S. National, nonimmigrants, and immigrant from a Pacific Island without U.S association. Hawaii is the only Pacific island entity that grants American citizenship and benefits to residents born there. Guam is an unincorporated and organized territory where residents of Guam are U.S. citizens, but they are not permitted to vote in general elections for the U.S. President (EPIC, 2014). Colonization was depicted through the subjugation of PIs by primarily the United States. The United States' dismissive treatment of PIs demonstrates an, islands in a far sea, mentality. A familiarity with PI historical contexts reveals to educational leaders that Pacific Islanders

experience a unique paradox where being accepting toward, and adapting to, higher education can result in further colonization, which increases PI invisibility.

Invisibility: Islands are isolated dots in a vast ocean. A result of colonization is invisibility and the displacement of the PI population as inferior outsiders. The term invisible relates to being unseen. The Pacific Islander community experiences being unseen in various facets. I constructed the research that exposes practices and customs that lead toward invisibility within the Pacific Islander student population in three diverse ways: unfamiliarity, othering, and physical absence. Institutional leaders should closely inspect their systemic structures and educational practices to seek out occurrences that maintain the marginalization of PI students.

Pacific Islander content is missing from all levels of educational curriculum, resulting in a general unfamiliarity with Pacific Islanders. White and Mensah (2007) conducted a study on 149 students enrolled in a Geography course over a span of three years at a four-year college in the Midwest. This study illustrated the university students' deficient Pacific Islander knowledge. People in the study were either not familiar with Pacific Islanders or they relied on popular media sources, which created a false perception that Pacific Islanders are 17th century savages and that the islands are a tourist's picture perfect tropical paradise. Student participants were asked to name as many island nations, territories, individual islands, or archipelagos in the Pacific region. Only 21% of the students could name one or more island nation and 58% were unable to name a single island nation, territory, or archipelago. The study noted that because

Hawaii is one of the 50 states that the students in this course did not perceive Native Hawaiians to be a culture from the Pacific Islands. Other responses from the survey contained inaccurate examples, which included Russia, South America, Africa, and several Caribbean and Latin American countries. In a college level course at a four-year institution, 79% of the students surveyed held no geographic knowledge on where Pacific Islands are located and who Pacific Islanders are (White & Mensah, 2007).

Another form of invisibility is when Pacific Islanders are assigned an inaccurate race. An ethnographic study on racism (Vaught, 2008) focused on a high school where much of the student body was Black. The study specifically focused on the experiences of Black students, yet the author noted that the school was also attended by many Samoan students who were ideologically Blackened. The school's educators grouped Samoans and Black students together, which resulted in a void of their cultural assets and caused racial ambiguity. In occurrences where Pacific Islanders are misidentified, it is typically with another marginalized population who also have low academic performance rates with negative experiences within the school environment (Borrero, Yeh, Cruz, & Suda, 2012). In this context, unfamiliarity will continue when Samoans are racially labeled Black.

The attachment of an incorrect race or placement of an "other" category contributes to ethnic invisibility. Stereotypes can overshadow truths when there is a lack of knowledge about a population. Borrero, Yeh, Tito, and Luavasa (2010) conducted a qualitative study based on data, from ten in-depth interviews, with Samoan high school

students attending three high schools within the San Francisco Bay area. The analysis used grounded theory to describe the complexities of student participants' Samoan and academic identity experiences. The study revealed that invisibility in educational settings occurs when the stereotypes of Samoan students are socially accepted as facts. Samoan high school students identified prominent stereotypes about themselves, that Samoans are physically large, athletic, strong, lazy, proud, and dangerous. One student noted the strong emphasis placed on Samoans for their athletic abilities. The student also mentioned classmates were shocked when a Samoan was excelling in academics over athletics, as if it were not possible, or as if they could not excel in both at the same time.

The last example of invisibility refers to physical absence. Borrero, Yeh, Tito, and Luavasa's (2010) study provided insight into how Samoan students describe prioritizing their academic environment. The students claimed that to be Samoan is to put family first. They emphasized that cultural expectations take precedent over academic responsibilities. Within the PI community, it is culturally acceptable, even expected, for Samoan students to miss school to watch over younger siblings, nieces, or nephews; to attend church or participate in funeral traditions; and to complete various household chores. This perceived truancy contributes to PI students' physical invisibility and to their ability to stay focused in school (Borrero, Yeh, Tito, & Luavasa, 2010). Educators can misconstrue the physical absences as deviant behavior if they lack PI cultural awareness.

College enrollment serves as another form of physical absence. There are more than double the number of Pacific Islander students at the community college level, than

PI students at four-year colleges. Community colleges are more attainable to Pacific Islander students because of the lower tuition, open admissions, and the proximity to home (Uehara, Chugen, & Staley Raatior, 2017). Thus, Pacific Islanders have an easier time establishing a community at two-year colleges. PIs enrolled in community colleges than in four-years. Participants who transferred from a two-year to a four-year were shocked and discouraged to witness the drastic decrease in Pacific Islander student enrollment at the university level. Some individual Pacific Islander populations such as Tongans, Fijians, Samoans and Micronesians have bachelor attainment rates lower than 15% (EPIC, 2014). A three-year American Community Survey across 2006-2008 revealed that 56.1% of Pacific Islanders ages 25-34, left college without earning a degree (Chaudhari, Chan, & Ha, 2013). Educational leaders need to be aware and come up with solutions on how to address the sizeable percentage of Pacific Islanders who are leaving college prior to earning their bachelor's degree.

A sea of islands. Hau'ofa (1993) ends his essay with an empowering message to Oceania about the importance of never allowing anyone to belittle them or take their freedom away from them again. PIs can seek out decolonizing practices to counter the hegemonic views that aim to confine them. This study highlights decolonization as the reversing of colonization. The first step toward decolonization is the understanding that colonization has not dissipated. Decolonization is the process of reimagining and rearticulating Indigenous power and knowledge (Sium, Desai, & Ritskes, 2012). This section discusses the intricacies of opposing colonization and introduces the phases of

decolonization. The literature in this section presents significant background in guiding educators with a strength-based view of PI students and in understanding the student voices in Chapter Two.

Some scholars are critical regarding the prospect of the decolonization process. One argument in opposition, notes that Western and alternative traditions are so intertwined that distinguishing set boundaries of the two cultures would be unfeasible (Enslin & Horsthemke, 2015). Another claim is that the definition of decolonization and Indigenous remains open and in some respects unknown (Sium, Desai, & Ritskes, 2012). A well-respected scholar and professor of Pacific Education, Konai Helu Thaman (2003) believes that one cannot decolonize the mind because of the need to read and write, which is a Western practice. She counters this dilemma with the encouragement and challenge to read and write more critically.

A Pacific Islander decolonization framework must privilege Indigenous ideology (Sium, Desai, & Ritskes, 2012). The decolonization process acknowledges the impact of Pacific Islanders being fully saturated in Western philosophy, from kindergarten to university. The decolonization process carefully, but intentionally, reverses PIs ways of knowing through placing value on Oceania concepts. Pacific Studies and similar courses provide students with a safe space to reflect on moments when their perspectives were silenced or put down, accompanied with a space to explore and reclaim their Indigenous knowledge.

Laenui (2000) established a process of decolonization based on his own Hawaii experience that contains five phases. The phases can occur simultaneously or in different combinations. The five stages are: 1) Rediscovery/recovery; 2) Mourning; 3) Dreaming; 4) Commitment; and 5) Action. The first phase entails an individual's rediscovery of history and recovery of culture. The second phase is mourning. This is a time where an individual grieves their colonial victimization. Laenui describes the third phase, dreaming, to be the most pressing for decolonization. He warns that individuals in the dreaming phase must be permitted to run their full course while in this phase. In the dreaming phase, individuals build their dreams, explore their cultures, and express their hopes for the future. The fourth phase is commitment. This phase allows individuals to invest in their movement by focusing on a plan. The final phase is action. In this phase, individuals act out their plans and move toward their future aspirations. This decolonization process has been initiated in classroom environments inspired by classroom discussions and curriculums such as in Pinoy Teach, which will be discussed in more detail later. Educational leaders can empower students by cultivating a safe space for them to learn about, explore, and encounter the phases of decolonization.

Oceania is vast: Promoting decolonization and visibility through education.

Prior to the islands being colonized, education had been largely informal with specialized skills such as warfare and navigation taught to males and craft-related skills taught to females. Knowledge was introduced through the practice of storytelling (Stoicovy, 2002). History, values, fables and family stories were all passed down from elders through

retelling special tales and teaching the young how to be effective storytellers. In the early part of the nineteenth century, formal education was introduced to many of the Pacific islands (Thaman, 2008). In the quest to benefit and empower Pacific Islanders through education, it is first necessary to understand how colonizers used education to harm and displace Pacific Islanders.

Higher education has been propositioned as the means needed to rise above and be prosperous; however, schooling practices were created by their colonizers. Colonizers prioritized tarnishing and destroying aspects of Pacific cultures that were viewed as detrimental to the colonizers' purposes (Thaman, 2008). Formal education stripped PI students of their culture and required them to adopt a new language, religion, and way of understanding how the world works (Fischer, 2013; Macpherson, 2003). The act of building PI community within an institution requires outward support. It is the responsibility of higher educational institutions to demonstrate to students and families, the value higher education brings to PI communities, when PIs attend college.

The pursuit of higher education is also resulting in a physical separation from the islands. It is becoming uncommon for Pacific Islanders who have graduated and earned their four-year degrees to seek jobs on the islands. They instead will use their new-found skills to move to the mainland to find work in a competitive market (Docquier, Lohest, & Abdeslam, 2007). Formal education is contributing to the demise of Pacific Islander culture. At times, the knowledge and values PI students receive from higher education institutions clash with their Indigenous truths (Thaman, 2008). The pursuit of higher

education results in a wider PI cultural divide. Degree attainment equates to what Western ideology defines as success, but at the cost of their identification and often physical separation from culture.

If formal education was designed to erase native knowledge, belief, and behavior, then through intentional restructuring, formal education can begin to teach and acknowledge native cultures; however, the reorganizing process will be complex. Cultural Studies courses can be viewed as a remedy to decolonization, but culture and the education on culture, are not necessarily completely legitimate and pure because colonizers have imbued native cultures (Kauanui, 2008). The entirety of Pacific Islander schooling has taken place in Western educational settings that have not acknowledged how Pacific Islanders communicate and learn. Pacific Islander scholars are utilizing Western ideologies to describe and represent Pacific Islander methodologies (Thaman, 2008). Pacific Islander scholars disclose this anomaly and have pondered if it is possible to decolonize institutions of colonial power, such as educational settings, and if it is possible to decolonize through them (Sium, Desai, & Ritskes, 2012). True decolonization will not occur by physically placing Indigenous peoples into positions colonizers held. The problem is more intricate. Decolonization calls for educational leaders to deconstruct and reconstruct educational structures; it requires the development of new systemic practices, which are inclusive to Indigenous values (Laenui, 2006).

An example of decolonization in higher education is the Pinoy Teach program. Pinoy Teach is an empowering multicultural teacher education program for college

students to teach Filipino American history and culture in middle schools (Halagao, 2010). Halagao conducted a study that reviewed the long-term impact on the Pinoy Teach program's student teachers within a ten-year span. Pinoy Teach strove to empower their college students to teach their ethnic history and culture to others. College students enrolled in a two-quarter undergraduate multicultural curriculum and teacher education courses before teaching in middle school classes. Teachers who participated in the program completed a survey. Four themes emerged from the survey: 1) Greater appreciation for their ethnic history and culture; 2) Empowerment; 3) Commitment to diversity and multiculturalism; and 4) Activism in their teaching professions.

These themes aligned with Laenui's phases of decolonization (Laenui, 2006). The Pinoy Teach program served as a vehicle for moving students through the decolonization process. This study demonstrated that developing and supporting decolonizing curriculum that connects learning with students' ethnic history and introduces social action can positively impact the students and their communities (Halagao, 2010). I acknowledge that this program is an example with Filipinos, however there are similarities that would connect to a PI decolonization process. At the most recent Asian Pacific American Higher Education conference I attended, I discovered an increase in offerings of Pacific Islands Studies courses at both two-year and four-year colleges within the San Francisco Bay Area, which gives me hope that an article regarding a decolonized PI program will be coming out within the next few years.

Although creating an Oceania space appears most influential, PIs can experience decolonization in a more broadly diverse setting. An institution's structural diversity refers to the racial and ethnic makeup of its student population. Increased diverse student enrollment is driving institutional leaders to review, evaluate, and develop academic and student life programs on campus. One aspect of academic programs that campuses nationwide are focusing on is classroom diversity. Classroom diversity refers to the implementation of knowledge about diverse groups into the classroom curriculum (Hu & Kuh, 2003). Ethnic Studies is an example of curricular diversity. The Ethnic Studies curriculum is designed to affect students' understanding of and attitudes toward race (Sleeter, 2011). Sleeter (2011) argues that incorporating racially and ethnically diverse populations into mainstream curriculum only slightly affects students' attitudes. In contrast, Ethnic Studies courses offer a stronger impact by including a diverse curriculum that explicitly addresses race.

Specifically, Ethnic Studies curriculum reflects the lived experiences of student hardships such as racism and poverty. The curriculum provides students with tools to address structural barriers, which then offers them hope about their lives. Ethnic Studies also explores historical and present-day U.S. colonialism. Extensive research on Ethnic Studies courses found that students experience positive academic and social outcomes, which effect academic engagement, academic achievement, and personal empowerment (Sleeter, 2011). Pacific Islander students should experience their linguistic and cultural practices, which they bring from their homes and communities in the classroom.

Culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) is a solution to cultural presence in the classroom. CSP calls for educators to be more than responsive and relevant toward students' cultures. It requires the practice of students sustaining their cultural and linguistic heritage while also accessing knowledge from the dominant culture (Paris, 2012).

Educational leaders can employ culturally sustaining pedagogy to support historically marginalized student populations with re-establishing or reiterating a stronger connection to their culture. McCarty and Lee (2014) utilized CSP to promote the survival of indigenous peoples', which in this study, refers to American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian cultures and languages, but expanded this framework to include culturally revitalizing pedagogy. Western schooling serves as the catalyst used to separate Indigenous peoples' identities from their Native languages, lands, and worldviews. Culturally sustaining/ revitalizing pedagogy (CSR/P) addresses the discourse of historical and current Native American schooling. This approach requires an assessment of what colonization stripped from Native peoples and the need to and benefits of, reclaiming and revitalizing their authentic identities.

Approximately 90% of American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian students attend public schools, yet more than half of the schools where they are enrolled have a total indigenous population of less than 25%. There are an estimated 170 Native American languages spoken, and in the 2010 census, only one in ten young people within the age range of a K-12 setting reported speaking a Native American language (Siebens & Julian, 2011). This statistic represents the successful attempt of Western colonizers to

create Native American ethnocide and linguicide. This near extinction of indigenous languages was largely made possible in the U.S. through English-only instruction. From the 1800's to present day, Anglo values replaced indigenous ways and English became the only means of communication. Colonization has enacted a race against time where language revitalization is needed to protect Native peoples from further eradication. It was indicated that teaching native languages to students is a CSRP practice, which builds cultural identity and engages and ignites student learning (McCarty & Lee, 2014). Culturally sustaining pedagogy promotes multilingualism and multiculturalism and implementing CSP practices in education can assist with visibility and the prevention of cultural erasure.

There is a misguided fear that the promotion of multilingualism will negatively affect English language learning (Wright, 2005). This simply is not accurate. Federal reforms, such as the No Child Left Behind Act reinforce monolingualism in K-12 settings, which privilege English (Michener, Sengupta-Irving, Proctor, and Silverman, 2013). Teachers who teach language-minority students can embody CSP in their classrooms by integrating the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their students with classroom instruction. Paris (2012) calls attention to the growing trend of increased multiethnic and multilingual students in U.S. classrooms and encourages educators and policy planners to take advantage of an educational opportunity to learn about, promote, and celebrate diversity.

Recent studies indicate the U.S. English-only language policies are proving to be harmful to students, including those students who are English-dominant (Rios-Aguilar & Ga'ndara, 2012; Wright, 2005). English-only reforms are also detrimental to teachers and other school staff who are receiving inadequate training on how to effectively work with multilingual learners (Hopkins, 2012). CSP promotes multilingualism and multiculturalism as a response for the U.S. to ensure success for all in the classroom. Paris and Alim (2014) feature CSP as a needed step toward effective educational practices, which differ from and challenge the hegemonic norm. They conceptualize an education system where the performance goals for students of color are to provide them with an opportunity to commemorate and analyze theirs and others' ancestries.

Promoting culture through campus life. Participation in spaces that promote decolonization and culturally sustaining practices can empower students to take back their education and actively represent their cultures both inside and outside of the classroom (Thaman, 2003). There is vast evidence that suggests that campus involvement and engagement positively impact student success (Wolf-Wendel, Ward, & Kinzie, 2009). Involvement is defined as the amount of physical and psychological energy students dedicate to their educational experience. Campus involvement positively correlates with student retention and quality of student learning. Institutional leaders should encourage involvement, because it reinforces learning and increases student success (Tinto, 2006). Engagement has two concepts. The first component places responsibility on the student and examines students' contributions to their studies and

other activities, which result in achieving student success outcomes. The second concept focuses on how institutions utilize their campus resources and services to ensure students get an opportunity to participate in activities that will benefit their educational experience. Elevated levels of student engagement result in positive outcomes such as intentional faculty-student contact and active learning. Engagement also influences student perceptions of attending an inclusive campus environment (Kuh, 2001).

If students have concern about the inclusivity of their campus, especially toward their own cultural community then they can create academic and social opportunities to engage in student democracy (Hu & Kuh, 2003). Diverse student populations inspire more active engagement (Hurtado, 2003). Students who are knowledgeable about diverse issues regarding political contexts are better able to participate in the U.S. democratic process. When students are engaged in democracy, they tend to align themselves toward public good as opposed to self-interest (Hurtado, 2003). Educational leaders need to increase engagement for student leaders to have meaningful participation in democracy through actions such as negotiating conflicts and forming coalitions. Colleges are supportive settings to equip students with the skills to be active participants in democracy. In college, students feel more comfortable debating various points of view with their peers (Hu & Kuh, 2003). Campus practices that facilitate student development of social and democratic skills have a consistently positive effect on many of their educational outcomes. Students invested in democratic participation are likely to develop the leadership skills to resolve local and global social problems (Hurtado, 2003).

Chapter Summary

The lack of adequate research results in the development of educational policies and practices that exclude the needs of Pacific Islander students (Teranishi, Behringer, Grey, & Parker, 2009). The conceptual framework provides educational leaders with a more purposeful way of understanding the PI students that they serve through the acknowledgement of the tensions these students experience. The review of literature informed institutional leaders by further analyzing PI students' binary existences. It demonstrated how invisibility in educational settings can be damaging when PI students, their peers, staff, and faculty are not knowledgeable about PI culture. The review of literature also validates the benefits students reap when their culture is included in the curriculum and when they share their culture through active student involvement. Chapter Two introduces the vibrant students of this study and reveals the study's narrative findings, which were uncovered through the students' rich narratives.

Chapter Two: Findings of Narrative Inquiry Based on Focus Group Data

Chapter Two highlights the narratives of six students. I chose these students because they epitomized a diverse range of Pacific Islanders and they all described various levels of cultural tensions during their higher education experiences. Therefore, I crafted each student narrative to directly connect to and represent one construct from the conceptual framework: colonization, decolonization, invisibility, visibility, conflict with hybridity, and harmony with hybridity. I associated a narrative with a framework construct because I wanted to demonstrate how PI students experience these tensions through their lived stories. Most importantly, these student narratives demonstrate how education leadership can help PI students and other historically marginalized student population succeed in higher education.

I designed this section to flow in this manner to better view how these students' narratives contrast with one another. In Chapter One I described the misconception that the AAPI population is a monolithic group, and I called attention to the importance of not making the same assumption regarding the PI population. These narratives overlapped and connected with other focus group participants, but they also contained unique dissimilarities. After the narratives, I will conclude with a summary of findings and insight for educators, which emerged from the focus group data.

Student Profiles

Kupono is a Native Hawaiian community college student from Hawaii and was the oldest participant from the study. He was born and raised in Hawaii. The other students noticeably respected his elder status. He is only two generations removed from witnessing Queen Liliuokalani, Hawaii's matriarch, be deposed by the United States government (Kauauni, 2005). This controversial historic moment has greatly shaped who he is today and has heightened his colonization awareness.

Steven is a Chamoru community college student from the Bay Area. He was born in Guam and raised in California. He showed up late to the focus group and when he arrived he smiled and said he was running on island time. As a high school dropout, navigating educational systems has always been challenging for him. His enrollment in a Pacific Islands course, where he saw his culture represented in the syllabus is what ignited his journey with the decolonization process (Laenui, 2006). He aspires to transfer into a four-year university, continue to learn about Oceania, and teach others about his Chamoru culture.

Masina is a Tongan university student from the Bay Area. She was born and raised in California. She is set to graduate with her bachelor's degree soon. She transferred from a two-year to a four-year institution and noticed stark differences in the ease of navigating between the two systems. She identified experiencing more difficulty at the four-year institution. In her experiences, "AAPI" refers to spaces that are filled

with Asian Americans only, and therefore, she detests the term AAPI because it often does not include Pacific Islanders and makes her feel like her community is invisible.

Lani is proud to be Native Hawaiian. She was born and raised in Hawaii. She truly values collectivism and connecting with other people. She is proud of her Native Hawaiian culture and is eager to make her culture more visible on campus. She attributes her college retention to finding academic and social support systems. She hates the stereotypes that fall under living in “paradise” because she faults it as the reason people ignore the colonization in Hawaii. She wishes people knew the history of Hawaii and not just post statehood but the real history.

Lika is a community college student from the same focus group as Steven in the Bay Area. She is half Mexican and half Samoan. She was born in American Samoa, mainly grew up in California, but was sent back to American Samoa during high school because she was getting in trouble in school. She graduated high school in American Samoa and returned to California to attend community college. She had an extremely negative encounter with a professor during her first semester of school, which has affected her college experience. She represents hybridity and depicts the ways in which she and many other PI students navigate their multiculturalism and intersectionality.

Chris is a Samoan, university student from Hawaii who was born in California, but was raised in American Samoa. He was the most vocal in his group and I was honored and grateful to him for sharing his story so frankly. He described his struggles regarding moving away from his family. His story details his difficulty with life away

from American Samoa and how his hybrid identities successfully allowed him to navigate a new geographic location and a higher education system.

Colonization: Positioning Pacific Islanders as outsiders. Kupono: *“When they took away the queen, it was like taking the head off of the snake the body couldn’t move.”*

Colonization is the exploitation and subjugation of indigenous people in one territory by a political power from another territory (Chilisa, 2012). In this student narrative, Kupono demonstrated that colonization is not something that happened back then, but that it is something his family witnessed, and is a discourse he currently exists in and that influences his drive to pursue decolonization by majoring in Hawaiian Studies. His narrative detailed a Hawaii that few non-natives are familiar with. He described the destructive effects of being displaced as an outsider and his refusal to remain powerless. Kupono is a Native Hawaiian older gentleman, in his late 50’s. He attends a community college in Hawaii and will be the first in his family to graduate with an associate’s degree in Spring.

The community college in Hawaii where I met Kupono was one that was known for servicing locals, especially Native Hawaiians. The space that was reserved for me during this focus group was a lanai. Not only was this space outside and not private, but it also had a chatty rooster circling the area, and he often chimed in as if he wanted to participate, too. I began with introducing myself to the group and through my university inclusivity training I referred to the one male and the four female focus group participants as “ya’ll.” Kupono let me get away with saying “ya’ll” once, but when I said it a second

time he stopped me and asked, “You mean us guys?” He spoke quietly and in Pidgin. I honestly did not understand him at first. I looked at him confused and got nervous that it might be perceived that I was disrespecting him. He said, “It’s not ya’ll, it’s us guys. When you are here, it’s us guys.” He waited for me to say, “us guys” out loud before allowing me to continue. I already smile a lot, but after that slight hiccup, which I, of course, internalized as revealing to the group that I am some haughty educated colonizer, was smiling even bigger and more often.

As part of my introduction I mentioned that Pacific Islanders have a low four-year graduation attainment rate and after I finished my introductory spiel, Kuponono was quick to respond.

Usually you know the Polynesian people like us guys, Hawaiian, Polynesian, Palau, we no like graduate or we no graduate from school because school is not interesting we don’t like learning about Paul Revere or Christopher Columbus. We like to learn about Kamehameha and his father and where his father came from.

This is an example of how colonization used formal education to replace Pacific Islander history with Western history (Fischer, 2013). The exclusion of PI culture in educational curriculum has resulted in a disinterest and disengagement of PI students in the classroom. The lack of PI cultural inclusion has negatively affected high school retention and graduation rates, and aspirations to enroll in higher education.

Kuponono placed value on tracing family roots and familiarizing oneself with cultural history. In the excerpt below, Kuponono illustrated the Native Hawaiian colonization experience that his own family endured. He is only two generations removed

from the destruction of the Hawaiian monarchy and this historic event has greatly influenced his family and who he is today.

To understand Pacific Islander is to understand that, my parents' parents grew up in the era where they couldn't do a whole lot but they had the king and the queen but when they took away the queen, it was like taking the head off of the snake the body couldn't move.

So the Hawaiian people was kind of like stagnant, sooner or later it's like the water, when the water sits too long the water get rotten.

So the local people got to the point where they couldn't share our own language or couldn't talk our own language. Couldn't share the Hawaiian food a lot of that stuff was taken away from them.

So they grew up in the era where they couldn't talk, if they talk Hawaiian they would get beat up, from the so called Hawaiian government that they had. So their parents was growing up teaching their kids not to say this or do certain things.

So when we came along, we followed the same path as them, but then us guys I guess, my generation, was a really rebellious one because we would rebel against everybody, anybody and everybody.

So that's when the renaissance started you know and we wanted to learn about a lot of stuff. We wanted to learn about us guys, our people, we wanted to learn how to talk this, we wanted to learn how to grow the kalo, and what the coconut tree is for and stuff like that.

But that never happened and now they try to teach us those things that should have been taught to us when we was younger, when our parents was younger. It's being taught to us by somebody who's teaching us how to talk Hawaiian in English, and it's like oh wait a minute.

The removal of the queen and eradication of the Hawaiian way of life occurred slightly over a hundred years ago, which is a reminder of how recent the takeover was and that the effects of colonization are contemporary (Kauauni, 2005).

Kupono's decision to major in Hawaiian Studies is his way of honoring his ancestors and resisting the takeover of his culture. Kupono discussed the importance of recognizing that no amount of colonization can strip you of who you truly are.

No matter how you want to be, or try to be, or express yourself to be, sooner or later you are going to come back down to the level of being local. You cannot always be walking around like I talk good English, but you are wearing socks and you are wearing slippas. That doesn't make you important. That makes you local.

I mean I can turn around and talk English but I don't like. I rather just talk like dis because that way when I talk to you like dis and you talk to me like that I feel comfortable. I can trust you. But once you turn and talk English it's like, "Oh, I'm not going to talk to you." It's gonna take me a long time for me to trust you.

Kupono takes pride in being Native Hawaiian and living on the land where generations of his family are from. Kupono's knowledge of his people's history has resulted in an uneasiness toward people who do not sound local when they speak. He associates speaking English in the manner of middle class Americans with the colonizers who took over his land and culture.

Kupono had originally never prioritized going to school. As the oldest sibling in his family, he was responsible for taking care of his other siblings and such responsibility caused him to drop out of school and not complete a high school education until 1994 when his daughter turned four years old. He now has one more class before he graduates with his associate degree. There were some noticeable gaps between him dropping out of school and returning, so I asked him what has helped him stay in college.

The school itself there are certain instructors that, like TRiO and use TRiO for their benefit in helping the students get through with the class. A lot of us we kind

of learn about TRiO through word of mouth. Like somebody had been here suggested we should try it or come here, you know that can help us.

With our education, it helps make things go a little smoother. Instead of sitting in the library and looking like you know what you are doing. But actually in the inside you are like a duck in the water. You are floating around but your legs are going, paddling like hell.

Kupono credited TRiO, a federal grant program's student services for his successes in college. His expression regarding the duck legs flailing underneath the water most likely described his experience at this college before he crossed paths with caring professors and the TRiO program.

Kupono is grateful for educational equity programs such as TRiO, but is aware that not everyone shares his same sentiment.

You know and then there are some teachers that don't look at TRiO the same way that other people. But that's how society looks at, for some people it's an asset to them to have TRiO and work with the kids. And other people think it's like you are babying the kid or whatever that is.

Kupono was disheartened while talking about people who perceived the help he was receiving as him getting coddled. Kupono described educators with a deficit mind frame, who likely, did not understand the needs of the PI population, which resulted in a view that the resources being offered to TRiO students was hand-holding.

There were moments while in college where he questioned his abilities. He had been away from school for so long that he was unsure if going back was the best option for him.

You know but the fear of flunking, that was big fear for me to come back because I wasn't sure if I could cut it. But when I started taking the classes here I started to realize oh hey, I can do this. because I started seeming more wiser.

Also I'm used to listening to our people, why you want to go to school for no you gotta. So my mind was thinking what they were saying and believing what they were saying, you know. Instead of realizing that I need to see for my own eyes instead of, until I started coming back and then I realized that I can do this. And I did.

Kupono chose to ignore all disapproval, and instead opted to move forward. He aspires to decolonize his educational experience and his every day perceptions by majoring in Native Hawaiian Studies and reclaiming his culture.

Decolonization: Reimagining and rearticulating Pacific Islander knowledge.

Steven: *"We need to like, to, reclaim ourselves and change the way that we grow ourselves and our communities."*

Decolonization is the process of Indigenous peoples reimagining and rearticulating their native power and knowledge (Sium, Desai, & Ritskes, 2012). In this student narrative, Steven demonstrated solid examples of his experiences with the decolonization process. Prior to enrolling in Pacific Studies courses he was slightly apathetic about his PI identity but now is empowered by his Oceania culture. Steven is Chamoru and a community college student from the San Francisco Bay Area. He is in his last year at the community college and plans to be the first in his family to transfer to a university.

When he joined the focus group, one of the participants stated that more Polynesians need to be educated versus just staying at home. Steven commented on the

cynicism that Pacific Islanders have about higher education. “We’re not told that it’s important and that taking care of our families and all this other shit, that’s before school.” The disregard of pursuing education can stem from being of a low-income background, but it also links back to what Kupuno shared, that the curriculum was not created to include or empower Pacific Islanders. As a collectivist community, and more importantly, as a colonized community, Pacific Islanders cherish family support and depend on each other to solve challenging life problems together (Yeh et al., 2006).

There are a few parallels between Kupono and Steven. Steven also dropped out of high school, but then decided to give education another try. When Steven withdrew from high school, he went straight into the workforce. He did not feel remorse for leaving high school early because he did not envision himself as a scholar. He saw himself as working a full-time job. When he got dismissed from work, it allowed him to reconsider going back to school.

It was a shot in the dark and kind of like a last resort for me. I had just gotten fired from my job and I dropped out of high school and I had been working there for four years and I got fired. And then, I don’t know it was just something that I wanted to try just so I could say that I tried it, you know what I mean?

But then I actually learned more about my history and all the historical context and all that, and that kind of got me really angry. And so that kind of pushed me to stay in school and do better and learn more and sort of to give back and just kind of connect with other Pacific Islanders.

Like Kupono, Steven’s engagement in classes and investment in education increased, once the curriculum became culturally sustaining. Another participant in his focus group spoke about a professor who incorporated articles about Samoan food and

culture in an English class. She described the representation of her culture as momentous. “Why did it take twenty-three years for me to learn about myself? And I loved it. He was a cool ass teacher for doing that for me, I felt that reflection like wow, the class fucking cares.” The realization that it took her over two decades for her culture to be integrated in a lesson and taught in a classroom, became overwhelming and she teared up.

Steven provided insight to the benefits of culturally sustaining pedagogy in the classroom. He attributed his retention and ability to commit to higher education to the Pacific Islander Studies program at his community college.

For me it was being, it was my first quarter in the classroom, in the Pacific Islander [studies], it was like the first class I took it was the only reason, that I’m umm doing good in school because they hooked me in my first quarter.

Umm but it was being in the class, being an untraditional student. Being one of two Chamorus, but I was the only one who didn’t drop out. And I remember just going through the course material and seeing all these articles that had to do with Guam.

And I was like this, you are talking to me right now. It wasn’t just like a little paragraph about a territory or a treaty. It wasn’t just like acquisition and now we have a military base. It felt great at that moment and it felt like it was the first time that this course was talking to me, instead of just talking to, or instead of this is what you have to learn. So that was a memorable moment.

And it felt very uneasy. I didn’t know how to process it. I wasn’t sure if I was proud or if I was embarrassed or if I was like ashamed.

Many student participants took Ethnic Studies or similar courses and had some form of indigenous/colonialism awareness, but Steven is highly conscious of tensions he experiences with (de)colonization.

Steven's cultural consciousness awoke in college. He began embracing and asking critical questions about his culture. The focus group discussion brought up things the students wished people knew about Pacific Islanders. One of the participants commented that just because they are disciplined does not mean that they were being physically abused by their parents, and then laughter and agreement came from the group. Another participant who grew up on the island mentioned witnessing someone getting beaten by their parent and a cop walking by the incident without responding, which reaffirmed that discipline was not child abuse. Steven showed that he didn't fully agree by making this comment:

I think personally, not to change the tone, but some things that are wrong with our own cultures is sort of like the ways that we deal with historical oppression. It's like we take it out on each other and that comes out in different ways, because before, maybe, we didn't have to do that.

Maybe we didn't have to resort to physical violence for discipline but that's what we were taught. That's what works and that's what got you to survive was pain and fear and all of that. So maybe we need to like to reclaim ourselves and change the way that we grow ourselves and our communities.

Steven's ability to take the role of a critical scholar forced those near him to carefully listen and analyze what he was saying. He was offering a perspective, which questioned whether the act of physical discipline is an authentic Pacific Islander tradition or a colonial practice, which was forcibly adopted and passed down.

Steven's enrollment in Pacific Studies courses was what activated his participation in the process of decolonization (Laenui, 2016). He has trained his mind to recognize the differences between his Chamoru and Western cultures. Steven was

beautifully articulate when he described what he wished college educators knew about Pacific Islanders.

I'd like them to know that when they are reaching out to a Pacific Islander, this mysterious elusive Pacific Islander, that they are talking to a community. We are our own walking islands in a sense. So you're not just talking to an individual out of many. You are talking to somebody who's really is part of his or her own connections.

You can either use that to your benefit, or you can dismiss it. But as far as the way that we are so intrinsic with our relationships, you have the entire world to gain just by realizing that. And that's not just Pacific Islanders only. I think that everybody has their own capital that they bring, and not just blank slates for you to tell what to learn.

Steven's description of how one Pacific Islander can represent their collectivist communities was eloquently illustrated.

Steven demonstrated experiencing the last two phases, commitment and action, of the decolonization process (Laenui, 2006). This was evident by his focused direction toward embracing his culture, and the action of getting more involved with his community.

I like that I'm tenacious. I like that I don't give up. That doesn't mean that I don't fail, or that I don't fall down, or feel like giving up, but just the fact that I don't, I'm proud of.

And I feel like learning more about myself and getting involved with my culture and community only strengthens that because it comes from a real place and not just like staleness or anger. That's how I feel.

Steven's description of engaging in his community depicted his commitment to getting more involved in his culture, which implies he experienced the commitment phase of the decolonization process (Laenui, 2006). Steven's narrative also connected to culturally

sustaining pedagogy through his affirmation that Pacific Islander knowledge is valuable and should not be excluded from the classroom (Hattori, 2016; Paris, 2012). The decolonization process Steven has experienced has reconnected him to his culture and has given his identity a sense of purpose and self-respect, that did not exist prior to enrolling in Pacific Studies courses.

Invisibility: A PI student experience of being unseen. Masina: *“Coming into a university that’s when I feel like I got muddled or watered down.”*

Invisibility is a result of colonization displacing the PI population as inferior outsiders. The term invisible relates to being unseen. In this student narrative, Masina describes aspects of invisibility, which began in high school and persisted at the 2-year and 4-year institutions. She also described invisibility in multiple educational settings regarding curriculum, programming, enrollment, etc. Masina is Tongan. She stayed close to home after high school and attended a community college. After four years at the community college she transferred to a local four-year university. She will be the first in her family to graduate with a bachelor’s degree and will graduate in Spring.

During her focus group, Masina described her high school counselor, whom she was admittedly fond of, although she now realized that he never encouraged her to consider higher education, not even community college. She shared that he only focused on getting her to graduate from high school as an educational goal. She recollected that only her peers enrolled in AP courses had the privilege to participate in college tours; other students in her school were not given the same opportunities.

Another student in Masina's focus group mentioned attending an affluent high school, which allowed students from East Palo Alto (EPA) to attend to increase student diversity. She had negative encounters with the high school's teachers and felt the school environment blatantly discarded the students of color from EPA. For example, EPA students were not encouraged to enroll in AP courses, sign up for SAT or ACT exams, or learn more about higher education options. She recalled classmates receiving acceptance letters to renowned colleges like UC Berkeley and Stanford, and wondered why she was not afforded the same opportunity to be prepped to even apply to such colleges. She was only given support to apply to community colleges.

When Masina first arrived at the two-year college, she was over-whelmed. She described her disorientation when she first started at the community college level.

I'm like on fafsa.gov, trying to put in my parents' information. They don't even know what's up or how to do it. And I'm just over here guessing, like this is right, right?

And then after you finally get into college and you choose these random ass classes like, I think I chose like pottery and just those things you don't really need. And it wasn't until my third year at Chabot that I was like, dude, hmm, what do I want to do? You know? And that's when I started taking advantage of resources, joining clubs, making my own family [in college].

Masina described her struggle to navigate the higher education system, which resulted in her spending four years at the community college level.

She was eager to transfer into a four-year college, but the transition was not as smooth as she anticipated. "I had that support I had a community there [two-year college], but coming into a university that's when I feel like I got muddled or watered

down do you know what I mean?” Based on her community college experience, when she began attending a four-year university, she knew to immediately look for resources. Her exploration, however, revealed that the communities who promoted serving AAPI students seldom had Pacific Islanders in them, which is what made her feel “watered down.” She described her first encounter with an AAPI retention program at her current campus.

So, when I went to the open house for that I was like, yeah I’m about to go meet some Pacific Islanders or some Polys. And then when I went there I was like umm..., like I still felt like a minority in a place that is supposed to be like for us.

Which could be like, I know there are PIs on campus, but just maybe they don’t know about it or they don’t want to join...

The difference is that I feel like we [PI students] are an invisible community because like even now we have like this retention program over here but regardless of that I still feel like I don’t have a community here on campus that understands me culturally, who I can relate to. You know what I mean?

Yes, we have this program over here, but I want more! I want to be known. I want to be acknowledged, I don’t want to be ignored. You know what I mean?

Masina mentioned her initial shock of experiencing invisibility in a space that was seemingly designed to make her feel welcomed.

Another form of adversity Masina experienced, was continuous hardships with the financial aid process. She initially spoke about not understanding how to fill out the forms and guessing on the information during her community college years. Then at the four-level, she stopped qualifying for financial aid.

Yeah, I didn’t qualify for FAFSA this year, it’s because my mom makes a little too much but the only people she claims on her taxes is like me and my younger

sisters. But in reality she's taking care of like so many damn people...and I'm like on the payment plan so it's like, it's freaken \$760 every month so I'm just like, luckily my mom has a credit card so (group chuckles), no seriously, that's what she's using but it's like now, it's just debt piling up.

Many of the study's participants deemed FAFSA as culturally insensitive toward Pacific Islanders because of how the government defines households versus how Pacific Islanders experience households. Masina's mother was only able to legally claim for what Westerners refer to as a nuclear family, however, in Pacific Islander culture, extended family is family.

A positive, shared commonality, regarding financial aid was that it afforded students an opportunity to financially support their families. It was not unusual for financial aid funds to be viewed and used as a source of income. One student from a separate focus group, described getting her financial aid disbursement as a highlight from her college experience.

I was so unaware, I forgot that I enrolled into direct deposit, and during a time that my family was struggling paying bills and stuff. And tell me why I opened up my bank account, and there was literally \$7,000 sitting in that bank account and I was like what the heck? Where did this come from?

And when I looked it came from State University and it was like wow, financial aid can be a headache like the office and stuff. But once that money comes you got the stressful part over with, it's worth it. And I was so happy that I could help my dad, literally pay our house, that's one of the highlights [of attending college].

The student participants valued their pursuit of higher education, but they could not ignore the needs of their family.

When Masina was asked to describe her favorite moment at her current university she described an experience in one of her classes that placed value on building community.

Probably in my hip hop nation class we got divided into groups. Like the class was split in half and we were in a group of like 30 people. So 30 people who all want to take lead. And we are just butting heads and not on the same page but then, it was for a midterm. But when we finally did our presentation we did like a skit and a poetry piece and that was the first time that I had ever felt like collectivity at its best. You know what I mean?

I felt like I was a part of something and everybody was like on the goal. Like we are all on the same page trying to promote equality. It was definitely like a moment of activism together, so that was my favorite moment.

Masina found success at the university level because she formed a sense of belonging and found community. She also credited engaging professors who made learning fun and valuable and kept her vested in her Ethnic Studies program. Masina believes it is the people who enrich the overall environment. She expressed enjoyment when she talked about Ethnic Studies and activism, which in this study, align with visibility.

Her only academic complaint is that Pacific Islanders are not part of the curriculum. She wants to increase Pacific Islander visibility inside classrooms.

Yeah like as an Ethnic Studies major I am learning about all these communities of color. And what I really want is just a class about me. You know what I mean? Or PIs in general, just something. I just want to be included. Just one online class.

Masina recently signed up for an AAPI leadership seminar that brought in AAPI guest speakers from the Bay Area community throughout the semester. Out of thirteen guest

speakers, there was only one Pacific Islander, a Chamoru male. She took the class in hopes of coming across speakers she could relate to. Her disappointment in the lack of PI within an AAPI focused course was still discouraging even though it was not a new experience.

Visibility: Campus involvement enhances cultural visibility. Lani: *"We are in education so that we can educate ourselves and then hopefully educate our communities."*

In this study, visibility refers to cultural presence at educational institutions and to students' opportunities to participate and engage in their, ancestry, traditions, family, language, and cultural pride. In this student narrative, Lani represents cultural visibility through her active involvement and engagement at her college. Her experience in higher education has enlightened her and created a space for her to have a deeply meaningful connection to her culture. Lani is Native Hawaiian who was born and raised in Hawaii, and is attending a four-year university in Hawaii.

Lani is incredibly proud of her Native Hawaiian culture. She is aware that there are still too many people who are not familiar with Native Hawaiian culture and history and when she comes across such people, she is quick to offer a lesson.

When people ask me "Oh as an American..." And I'm like no, wait, I'm a Hawaiian. And then they're like, "But you live in the 50th state" "No, our state is currently occupied, illegally by the U.S. military. So, see I am American by force.

That's why we are in education so that we can educate ourselves and then hopefully educate our communities and our families. You know to decolonize our minds guys.

Lani takes advantage of any opportunity to reeducate those who are not knowledgeable about the Native Hawaiian struggle. She aspires to open people's eyes on what happened and is still happening in Hawaii.

Lani strongly believes in the power of education. She was reminiscing about her younger education settings. She was trying recall if she got to learn about her cultural history in a K-12 setting.

To some extent in elementary we had like once a week a kukuna, an elderly person, would come in and share little things like pre-contact so like our games, our language, just really, really, little...

Then in intermediate our middle school and high school was practically all post overthrow of our kingdom nothing in between like when Captain James Cook came to overthrow, and from overthrow to now it's like very minor. We only had one month of learning Hawaiian history so I didn't know anything. But because of family they would teach me and help me understand but at that level I still didn't know as much until I came into college.

That's when I was like whoa there's so much that I didn't understand and still don't understand. So I'm really thankful that I'm here and learning about my people and other Pacific Islanders and the connections we have with each other. I love it. I love college. I really do, I love learning.

Although she vaguely recalls having some lessons about her culture, ultimately, she did not have an opportunity to gain a more cohesive understanding regarding her culture until she attended higher education.

Lani shared with the group that she did not feel like high school academically prepared her for college. When she attended community college she wandered over to the Hawaiian Studies program where she could make connections and establish a support

system. At the four-year level, she attributes her retention at her college to Ethnic Studies.

I feel like it would be the same for Ethnic Studies and like Pacific Islander Studies; they like really engage with their students. And they always remind you of like why you are in school. When you're in doubt they remind you of why you are here, and that you are almost done.

I like to call them my family because they are so awesome, and even the other Ethnic Studies major students they're awesome we are all on the same page with the same goals so it's good to have that support. I think that's what worked connecting with my department and other students.

Lani was exposed to culturally sustaining pedagogy through her associates degree in Hawaiian Studies and with her current courses in Ethnic Studies. She credits her success in college thus far to her ability to actively learn about, and share her culture with others.

Lani is informed about the levels of oppression that affect Native Hawaiians along with other marginalized communities. Her enrollment in Ethnic Studies courses have attributed, to her comfort in speaking about the exclusion of her culture at her institution (Sleeter, 2011) and to involvement on campus. Lani believes that outside of Ethnic Studies and Culture Studies spaces that the overall campus does not recognize PI culture or acknowledge their histories as occupied nations. Lani views the mission of higher education as sustaining the status quo, whereas she aspires to utilize education as a catalyst to decolonize her mind and educate her family and community.

I'm a part of PAPA Pacific Advocacy People's Association so all of the Pacific and I'm also part of ESSA Ethnic Studies Students Association so yeah this is actually my first semester, I mean I've been a part of it last year but this semester I'm like fully engaged in it and I'm organizing some events that I need to talk to

you [another focus group participant] about or at least mention to you to mention to your clubs.

Lani described two student clubs that she is involved in. Her campus engagement in the two cultural clubs allow her to participate in active learning outside of the classroom (Kuh, 2001) and provides her with an opportunity to inform others on issues that are important to her community. She also participates in student democracy and is committed to educating the masses on oppression.

Like Lani, Kalea who was also in the same focus group mentioned that she was involved in an array of student clubs as well. Kalea is Chamoru and will also be graduating the same time as Lani.

I'm part of the Marianas Club here, which is like full of Chamorus. We have a Micronesian Connection Club, which is like for students of Micronesia. We have Oceania Rising Club, which is like totally focused on social issues about Oceania so that one is really fun, like a lot of activism. It's a good way to get together and see like hey what's going on in your islands right now, alliances.

After the focus group, Kalea and Lani exchanged contact information and invited each other to upcoming events that their clubs were hosting. They also spoke about potential future collaborations and big campus-wide and local community events that each other would be interested in attending. The array of clubs on campus spoke highly of the institution's ability to create an inclusive setting, at least for their PI students to thrive in. Like Steven, Lani is conscious of the effects of colonization and, also experiences continual movement through the various stages of decolonization. She believes in the

saying, “stronger together” and the importance of not just holding on, but fighting for indigenous rights and ways of life.

She gave great gratitude to Mau Pialilug, who is respectfully and affectionately known as Papa Mau. She shared that Papa Mau is the Micronesian navigator from the Carolinian island of Satawal. He was named a master navigator, which is culturally one of the highest honors. Lani praised Papa Mau for recognizing that his people were living a more westernized lifestyle, which was resulting in the loss of the cultural practice of navigating the open seas. He brought the teachings of navigation back to other cultures, even at the risk of being rejected by his own community for sharing sacred knowledge with outsiders, to ensure that this practice was not lost. Sharing the Oceania way of life was more important to him and as a result, this traditional practice of navigation has been reintroduced to multiple Pacific Islander communities (Iding, Skouge, & Peter, 2008; Ames, 2013). Lani said it best when she said that Pacific Islanders need to work together, after all, “We are all on the same canoe.” Lani promotes Native Hawaiian visibility by actively learning more about her culture, correcting people who have misconceptions about Native Hawaiians, and through participating in student clubs and community advocacy.

Hybridity: A foreigner in one way or another. *Lika: “I feel like they do look at Samoans way different who are not from there.”*

Hybridity could be perceived as a dilemma where someone can have access to two cultures but feel deprived in both (Bauhn & Tepe, 2016; Hutnyk, 2005). This student

narrative epitomized the complexities of hybrid identities. Lika described the concept of accessing two cultures yet feeling dispossessed by both. Lika is half Mexican and half Samoan and a community college student from the San Francisco Bay Area.

Lika was in the same focus group in California, as Steven, but her eye-opening experiences varied greatly in comparison to his. She grew up in California but when she was a freshman in high school she admitted she had a bad attitude and was truant from school. Her parents decided she needed to move to American Samoa. She described this decision to be her punishment. Being sent to the islands was considered a form of punishment by other focus group participants, as well. In my first focus group in Hawaii, one of the participants, Tasa, shared this story, which supports Lika's experience.

A lot of my friends too their parents would always be like, you know, if you are not going to be doing well in school and you are just going to keep doing what you want then you are going to go back to the island. And then they straighten out real quick (group laughs) and they'll be like, "Oh no I don't want that."

Fetu from the same focus group as Tasa shared that a church member told his father about how his son had been missing school and was getting into trouble. Fetu explained that the father simply wanted his son to get a good education and not bring shame to the family name and so was contemplating sending his son to Samoa.

Ultimately, Lika was grateful to have been sent to American Samoa and have an opportunity to restore her culture, but her transition from the mainland to "the Rock" (American Samoa) was initially disheartening and wearisome. Lika stood out because she

did not embody the traits of a traditional Samoan. She has a light skin complexion and she did not speak the Samoan language.

When I was living in Samoa, they looked at me differently. They looked at me like she's not Samoan because I do have light skin and I didn't know how to speak the language. And as the years past I started growing up and learning more and more, they started to accept me.

And I feel like they do look at Samoans way different who are not from there. And Western Samoans, because I've been to Western Samoa, they look at us from American Samoa way different even though we are all from the same people.

They look at each and every one of us different because if you don't know the language or you don't know the tradition, if you don't know your culture or anything, then what are you? You aren't Samoan. They told me that straight up when I was first attending high school.

Hybridity has been described as both a blessing and a curse (Bauhn & Tepe, 2016) and when Lika first moved to American Samoa she experienced hybridity as a curse. She was viewed as being of two cultures, but was perceived to be insufficient with her Samoan culture since she was considered physically and linguistically deficient.

Lika talked about the dismay she had with being told she was "not Samoan," and how the practice of labeling others is culturally accepted.

Out there they label you just like that and it hurts to see my people be like that towards each other, but what can I say some Samoans don't even consider themselves Samoan because of something called white wash or another culture wash and it hurts to have people like that.

And they are very judgmental especially toward people who don't even know their culture they were judgmental towards me and the only time they actually do accept you is when you start learning your own culture and language.

And that was my motivation to learn that so I could get accepted and feel accepted by my own people. And it hurt me to feel like I wasn't accepted because I was going to school. And it's like come on, I'm Samoan too!

And they're like you're not Samoan if you don't know this. I feel like it really does hurt me to see my people like that. It's like we're all the same people.

Samoans freely labeled and judged Lika because she was viewed as an outsider. They placed Lika in a cultural construct that appeared to classify her in an "either/or" category (Phoenix & Owen, 2000), where she was either American or Samoan, but ultimately, they did not view her as Samoan.

Lika experienced hybridity through her interactions with her friends. When she first went to college her initial group of friends were not Pacific Islanders, which conflicted with her PI culture. She recalled how those friends would call her a "flake" because she could not go out at night or as frequently as they did. Her friends teased her because she was 19 and 20 years old and still had to be respectful of her parents and obey the restrictions they placed on her such as curfews. She mentioned a time when one of her friends crashed her own car and that the friend's parents replaced the totaled car with a brand-new car. Lika explained that if she crashed her car, she would be done, that getting a new car would not have been an option for her and that she currently does not have her own car and relies on public transportation to get around. She also mentioned that those friends were in disbelief of the fact that she did not have her own car. She still maintains friendships with people who are not PI, but she did say, "I connect more with these guys or Pacific Islanders in general because they see the struggle that we come

from, the background, like with our parents, our religion, like all of that, they understand.”

Lika appreciates her PI community and names them as a factor for remaining in school and becoming a better person due to their continuous support.

Ever since I found a great family here, these guys, I feel like now I’ve become a way better person than I was. And I’m the youngest and every time I slack, I hear an earful from each and every one of them. I just feel like I’m a better person in college now and I like seeing my transition.

In Lika’s PI circle of friends at school, she learned that these peers would hold her accountable for not only coming to school, but also with actively participating in class. It was evident that the enjoyable experiences Lika had in college were due to the friends she surrounded herself with.

Lika admitted that school did not come easy to her and she explained what it was about school that she did not like. “The professors. They are irritating.” She then went on to bravely share a traumatic encounter she had with a professor that still affects her today.

And I also believe that my professors they look at me differently like one of my professors actually in my first semester, because I told her that I kind of didn’t get the concept of what she was teaching and then she asked if I had a special need and I was like...

She first asked me like what my ethnicity was and I told her oh, I’m Samoan and Mexican and she’s like, “Oh yeah, there are a lot of PIs who have like special needs.” And I’m like I don’t need, I’m not saying that I have something against people with special needs, I’m just saying why does that mean I have special needs just because I’m a PI.

And then she asked me what high school I went to and I was like I didn’t graduate here, I graduated from American Samoa. And she was “Oh, then we can just take

you somewhere...” And I was like ok you know what and then I just completely left the class.

How is someone going to tell me...and then I started thinking do I really have special needs? Are you trying to say that I'm dumb that I don't get this whole concept? All you got to do is teach it to me better and I'll be fine. And she was just saying..., and I bawled too, I cried for a little bit and I was like, why the fuck would you say that to me? What the hell? How are you going to tell me I have special needs just because I asked for help?

It was Physical Geography. I still didn't drop that class because I felt like I could prove her wrong. Which I did, because even though I did mess up, I got a B-!

This incident occurred during her first semester at this college. Students are often encouraged to take advantage of office hours and to discover that she was insulted in that manner was difficult to listen to.

Lika spoke about an example of invisibility, which referred to physical absence. In Pacific Islander culture when someone passes away the funeral ceremony lasts weeks and involves all family members to participate. Lika mentioned she had a classmate in her Math class who was Samoan and had to fly to the island to participate in cultural responsibilities for a death in the family. He had emailed the professor before he left but was gone for weeks and when he came back the professor told him that family matters are not an excusable reason to miss class.

As kids, we are supposed to do that, not the elders or the parents, having to do it. And I think after my first year of college here I missed a lot of days due to, because I was coming back from the islands. I knew how to do the things my siblings didn't because they are still in the process of learning and I had to do it out there.

And I missed so many days I couldn't catch up anymore. I could not leave [the islands]. I couldn't say I can't come because if I did, it would have looked bad on

our family. Because my grandfather was the ma'tai [chief] of our family and you know it's getting passed on down to my dad and all of them.

And you know I don't think anybody would understand that and that's why we do the things we do. So of course, he would have in his head, I might as well not go to school any more since I already missed so many days of class. I would understand why they have that kind of mindset.

Lika perceives faculty to have a lack of PI cultural transference and knowledge. In

Western culture when a funeral occurs it is acceptable to take a few days off, but to take weeks off is not a customary practice. Lika explained that there are responsibilities, which Pacific Islander children need to fulfill and to be absent from this tradition is to bring dishonor to the family.

Lika wishes educators were more knowledgeable about Pacific Islanders and that as a collective, would believe in PI students' ability to academically perform, understand their hybrid backgrounds, and support PI students who ask for help. Her dialogue below emulates her experience at her college.

Have faith in our intelligence. We may not, not know everything. We may not know much like a lot of these students. But know that whatever work you do give us we will put in 100%. Just like with what we do with our families and with our chores with everything that we do.

We do have a few Pacific Islanders that won't give it their all but it has to be a reason behind it. Every Pacific Islander has a different mindset and umm, not all of them were introduced to things, to the technology we have now. The education that's provided to us, the help.

I just hope and wish, I really wish that our professors are considerate of us, who don't know much and to be considerate of all the Pacific Islanders. And be respectful towards their culture and don't look down [at us]. Because that makes us think oh my professor is looking down [at me] so what's the purpose of going back to school?

I had that mindset. You know just to, if we ask for help just be there, we don't do it on purpose we don't try to irritate the people. And I just feel like you know I just wish they'd be considerate to the ones who are actually trying in school and trying to make it out and help our family from the struggles we have now.

Lika believes that professors get irritated when students ask for help. She is emotionally scarred from her previous professor questioning her intelligence and is pleading for other professors to not do to others what was done to her. She wants educators to be aware of the possibilities and capabilities that Pacific Islander students have if teachers took the time to help students unlock and expose their potential.

Hybridity: Positively affects the capacity for agency. Chris: "*Struggling is hard, but it kind of helps you in a way.*"

Hybridity describes the uniqueness of each person or context as a hybrid. It implies a sense of merging, in that a participant feels confident about their ability to have successfully brought their binary identities together (Bhabha, 1994). In this student narrative, although he experienced struggles, Chris overall appeared to have successfully merged his binary identities together. Chris grew up in American Samoa and left the island to pursue his four-year degree in Hawaii. Although American Samoa and Hawaii are both islands he experienced culture shock and overcame tensions. Chris is Samoan and is enrolled at a four-year university in Hawaii. He will be the first in his family to earn a bachelor's degree when he graduates in Spring.

During his focus group, there was discussion on how Pacific Islanders differed from other students. One student in Chris's focus group responded that it depended on

whether the professor is familiar with their culture. Chris's response to the discussion revealed experiences with hybridity in the classroom.

I feel like she explained earlier the matter of characteristics that you carry... your ethnic background. Usually how you carry yourself like I see a lot of Pacific Islanders are very humble, and situations with learning, like I've seen that they are not prone to ask many questions like other cultures, especially like Caucasians. They like ask more questions than we do. I just feel like it's more of a matter of giving respect. Like I see a lot of Pacific Islanders like be careful in different settings, whether that be in the classroom or conversations with people.

A displeasure with speaking in front of the class or simply aloud was common within all the focus groups. Kupuno recalled telling classmates that if they laughed at him that he would fight them after class. Lika mentioned disliking speaking in class, which I assumed was for cultural reasons as well as in combination with the adverse encounter she had with a professor. Chris mentioned the Pacific Islander cultural characteristic of being humble, which was also mentioned in various focus groups. It is not a PI custom to emphasize individual achievement (Wright & Drewery, 2006), which is what speaking in class equates to for many PIs.

Hybridity entails being between two spaces but not necessarily evenly in-between (Hutnyk, 2005). It was evident that Chris lacked exposure to technological advances. Focus group participants from American Samoa, Western Samoa, and Micronesia spoke about having to learn modern technology, which appeared to be common knowledge to their classmates who grew up in the United States.

I mean personally, I never grew up with the comfort of using iTunes and Apple Pay and all that other stuff that's modernized here. We don't have that privilege back at home. Because before I came here, back home, everyone was holding

cash, like to buy groceries. Whereas here you have your card and you swipe here, swipe there.

So, like all that minor stuff and learning all this, and even with just technology based stuff, which is up to par with the world now. And what we face is, well in our culture like back home it's like, it's not there. And here we're glad, I'm able to experience all this. And especially those who came before us. Especially all the Pacific Islanders that set up a path that shows what we should do, what we shouldn't do.

Another student from the same focus group spoke about being lost since everything was done on the computer. She spoke about how registering online was brand new to her and that her transition into college was confusing and made her feel lonely.

Chris shared that his mother did not want him to go to college for several reasons. Chris is openly gay, and she was very worried about how people at a four-year university, away from home, would react to him and treat him. She asked him to tone down his personality. Chris continuously reassured her that he would be fine. Chris said that the other reason she did not want him to leave for college was because she did not want him to struggle. He admitted that there is a difference between him being back at home and him being at the university. "I was very carefree because I knew that in my heart that my family was always going to catch my problems."

Chris often referred to his transition to college as "adulting," but what he was describing was the co-existence of his two hybrid identities of coming from a collectivist community to now living in an individualistic society.

I felt uni [university] was more... it wasn't a walk in the park that is how I'd like to put it. As opposed to... of course you are doing everything on your own, you would have to learn it then and there.

Like I literally missed, I'm being very truthful, so my first semester I missed two finals because I didn't know that on the syllabus... Like I was always thinking that the class dates, like the date you attend, was the day you would take the final. But they already scheduled a specific date and time, which I totally missed. And yeah it was heart breaking. Yeah so from that, I learned that a syllabus is important.

Chris's example of missing his finals is both a clear example of him not knowing how to navigate the system and an example of not having a supportive community that would have warned him about a finals schedule or taught him the value of reading a syllabus.

The importance of religion was brought up in every focus group, in fact, my first focus group was hosted inside a church and all the focus group participants were members of the church's parish. Chris also brought up his faith.

I hope, God willing, that I graduate next semester, I will be the first to graduate and get a bachelor's. But it's something to make my mom proud of and support.

Like she was saying being Samoan it's always about God and family. It's God first, family always. And so because of that, that mentality, you have to you know, go to school, get the blessing from God, and take care of your parents.

Chris made it clear throughout the focus group, that religion was woven into his moral fabric and that his faith played an integral role with his identity and interaction with the world, which was a similar mentality for other focus group participants. His commitment to his faith illustrates the sufficient and long-lasting effects of colonization. His ability to confidently share that he is openly-gay and a devoted Christian, and that he is appreciative of his collectivist culture but proud to have gained independence implies a sense of successfully merging his identities together.

Student Narratives — Findings

There were several notable shifts that students described as memorable moments in their higher education experiences, which I condensed to identify three findings. These findings include: 1) Pacific Islanders actively experience colonization; 2) PI invisibility occurs at various educational levels; and 3) PIs address the intricacies of dueling identities through hybridity. These three elements frame the challenges educational leadership face when supporting PI students in higher education. Colonization sets PI students up to feel insecure. The dominant culture and higher educational settings are not inclusive to PIs, which adds to their invisibility. Educators can address hybridity when they build PI students up internally by guiding their understanding of how outside forces are affecting them. Institutional leaders can help ease the paradox PI students experience with pursuing higher education when they demonstrate how education can be utilized to address external issues that are impacting their communities.

Pacific Islanders actively experience colonization. Colonization values the culture of the colonizer and simultaneously devalues the culture of Pacific Islanders (Thaman, 2008). Kuponono was the student whose narrative best aligned with colonization. He illustrated the devastation that occurred when his culture was stripped from his family and the lasting effects it has on his people and their aina (land). In Lani's narrative she made it blatantly clear with the statement, "I am American by force" that she does not view Hawaii as the 50th state, but as a land that is illegally being occupied by the U.S. military. Lani identified colonization as the driving force for her to remain enrolled in

school so that she can learn more about her culture and be given the tools needed to begin the process of decolonization. Colonization was represented across every student narrative.

Two present-day colonization experiences that surfaced from the student narratives are PI skepticism regarding higher education and discipline. Polynesian subgroups have been described to share cultural values, one of the most compelling being a community that is welcoming and generous (Allen, Garriott, Reyes, & Hsieh, 2013). Overall, student narratives demonstrated supportive PI communities with an exception of attitudes about attending college. Steven's statement, "We're not told that it's important" shows how Pacific Islanders have a distrust of higher education and a fear of their culture being removed from their identities. Throughout all the focus groups I conducted, multiple participants spoke about their families or communities not encouraging them to pursue their higher education endeavors.

Pacific Islander communities do not approve of the pursuit of higher education because of their experience with colonization, where educational systems were, and still are, not inclusive toward Pacific Islanders. Kupono's family and friends were not very supportive, because they were in disbelief that a Western mainstream education would be beneficial to him. Although Kupono wishes they were more supportive, he does acknowledge why other PIs question higher education. He shared that when Hawaii was taken over that Native Hawaiians were stripped of their language and culture, and now that it is acceptable to return to their native roots he is discovering, "It's being taught to

us by somebody who's teaching us how to talk Hawaiian in English," He recognizes that Hawaiian culture is being taught by the colonizers, which does alarm him.

Another colonial concept that was introduced to the PI community is discipline. Discipline was brought up multiple times in various focus groups. In his focus group, Steven posed the idea that physical punishment was related to colonization and that it has caused a disconnect with PI culture. I was intrigued by his suspicion, but his inkling did not appear to interest the other participants and they continued a conversation about how discipline was important and shaped them to become better people. I discovered that Pacific Islander students who were brought up on the islands were heavily disciplined through physical force and that they described the Pacific Islanders who grew up in the mainland as "disrespectful savages" who needed to be adequately disciplined. There were a couple focus group participants in Hawaii who expressed their belief that mainland Pacific Islanders made the Pacific Islanders from the islands look bad because they did not uphold values like putting family first, respecting elders, and practicing their cultures. From my own experience and specifically from the data I collected from California, I found that the mainland Pacific Islanders I interviewed wholeheartedly valued these same things.

Multiple Samoan students from both Hawaii and California admitted that they were sent to "The Rock," to adjust attitude problems and get straightened out by reconnecting with their culture. Fetu, from the first focus group, shared that when parents feel like their children need to be taught well and reminded of their culture, sending them

to Samoa is the most fitting solution. Lika's parents' decision represent the mentality other PI parents have regarding returning to the islands as the advantageous method for their children to find their way and reconnect with their roots. PI parents believe that returning to the motherland and paying homage to their culture will replenish, nurture, and fulfill their children.

Fil-Am is a familiar term I grew up with. Fil-Am is an abbreviation for Filipino American, which describes an American with Filipino descent. An observation I made throughout my focus groups was that not a single participant hyphenated their ethnicity to include American such as, Samoan-American or Tong-Am. Despite the colonial rule in their native lands, they still have strong claims to their indigenous cultures. Although their cultural pride is a powerful part of their identities, for the most part, the focus group participants also recognized how colonization has affected their identities, which leads them to embrace decolonization practices to find power in their home cultures.

Many focus group participants' narratives indicated that they experienced the first phase of Laenui's (2006) process of decolonization. The first phase entails an individual's rediscovery of history and recovery of culture. Lani mentioned that Native Hawaiian history was not included in her school's curriculum, and so she took the initiative to learn more from talking story with her family where knowledge was passed down through oral narration (Taosaka, 2002). Kuponono described being a rebel and wanting to learn as much as he could about his culture. He wanted to learn everything

about his culture that he felt should have been taught to him as a child. Lani and Kupono used this first phase of decolonization to find their voice and agency.

Steven displayed movement in the first and second phases of the decolonization process (Laenui, 2006). He experienced the first phase of decolonization, regarding rediscovery and recovery through the opportunity to learn about his culture's history. He then experienced the second phase of the decolonization process of mourning, when he learned about his culture's historical context, which resulted in making him angry. His consciousness awakened him to recognize the deep impact colonization has had on his culture. He said, "it felt great at that moment and it felt like it was the first time that this course was talking to me," which is an example of Steven experiencing the third phase of decolonization, dreaming (Laenui, 2006). He was exploring his culture and his own aspirations for his future as a proud Chamoru. His community college provided him with a space to fight against his oppressors by learning more about what it means to be Chamoru and embracing the culture. Steven benefitted from culturally sustaining pedagogical practices. He credited his academic attainment to his culture being positively represented and practiced in the classroom (Paris, 2012). Culturally appropriate education is a basic human right; the inclusion of multiple cultures is good practice that enhances education (Gay, 1994; Reyhner, Gilbert, Lockard, 2011).

Invisibility occurs at various educational levels. This study defines invisibility as an absence from physical space and educational settings and from access to high-quality education. Educational structures and teaching elements that honor PI students

should begin with recognizing cultural capital. Masina's narrative portrayed invisibility. She described invisibility as the physical absence of PIs not being enrolled in various levels of education and as not being present or represented at campus programming. Lika also described invisibility when she shared her negative encounter with her professor who assumed she had special needs because she was Pacific Islander. Lika believes professors need to learn more about PI students personally and culturally. Two examples of invisibility that emerged from many of the student narratives include invisibility regarding enrollment in higher education settings and educators' lack of awareness and familiarity with PI cultures.

One pattern common across the focus group participants that contributed to this invisibility in higher education is that many of the student participants did not take SAT or ACT exams and in many other ways, were not familiar with the college application process. Like Masina, nearly all the PI students I interviewed in California and Hawaii agreed that graduating from high school was the only feat their high school counselors inspired them to achieve. High school counselors who do not encourage Pacific Islanders to attend four-year colleges contribute to the physical invisibility of lower enrollment at the university level. Another focus group participant in Chris's focus group shared that when high school counselors did tell her to prepare for college she only felt prepared academically. Like Chris, who struggled with the technology components, she did not realize that there was a whole new system for interacting and connecting that she would have to learn, even before she got into the classroom.

Invisibility also occurred inside the classroom. Three examples of not being seen in the classroom is absence from school, lack of PIs in the curriculum, and lack of professor familiarity with PI cultures. Multiple students from various backgrounds provided examples of physical invisibility when classmates, including themselves, missed multiple classes due to fulfilling cultural customs. In comparison to educators in the Bay Area, educators in Hawaii appeared to be more understanding and accepting toward PI cultural traditions that resulted in these students missing class.

In congruence with physical absence is absence within the curriculum. Kuponono spoke of invisibility in the classroom where he learned about Paul Revere and Christopher Columbus, who were irrelevant to him, but never learned about Hawaiian historical figures such as King Kamehameha. Lani shared that once a week in elementary school, an elderly person would come to her class and share stories about pre-contact, that is, Hawaii before it was colonized. She contrasted this experience with history lessons from middle school and high school that only focused on what she called “post overthrow of the kingdom.” She was disturbed by the curricular gap because it is important to Lani that the schools take on the responsibility of informing others of the history that reveals the demise of her Hawaiian culture. Masina also experienced a PI absence in the classroom. She spoke about PIs feeling overlooked in an AAPI leadership course that she and other PIs enrolled in. The class had advertised bringing in successful AAPI speakers on to campus, but for Masina, the term AAPI was once again misleading, since out of 13 guest speakers, there was only one Pacific Islander.

In contrast to tangible absences, such as, physical absence or curricular absence, is knowledge-based absence. Lika's story described the harmful and hurtful effects to PI students when professors are unaware of PI culture. I was surprised by a response in Chris's focus group when I asked how Pacific Islanders differed from other students. One student responded that it depended on whether the professor is familiar with their PI culture. I would like to reiterate that the college Chris attends is a designated AANAPISI in Hawaii and that the institution has a student population where Pacific Islanders are the highest ethnic/racial group of the student body. This discovery had me questioning how it was possible that some professors in Hawaii were not familiar with the PI culture in an environment where PIs make up more than 30% of the campus population?

PIs addressing intricacies of dueling identities through hybridity. The focus group participants experienced tension with navigating their hybrid identities between PI and Western cultures within multiple aspects of their lives. The illustrations of hybridity align with Clandinin and Connelly's (1995) descriptions of competing and conflicting narratives. Competing narratives are stories that are compelling and describe positive tension with hegemonic school norms whereas, conflicting narratives clash against and have a negative tension with hegemonic school norms. Lika's and Chris's narratives represented hybridity. Lika is bi-racial, light skinned, grew up in California and Samoa, and is bilingual. Her story presents a conflicting narrative because she faced grave challenges with transitioning her life from California to American Samoa and then back to California. Chris is an openly gay male who is devoted to his Church, and experienced

culture shock from growing up in American Samoa, and then moving to Hawaii. His story is an example of competing narratives because although he struggled with existing outside of his collectivist community, he believes his journey provided him with needed growth and maturity.

Four student examples of hybridity that emerged from the narratives are: 1) Accusations of being “white washed”; 2) Loss of culture through language; 3) Classroom behavior; and 4) Ability to navigate higher education systems. Other focus group participants relate to Steven because they mentioned being called a coconut, which refers to being brown on the outside and white on the inside. In my first focus group in Hawaii one student participant struggled with a comfort in identifying as PI because he only spoke English and did not believe he deserved the honor of being considered PI. Chris noted that PI students do not speak in class as much as other students because they are taught to be humble and to respect elders and authority figures by not disrupting them. Masina shared that she was at the community college level for four years and vowed to not stay longer than needed at the four-year educational level. She sought out services and resources immediately after transferring to a university and completed her Bachelor’s degree in two and a half years.

Steven expressed that earlier in his life, he had been accused of being white washed. When he was a young boy who misbehaved, his grandma and aunties blamed his disobedient behavior on being too Americanized. Chamoru values revolve around family, intergenerational connections, and respect with an emphasis on filial piety, all of which

place great regard toward respecting elders (Misco & Lee, 2012). His elders reminded him of his outsider status as a warning that he needed to work harder to preserve his Chamoru culture. His family intentionally asserted the Chamoru values they feared conflicted with his Americanized conduct. Respecting elders was first and foremost.

As an elder, Kuponon took charge of the conversation in his focus group, and for the first half hour it appeared that everyone deferred to him to initiate a response. Only after he was finished speaking would others then contribute. The focus group participants referred to him as “Uncle,” which among Pacific Islander youth is a sign of respect. PIs will often refer to women who are around the age of their mothers as “Auntie” and to men who are of similar age to their fathers as “Uncle” (Sobral, 2006). The cultural value of respecting elders was a recurring theme in my focus groups and it was one that was seared into my upbringing as well.

Steven listed other traditions that he was proud to be knowledgeable of and practice such as never turning away a gift. He explained that it is a Western custom to tell people, “No thank you” or “No, that’s ok” but in Guam if someone offers a present or a kind gesture you take it. If someone tries to feed you, always take their food otherwise it is offensive. He followed these rules as a young boy, but as an adult reconnecting to his culture, he embodies the values. As a college student, he aims to return to and honor his roots by serving his community and not chasing capitalism. Chris spoke of these cultural traditions with immense pride; it was evident that he was proud to know and practice this knowledge.

To combat feelings of not being PI enough, students took pride in practicing aspects of their culture that they were well-versed in such as respecting elders, fulfilling funeral-related duties, and attempting to learn the language. Of the 34 total students who participated in my focus groups, most spoke their native tongues at home and only about a quarter of the student participants did not know how to speak a second language. Among these students, there was an evident shame that they carried for not knowing their culture's language. Lika felt insecure about her PI identity, when she first arrived in American Samoa for high school. She began feeling less Americanized once she learned how to speak Samoan. In the first focus group, one of the students admitted to a discomfort in claiming to be PI because he did not speak Samoan, which he felt discounted his claim to his culture.

A pivotal understanding surfaced when my analysis captured the tension of belonging to a rich Pacific Islander culture and transitioning into a Western educational environment. PI students struggled with hybridity in classroom settings and in their broader experiences navigating the college system. Multiple focus group participants expressed uneasiness with speaking in class. Some students, over time, have grown more comfortable with participating in classroom discussions, whereas others still prefer to observe and silently take in the environment. Students articulated that Pacific Islanders consider their words to reflect their people, and so students feel an extra cultural burden when they speak. In addition, raising one's hand to participate in class can be viewed as

showing off or questioning the teacher, which conflict with the value of showing respect (Uehara, Chugen, & Staley Raatior, 2017).

Educators should familiarize themselves with Pacific Islander values. Humility is greatly revered and if faculty do not understand how this value is practiced, it may lead to the false belief that PI students are disengaged in class. PI students are practicing humility when they quietly listen through a classroom lesson. The act of students asking questions is institutionally viewed as taking initiative to better understand the subject matter, but to many PI students this practice is culturally viewed as being impolite and in some instances insulting (Uehara, Chugen, & Staley Raatior, 2017).

PI values influence hybridity regarding classroom behavior and how PI students experience and adapt to higher education settings. Multiple students admitted to feeling disoriented when they first attended college. They were unsure how to register for classes, how to log on to college web portals, how to select courses that counted toward their degree, and which resources and services were accessible to them. They perceived college expectations as knowing how to do all those things already. Masina experienced unfamiliarity with the process of filing for financial aid and selecting courses. The primary purpose identified by the focus group participants, in obtaining a four-year degree, is to secure the financial stability needed to provide for their families and to pursue a field of study that will allow them to positively give back and contribute to their communities. Masina was disappointed about no longer qualifying for aid, and admitted to feeling guilty about causing her mother's credit card debt. She wished that the

government understood how Pacific Islander families operated so that the FAFSA system could have served her better.

PI students experienced challenges when merging their collectivist values with higher education's independent values. College was the first time for many PI students where they felt people had a "figure it out on your own" type of attitude (Uehara, Chugen, & Staley Raatior, 2017). Student narratives also reflected that independence does not exist in traditional Pacific Islander cultures. Lika used the familiar phrase, "It takes a village to raise a child," during her focus group and she meant it. She grew up in both American Samoa and California and in both locations, she had an influential PI community who guided her throughout her life. Before she established her PI community at her two-year college, she described struggling to find her way. Pacific Islanders are capable of being independent, yet these findings demonstrate how college was the first space for many PI students to learn and practice independence. It is important for educators who work with PI students to understand this frame of reference to inform practices, initiatives or programming that focus on this student population.

The sense of community living and involvement that PI students thrive on from back home, does not prepare them for the college attitude that students need to learn on their own (Uehara, Chugen, & Staley Raatior, 2017). Back home, Chris was accustomed to having a supportive community look out for him. Older family members are often approached when questions arise; the concept of learning on one's own is not common to PI communities (Uehara, Chugen, & Staley Raatior, 2017). When Chris got to college he

did not have his community and instead had to learn how to be independent, which was a first for him. He stated that he understood that his mom discouraged him from leaving home to go to college because she did not want him to suffer financially and she did not want him to struggle with the hardships of leaving home. He is grateful for his mother's love, but is thankful for his autonomous experiences.

Relevance to Leaders

Overall, focus group participants highlighted that higher education institutions are spaces created not for Pacific Islanders, but for their white counterparts to thrive. Thus, the student participants view education as oppressive, when it should be transformative. The students were asked what is something they wish educators knew about being Pacific Islander. Student responses varied although commonalities centered around disrupting educators' deficit mind-frames, and being more knowledgeable about PI culture, with an emphasis on PIs high regard to being community based.

Across all demographics, first-generation students are more likely to have lower graduation rates than their non-first-generation counterparts. Specifically, students identified as first-generation and low-income are four times more likely to leave higher education after their first year than their non-first-generation peers (Stebbleton & Soria, 2012). Kuponono was disheartened when he talked about how professors felt that TRiO was hand-holding the students in its program. He wants educators to understand that the support services that he and other first-generation, low income students receive are a form of compensation for a lack of educational assistance and encouragement. TRiO

provides services such as, registering for classes, tutoring, accessing computer labs and printing services, receiving career counseling, and learning about financial and economic literacy. Pacific Islanders benefit from such student support services because it equips them with the tools needed to succeed in an educational system, which was not created for their advancement.

Lika wants educators to “Have faith in our intelligence.” Her resilience is evident through her ability to push forward and continue enrollment after her negative encounter with the professor who asked if she had special needs. It was obvious throughout the focus group that the professor’s deficit thinking of PIs stayed with her. Two years later, she stated that she has more confidence in herself now, but unfortunately the doubt the professor implanted in her mind about her academic abilities did not dissipate. Lika created the practice of having her group of friends actively help her register for classes, by asking about the professors, and if her friends have recommendations, in hopes of avoiding disrespectful instructors. Lika expressed that she wished faculty would take the time to better understand Pacific Islanders as people and understand their cultures. The unfamiliarity that Lika believes her professors have is a form of invisibility, that she hopes gets addressed.

Steven wants educators to comprehend the power of coming from a collectivist community. He described PI collectivism like this, “We are our own walking islands in a sense, ... You are talking to somebody who really is part of his or her own connections.” Collectivist cultures place value on associating themselves as a member of a larger group

(Wright & Drewery, 2006). Steven described an example with how colleges can weave PI values of collectivism and reciprocity. He suggested that if a college invests in the academic attainment of a PI student, then the PI student will contribute to campus commitments, thus creating a beneficial relationship for both parties. The success of one Pacific Islander in college, will result in that Pacific Islander community talking story about the supportive college environment and the accomplishments of the student. Once this chain reaction occurs, colleges will need to continue to earn this reputation.

Kupono is a product of that way of thinking; he mentioned learning about how supportive TRiO is through word of mouth, which demonstrates how the community watches out for one another. He had known people who have come and gone before him and participated in TRiO, which is why he sought the program out. The TRiO program at the college provided a safe place for students who may have been intimidated by the higher education setting and needed more guidance on how to navigate the college system. Steven and Kupono demonstrated how educators have a lot to gain in understanding PI intrinsic relationships.

Chapter Summary

This chapter examines how an awareness of an underserved student population, such as Pacific Islanders, who are forced to assimilate pushes educators to adopt a new lens. This new lens better gauges what higher educational institutions are not doing to support these students. It is necessary to disrupt the continuing dominance of deficit explanations about the causes of marginalized student disparities. To offer

recommendations, and to share my vision, on how educational institutions can better serve PI students, I must first think about my own growth and understanding with this subject. Chapter Three explores my effective leadership practices for supporting PI students.

Chapter Three: Self-identified Leadership Practices for Supporting PIs

This chapter is written for all AAPI leaders on college campuses, with specific regard to AANAPISI programming staff. AANAPISI is a relatively new initiative; I designed my dissertation to promote opportunities for cross collaboration and information sharing among AAPI leaders, to build a community of leaders, and to inform program practices. Attending a National Pacific Islander Education Network (NPIEN) Conference ignited my passion to work with Pacific Islanders. My lived experiences as the Hawaii state recruiter, the Asian Pacific American Student Success Coordinator, and the process of delving into student data in my role as a doctoral student reinforced my eagerness and confirmed that the needs of this student population must be recognized and addressed.

In this chapter, I describe leadership practices I adapted to enhance my social capital and increase my effectiveness as an advocate for PI students. I describe eight personal narratives that represent key turning points for me professionally as an AANAPISI leader and personally in terms of my identity as a Filipina and a student services professional. In each of these, I highlight specific leadership strategies because they align with Pacific Islander values such as relationship building, community collaboration, and humility. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the integration of components of the conceptual framework, leadership theories, and elements of convergence.

Increasing Social Capital through Theories that Guide Leadership

Notions of (de)colonization, (in)visibility, and hybridity provided me with a frame for reflecting on how my data revealed the need for PI students and PI institutions and leaders to promote social capital. In fall of 2014, my first semester of the doctoral program, I revised my approach to advocate for AAPI students to focus specifically on Pacific Islander students. My specified dissertation topic has altered and impacted my leadership skills. I turned to four leadership theories to guide me through my educational, professional and personal endeavors to better serve PI students within the past three years.

These leadership theories include Hattori's (2016) culturally sustaining leadership from a Pacific Islander perspective, charismatic leadership (Howell & Shamir, 2005), Fullan's change-based leadership (2008), and transformative leadership (Shield, 2009). I will further describe each theory, how they converge for me, and their relevancy for other educational leaders in similar positions as mine. Apart from Hattori's leadership theory, the remaining leadership approaches do not derive from working with PI students and leaders, however, components of PI values are ingrained in the leadership theories, which is why I pursued them.

Hattori's (2016) culturally sustaining leadership from a Pacific Islander's perspective is modeled after Paris's (2012) culturally sustaining pedagogy. Culturally sustaining leadership acknowledges cultural customs and traditions as a valid leadership

base (Hattori, 2016). Hattori's leadership is rooted in Chamoru epistemology called, Pã'ã taotao tãno', which translates to, ways of the people of the land. This leadership depicts hybridity through a successful integration that respects PI culture in a Western setting. I implemented this form of leadership at the start of my third-year in my doctoral program, when I began collecting data in Hawaii. Below is a table condensed from Hattori (2016) that illustrates the components of her culture-based leadership theory.

Table 2

Hattori's (2016) Culturally Sustaining Leadership from a PI Perspective

Chamoru Value	Chamoru Cultural Context	Educational Context
<i>Inimi'di</i> (Belonging)	Bonded to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate/extended family • Clans of both parents • Spirits of the ancestors • Ancestral places 	Promote a communal identity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ teams & mentoring • Foster collaboration over competition • Acknowledge every person
<i>Chenchule'</i> (Reciprocity)	Contribution to care of others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material • Emotional/Spiritual • Professional & Financial • Temporal 	Supporting and nurturing members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivate and develop talents, skills, & knowledge in others
<i>Respect for Manãmko'</i> (Elders)	Elders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possess cultural knowledge & wisdom. • Are consulted in family & community decisions • Opinions & judgments respected 	Seek out elders and solicit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family, community, & institutional stories from which valuable insights can arise that help us all shape the future.

<i>Chamoru Temporal Intelligence</i>	Time is not quantifiable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot possess because it is not a commodity • No sense of wasting/killing time • No notion of forcing/rushing time 	Maintain a steady rhythm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate a manageable pace within workplace/class • Ascertain the natural tempo and patterns of any environment
<i>Primacy of the Natural Environment</i>	The natural environment offers life lessons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethos of resilience • Every decimating typhoon is followed by regeneration of the land 	Apply what pã'ã taotao tãno' teaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain & articulate confidence that things will always get better • Show others ways we can collaborate to surmount challenges

In my student narrative data from Chapter Two, belonging and respect for elders came up very frequently with almost all students commenting on these values. The other values were mentioned sparingly. Narrative examples exhibited belonging within group settings such as Kuponon being a member of TRiO, Masina and Lika's friends at the community college, and Lani's classmates from Ethnic Studies. Belonging was also described in classroom environments such as Steven learning about Chamoru history in his Pacific Studies class, Masina and Lani's experiences in their Ethnic Studies courses, and Chris's comfort in not considering his mother's warning to tone down his personality.

Respect for elders was the second value that Hattori featured, which was repeatedly represented in the student narratives and was demonstrated in school settings. Lani mentioned that an elderly woman would come to her elementary class and talk story

to share wisdom and history. Lika did not confront the professor who asked if she had special needs. Although the professor's comments were inappropriate, she remained culturally respectful by not challenging the professor's statement. Chris acknowledged the Pacific Islanders who came before him and established a pathway for him to follow.

Reciprocity occurs when the good of the community is prioritized from the care of others (Hattori, 2016). Examples of reciprocity did not emerge from the data, most likely because my focus group questions did not result in students providing examples of reciprocity, or the students were not given an opportunity to practice reciprocity in their educational settings. Lika met with her professor during office hours to build a relationship with her, but instead was left questioning whether she belonged in college. Steven described the value of educators understanding the gravity with which PIs appreciate intrinsic relationships. Hattori's belief in her Chamoru culture's ability to benefit others serves as the catalyst of her leadership theories, which intend to promote PI student inclusivity in educational settings. Given the values placed on PI culture, Hattori's leadership theory best supports the intentions of this dissertation.

While Hattori's leadership theory is central in obtaining a deeper understanding for working with Pacific Islander students, there are other leadership theories that are part of the broader literature and can also inform this work. One promising model from the established leadership scholarship is charismatic leadership. Charismatic leadership originated from religious and spiritual leaders who had an innate ability to mobilize people and was later reproduced in political and business settings (Sandberg & Moreman,

2015). I was attracted to this theory of leadership because of its focus on passion and charisma. These types of leaders are known to transform the needs, attitudes, and pursuits of followers from self-serving to team-centered. This form of leadership strongly focuses on the type of dyadic relationship that forms between the leader and the follower and emphasizes the leader's ability to influence the follower (Howell & Shamir, 2005).

Charismatic leaders can often alter the values and identities of followers' self-concepts, which allow leaders to transform an emphasis on individual gains to prioritizing collaborative contributions. They are also able to increase self and team effectiveness through positive evaluation and motivational communication (Howell and Shamir, 2005). Charismatic leadership aligns with Pacific Islander collectivist values by emphasizing the importance of team and building personal relationships. In my first focus group in Hawaii, I was cautious about what I was wearing, but I was not aware of how I was being perceived when I was talking. While I was describing my study, and going over the protocol, I was using scholarly language and was approaching the focus group on an academic level. I should have first focused on building rapport by sharing my story with them. Pacific Islanders revere reciprocity, once I learned to modify my own behavior by talking story with them, as opposed to making "I" statements regarding the research I was conducting, they in turn talked story with me, and so I did not experience any one-sided encounters with the focus group participants. Charismatic leadership served as a reminder that as an effective leader, I needed to establish a personable

relationship with the students and I needed to promote that students who share their individual stories can ultimately, service the larger PI student population.

Another form of leadership, which utilizes a humanistic people-centered approach, by incorporating a sense of camaraderie, humility, and collaboration, is in Fullan's (2008) book, *The Six Secrets of Change*. Fullan identified a set of principles for leading change by influencing school capacity and student achievement: 1) Love your employees, 2) Connect peers with purpose, 3) Capacity building prevails, 4) Learning is the work, 5) Transparency rules, and 6) Systems learn. More in-depth data examples of Fullan's practices will be revealed later in the chapter. The practice of "Love your employees" is about investing in employees through creating conditions for them to succeed. In a context that focuses on investing in students, a fellow student from Steven's focus group teared up when talking about how her professor incorporated articles about Samoan culture in her English class.

"Connect peers with purpose," signifies the need for leaders to create a space for effective peer interaction. Fullan notes that leaders should actively provide direction in peer interaction spaces and should intervene if disagreement among peers occurs. "Capacity building prevails," disapproves of an environment where people criticize and form judgments; instead this practice focuses on improvement. "Learning is the work," is when educational institutions encourage their staff to experience personal and professional growth through continuous teaching and learning.

Kalea, who is Chamoru and was in Lani's focus group, epitomized this fourth leadership practice through active involvement in clubs on campus. Kalea was born and raised in Guam which is the largest island within the Mariana islands, also known as the Marianas. The Marianas are part of the Micronesian region and Oceania refers to the lands and people of the Pacific. Kalea is involved in three student clubs and each one addresses a component of her identity. She is a member of the Marianas Club which primarily serves Chamoru student participants. She is active in the Micronesian Connection Club, which is for students of Micronesia. Her third club membership is in the Oceania Rising Club, which focuses on social issues about Oceania. She shared that this last club pertains to activism and describes it as a wonderful way to build alliances and stay up to date on what is happening on the various islands.

"Transparency rules" refers to a comfort in normalizing assessments on data and outcomes of action items, to inform future practice-based decisions. I describe utilizing this fifth leadership practice in a personal narrative later in this chapter because of its focus on data assessment. The last practice is "Systems learn," which advocates cultivating multiple leaders to enhance stability, as opposed to focusing on individual leaders. Lani described her admiration for Papa Mau who was the Micronesian master navigator who broke tradition and shared the sacred knowledge of navigating to outsider PI communities. He believed in the value of preserving this Oceania way of life so much that he risked rejection from his community to cultivate more leaders who could pass

down these skills and teach future generations how to navigate (Iding, Skouge, & Peter, 2008; Ames, 2013).

Fullan's last practice also reinforces the benefit of having a leader remain confident in complex and distressed circumstances. Pacific Islanders can connect to Fullan's six practices toward effective leadership change because of the humanistic people-centered approach, which incorporates a sense of camaraderie, humility, and collaboration. Fullan's leadership theories are favored by educational leaders because they are grounded in practice and are perceptive, actionable, and easy to understand; however, criticism of Fullan's work is that it does not explicitly address issues of culture, social justice, or equity.

My leadership practices were evolving in my understanding of how a leader initiates and delivers successful change, which directed me toward the need to effect systemic barriers. Transformative leadership begins by challenging inappropriate uses of power and privilege that create or perpetuate inequality and injustice (Shields, 2010). One of the first transformative leadership writers, William Foster (1986), believed this form of leadership required leaders to be critically informed. Shields (2009) attributes Freire's (1978) work as foundational, as it asserts that transformation cannot occur without education and *conscientization*, which means gaining awareness through critical analysis and acting against oppressive circumstances and ways of thinking.

Transformative educational leaders take responsibility in their institutions for bringing attention and solutions to critical issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and class

(Santamaria, 2014). In this way, transformative leadership takes a holistic approach in addressing educational issues. This form of leadership recognizes that it is not enough to simply identify systemic barriers; instead a transformative leader must deconstruct and then reconstruct a more equitable system (Shields, 2010). Transformative leadership can support PI students through their educational journey by structurally analyzing the effects of colonization in daily school practices and generating processes of decolonization.

These leaders challenge the status quo, for example if PI students historically have low retention or graduation rates, this leader would confront the evidence, identify negative trends, and assert change. Transformative leaders also critically analyze how educational institutions construct knowledge, such as, condemning deficit-based thinking from administrators, faculty, and staff. Finally, transformative leaders confront the inappropriate uses of power and privilege, which allow some groups to dominate while others are marginalized. Students in Masina's focus group observed that SAT/ACT prep, AP courses, and fieldtrips to colleges were only granted to students from higher socio-economic backgrounds and specific racial groups. A transformative educational leader would acknowledge these practices and make sure to dismantle the inequity that privileges only some students.

Pivotal Narratives of a Change Agent

I now analyze my transformation into a change agent through eight critical narrative turning points that occurred during personal, educational, and career explorations. Each narrative represents a construct of the conceptual framework and

demonstrates how each critical turning point changed me. I discuss the leadership theories I applied to each stage of learning. Then I incorporate four new elements of leadership that converged for me and that deepened my leadership growth. These convergences highlight my blind spots, my insider/outsider stance, my vulnerability, and the sophistication of my analysis.

The first convergence are my blind spots, which refer to recognition of what I still needed to learn versus what I thought I knew. Immersing myself in the literature was the best method to increase my knowledge on PI students as this information allowed me to craft my dissertation design.

The second convergence was insider/outsider, which pertains to moments of awareness regarding my experiences with hybridity. As I listened to the narratives of the student participants' encounters in the Western educational system, I also gradually connected with literature that described traversing through hybrid identities. These connections provided me with a new way to understand my own hybridity in being half Filipina and half White (Ahmed, 1999; Mabardi, 2000).

Vulnerability is the third convergence. It describes a set of feelings that relate to my susceptibility of the unknown and my willingness to grow. Vulnerability naturally leads to discomfort, but always resulted in positive tension because it required me to push myself to learn more.

The last element is sophistication of my analysis, which applies to moments where I could better articulate my arguments and refine my inquiries. Sophistication of

analysis often occurred when I came across shortfalls where I could not make meaningful connections. In that way it often emerged from what had been my blind spots and from being open to my vulnerabilities.

Table 3 below demonstrates how I incorporated the dissertation's conceptual framework constructs, practices in leadership, my pivotal narratives, and the elements of convergence among my pivotal narratives. I used an integration of these components to interpret my data, analyze all components, examine tensions, and create a deeper understanding of the current conditions for PI students in higher education. An examination of all the analysis in Table 3 informs my recommendations for Chapter Four.

Table 3. *Integration of Pivotal Narrative Leadership Practice(s) Associated with the Conceptual Framework*

<u>Conceptual Framework Construct(s)</u>	<u>Practice(s) of Leadership</u>	<u>Pivotal Narrative</u>	<u>Element(s) of Convergence</u>
(In)visibility	Charismatic leadership	The CSU AAPI initiative	Blind spot & Sophistication of analysis
(In)visibility	Charismatic leadership	Articulating the need to focus on PI students	Blind spot & Vulnerability
(In)visibility (De)colonization	Culturally sustaining leadership	Researching & Writing a small-scale qualitative study	Vulnerability & Insider/outsider
(De)colonization, (In)visibility, Hybridity	Fullan's practice #5 & Transformative leadership	A PI relevant conceptual framework	Blind spot, Vulnerability, & Sophistication of analysis

<u>Conceptual Framework Construct(s)</u>	<u>Practice(s) of Leadership</u>	<u>Pivotal Narrative</u>	<u>Element(s) of Convergence</u>
(De)colonization	Fullan's practices #1 & #3	Dr. Hattori's mentorship	Vulnerability & Sophistication of analysis
Hybridity	Culturally sustaining leadership	Culturally relevant introduction	Vulnerability, Insider/outsider
(In)visibility	Culturally sustaining leadership & Fullan's practice #6	Becoming the Asian Pacific American Student Success Coordinator	Insider/Outsider & Sophistication of analysis
(In)visibility	Fullan's practice #4 & Transformative leadership	Dissertation process	Blind spot, & Sophistication of analysis

The CSU AAPI initiative.

(In)visibility is the construct from the conceptual framework that applies to this narrative. Prior to entering the Ed.D. program, I was full of enthusiasm and naivety. I knew I wanted to help the AAPI community but, apart from physically recruiting them, I was unaware of how to develop my advocacy. I experienced elements of convergence through blind spots and a sophistication of analysis.

Shortly after moving from Monterey Bay to the East Bay, in 2011, the California State University (CSU) system introduced their Asian American Pacific Islander initiative. The CSU system-wide initiative focused on improving college access and graduation achievement for marginalized AAPI communities. When the CSU launched the AAPI initiative, I immediately met with my supervisor and requested to lead all outreach addressing this initiative. If Cal State East Bay participated in anything AAPI, I wanted to be involved.

A Black colleague from another CSU campus warned me to be careful about what I wished for. He explained that as "the" Black man in an outreach office he was recruited to take part in every African American initiative his campus hosted,

even if it was not related to his department. He described how his campus pigeonholed him to only serve the Black community, which made it difficult for him to prove he had the capacity to lead other initiatives or assume alternative roles.

He was worried about the limitations these expectations placed on him, how they minimized opportunities toward advancement, and how he felt tokenized. I nodded my head and attempted to look empathetic, but I was not heeding his caution; instead I was envisioning the possibilities. I yearned to be “the” go-to person on my campus for AAPI advocacy.

Prior to the AAPI initiative in 2011, the CSU had never created a space to critically discuss the needs of these students. I was grateful when my job became a place that supported my devotion to supporting the AAPI community, my community. I was also appreciative for the opportunity to utilize the Ed.D. program as my platform to further promote the CSU AAPI initiative.

Therefore, before I had even enrolled in the Ed.D. program, I had already taken leadership roles within the AAPI community. I was enthusiastic about CSU’s initiative, which had finally acknowledged the academic and social disparities within the AAPI population. It was through charismatic leadership that I envisioned the endless possibilities of having the nation’s largest four-year educational system unite and devote resources to supporting AAPI students. Howell and Shamir (2005) describe the ideal traits of charismatic leaders as being a visionary, setting elevated expectations of their followers with the genuine belief that they can achieve the goals, and modeling admirable behavior. My dedication to support the AAPI community mixed with a philosophical orientation toward charismatic leadership influenced me as I sought to be an exemplar

recruiter who presented best practices in serving AAPI students to my outreach team and at CSU outreach conference workshops. Charismatic leadership provided me with a space to be confident about my ability and passion to advocate for the AAPI community.

The elements of convergence, which occurred in this narrative are blind spot and sophistication of analysis. I was not aware of the gravity of the AAPI students' experiences with student tracking until I moved to the Bay Area. I was also blinded by the allure of the CSU AAPI initiative. I was eager to support this initiative that had a strong launch and was naïve to believe the initiative's momentum would remain steady and would have the capacity to quickly solve academic disparities. I experienced a sophistication of analysis in that I learned how to better address what it is I want to highlight. I shared this pivotal narrative because it changed my leadership as a professional. I communicated and articulated the realities the CSU AAPI initiative addressed. I educated other CSU recruiters on the diversity of the AAPI community, and I influenced the implementation of best practices in supporting this student population.

Articulating the need to focus on PI students.

(In)visibility is the construct from the conceptual framework that applies to the next narrative. I entered the Ed.D. program with a strong interest in exposing and addressing AAPI student educational disparities. Immediately within my first semester, I narrowed the scope of my research to focus on Pacific Islanders. The elements of convergence that I experienced were blind spots and vulnerability.

In a class exercise, in the first semester of my doctoral studies, my classmates and I were encouraged to use over-sized post-it notes and markers to brainstorm potential research questions. I wrote, "What are the contributing factors that affect Pacific Islander student low-academic attainment rates in higher education?"

My master's thesis focused on the contributing factors, specifically, why Pacific Islander high school students were not continuing to four-year universities. I wanted to add to that scholarship by examining PI students enrolled in higher education institutions with the intention of earning their four-year degrees. I looked at my proposed research question and was pleased I could complete this task with such ease. I perceived that my proposed research would be significant because it would identify the structural barriers that affected this population. Then once I recognized the barriers, I would establish protocols to eliminate them, and PI student retention and graduation would increase!

Dr. Cooks, one of the professors teaching the class was making his rounds to offer comments and critiques for each student's question. He arrived at my post-it and read my question aloud. I gauged his reaction and expectations of praise flooded my mind. "He's impressed; no one has ever looked at Pacific Islanders in this program before; he's going to compliment this commendable research question."

He cupped his index finger and thumb over his upper-lip and chin, tilted his head, and then looked at me and said, "So what?" I looked at him perplexed, "I'm sorry?" I asked. He pointed to the words Pacific Islander, and asked, "What is the population size of Pacific Islanders?" I was slowly piecing together that he was not picking up what I was putting down. I told him "Pacific Islanders make up 1% of the U.S. population." He scoffed, "They make up 1% of the population? Then who cares? This population is too small. How will you demonstrate the significance of your study?"

Now it was my turn to have a puzzled look on my face, "I care." He moved his hand in circular motion, signifying I needed to say more. "They matter to me." I said with more certainty.

Dr. Cooks smiled at me, an encouraging smile a teacher gives a student who got the answer wrong. My response did not move him. He cautioned that if I wanted to continue with this research topic I would need to articulate the significance of studying a trivial sized population of students.

I understood his reservations, but I did not allow them to deter me. He had a valid critique and he made it known that he was not going to be the only person to ask

me to defend my perspective. I acknowledged that 1% is a meager number, but I had already experienced interactions with these students and there was nothing small about them. I was determined to use my dissertation as a means for educators to encounter and connect with PI students.

As this narrative shows, I entered the Ed.D. program with a strong interest in exposing AAPI students' educational disparities. I was taken aback by what I initially perceived to be a notion that the population I chose to concentrate on was too small to merit a viable dissertation topic; however, Dr. Cooks was not dissuading me from pursuing a study on Pacific Islanders. He was priming me to be a critical scholar and pushing me to deepen my understanding of my proposed research topic. I resorted to charismatic leadership to demonstrate my confidence to naysayers and show I had the aptitude to formulate a dissertation with an appropriate scope and significance to the field. Key characteristics of charismatic leadership include innovative vision, responsiveness to followers' needs, eccentric behavior, and risk-taking (Conger, Kanungo, & Menon, 2000).

In terms of the conceptual framework for this dissertation, specifying a focus on Pacific Islanders connects with the construct of (in)visibility. Pacific Islanders make up 1% of the U.S. population (U.S. Census, 2010). Therefore, they experience invisibility in comparison to other student groups, yet their visibility is growing as increasing numbers of Pacific Islanders are moving to the continental U.S., particularly to California (U.S. Census, 2015a). I anticipated that there would be a demand to research PIs.

In retrospect, I see how a convergence of beginning to recognize my blind spots and accepting some sense of vulnerability helped me move forward. As a new student in a doctorate program, I was finding it very difficult to admit that I did not know an answer or how to frame an argument. It was also challenging to receive criticism, or to not perceive it as an attack that questioned whether I deserved to be there. At first, I did not find Dr. Cook's critique supportive. It took some time for me to realize that his response was the push I needed to expose myself to new literature and advance my reasoning. I increased my leadership skills when I opted not to concede to this encounter with adversity. Instead, I accepted the challenge and persisted.

Researching and writing a small-scale qualitative study.

(De)colonization and (in)visibility are the constructs from the conceptual framework that apply to this narrative. I determined within my first semester that my dissertation focus would be on Pacific Islanders in higher education and I never changed my topic. For every major assignment I chose a PI focus. A key interview with a PI student provided me with a new perspective of how invisibility is experienced. The elements of convergence I experienced were vulnerability and my insider/outsider status.

In my Master's program I opted to participate in a project-based capstone instead of completing a research-based thesis. In the second semester of the Ed.D. program, I was enrolled in Qualitative Analysis, a course where I designed and conducted my first educational research study.

This small-scale study focused on Samoan students because I had the most access to them. I analyzed seven pieces of data and gained the greatest insight from the stories I collected through interviews. I conducted two interviews: one was over

Skype with a former student who lived in Hawaii and the other was in-person with a current student from the Bay Area. This second interview was with a previous student assistant, Leila, and was the more powerful of the two, probably because of the interview setting.

Leila informed me that if I wanted to interview her, I would need to come to her church where her father was the pastor. I happily obliged. When I arrived, she enthusiastically showed me around her father's church and introduced me to her family and numerous congregation members. I am quite certain I was introduced to two dozen people by name and waved and smiled at two dozen more. I was surprised to see so many people in a church at 7:00 pm on a weekday.

Leila then guided me to her father's office for the interview. I was more confident because this was my second interview and Leila was comfortable, too. She revealed her comfort by occasionally speaking to me in Samoan. I was excited about my ability to create a space where an interviewee felt relaxed enough to speak openly.

Leila spoke of invisibility and described how she experienced it in higher education. She explained *"A lot more of the organizations, and the faculty, and staff on campus was coming to use me or ask me questions. And was like 'Hey, can you do this? Can you be on this panel? Can you go here for this conference and this... and be... host this? [That] was when I was starting to realize, man there really are no other Samoans.'"*

Thus, one of the ways that PI invisibility on campus became evident to Leila was due to feeling over exposed through far too many invitations to events, marketing, and outreach efforts. I also began to think about how to create an interview setting that felt welcoming and supportive, as this approach would be the only way I would be able to elicit stories with the authenticity and depth of emotion I was seeking.

For the course paper, I transcribed both student interviews, which produced rich data that told a combined story that quantitative data couldn't have captured. Through this experience, I decided to pursue narratives as key to my dissertation methodology. By

embracing a culturally sustaining leadership style, I emphasized the value of belonging through working as a team where everyone is supported and invested. I interviewed the student participants and created a space where they felt their input mattered and contributed meaningfully to my research.

When I had initially contacted the students, neither believed they were interview worthy. During their interviews, the PI value of reciprocity emerged. I was genuinely validating their experiences because I was learning from them. As a result, both students recognized how much I valued their narratives and invited me to reach out to them again.

The Qualitative Analysis course is related to the dissertation's conceptual framework constructs of (in)visibility and (de)colonization. Leila understood the gravity of PI invisibility on her college campus from being actively pursued to attend events to represent the PI population. Colonization was evident through Leila's strong identity ties to her church. Missionaries executed a comprehensive outreach within the Pacific Islands, which manifestly influenced Pacific Islanders' religious practices (Allen & Heppner, 2011; Fischer, 2013). Finally, decolonization unfolded at the end of this pivotal moment through the powerful student narratives I was able to document in my qualitative research paper. I felt strongly motivated to demonstrate decolonization through these students' counter-narratives.

Through this narrative, I encountered a convergence that involved my vulnerability and my insider/outsider status. My vulnerability emerged as I agreed to drive for an hour to conduct my second interview at a place that was dear to my

interviewee, but was wholly unfamiliar to me. In addition, I was still learning and building my interview skills and so toward the beginning of the interaction, I felt uneasy. My outsider status was most palpable when Leila was touring me around her church. She was eager to share this aspect of her identity and introduce me to members of her community. Although everyone was very friendly, I felt strongly that I was not one of them, but just a visitor.

I also encountered an insider experience when I was interviewing Leila and she code-switched to speak in Samoan without translation, or described aspects of her culture without providing any background information. In these ways she treated me like an insider, and although I needed to do further research on these topics, I was grateful for this trust and inclusivity she shared with me. Prior to my interview with Leila, I viewed not being Pacific Islander as an inherent limitation to my work. This experience informed my leadership because of the insight I gained from countering my self-perceived outsider status through being knowledgeable and respectful of PI cultures.

A PI relevant conceptual framework.

All three constructs from the dissertation's conceptual framework -- (de)colonization, (in)visibility, and hybridity -- apply to this narrative. As I continued to maintain a PI focus throughout my doctoral assignments, I collected more data on the population and the issue. When I analyzed the data, I discovered a disconnect between

what I was trying to demonstrate and what was occurring. The elements of convergence I experienced were blind spots, vulnerability, and sophistication of analysis.

Within my first semester in the Ed.D. program I had pinpointed the model minority myth as PI students' number one enemy and the primary explanation for their invisibility in higher education. Yet as time passed, and I expanded my research on PI students, I realized I had fixated on the model minority myth simply because I was familiar with it.

Faculty continued to push me to deepen and clarify my research focus, but I thought a shift would reveal my lack of knowledge on literature that I suspected program faculty expected me to know. Ultimately, I could not deny that the model minority myth was creating a limiting frame. More importantly, I came to realize that it was neither addressing what I was uncovering about PI students, nor helping me focus on what I wanted to demonstrate with respect to their experiences.

In the start of my second year of the doctoral program, I placed pressure on myself to meet the program's second milestone, the proposal. I was relieved to gain more methodological experience in another small-scale qualitative research seminar class. I sought out my network and secured a colleague from work and a member of the National Pacific Islander Education Network (NPIEN) to conduct two sets of in-depth interviews.

One of my interviewees was Talia, an academic counselor at the university level. Talia grew up primarily in American Samoa and came to California as a young adult to pursue higher education. She described the severe hybridity challenges she faced, as she was forced to learn new norms in California that clashed culturally with her Samoan identity.

My second interview was with Sara, a middle school teacher who was born in Guam and grew up in Northern California. Sara had an impressive ability to actively tap into her critical race consciousness. Through her narrative, I became interested in incorporating the theoretical frame of colonialism into my study.

I then began observing a set of recurring ideas including Talia's descriptions of hybridity and Sara's railing against colonization. I mapped these out in a graphic, an effort that produced a draft of an original conceptual framework for my dissertation. Once I abandoned the fear of not knowing, I evolved past the limiting theoretical frame of the model minority myth.

In this shift, I employed two forms of leadership: Fullan's fifth leadership practice on transparency and the broader framework of transformative leadership. As discussed earlier, Fullan's fifth essential practice for leading change is "transparency rules." Transparency entails assessing, communicating, and acting on data that influences change efforts (Fullan, 2008). I absorbed and analyzed all the data I had collected, and formulated a more comprehensive framework. I used transformative leadership to identify and address inequitable social and cultural contexts (Beyer, 2012).

Originally, I had tunnel vision and experienced blind spots with the singular construct of invisibility, but the narratives I heard incorporated hybridity and colonization as distinct experiences and ways of thinking with deep roots in history. Transformative leadership allowed me to gain a fuller picture of PI students' lived experiences through the expansion of my conceptual framework. Most importantly, this form of leadership created a space for me to formulate a counter hegemonic understanding to incorporate into my dissertation.

At this turning point, I experienced three elements of convergence, blind spots, vulnerability, and sophistication of analysis. I needed to uncover my blind spots with how I viewed, understood, and countered inequity (Cooper, 2009) to prevent overlooking educational practices that may be common, but are nevertheless inequitable. I endured a sense of vulnerability by admitting how I was limiting myself by sticking with a framework that was insufficient for my research interests and came to see how much I

needed to expand my knowledge base. I therefore experienced greater sophistication of analysis when I constructed a novel framework that incorporated three constructs that had not previously been brought together to examine Pacific Islanders in higher education. I also improved my leadership capacities by addressing my insecurities of not knowing and pushing myself out of my comfort zone to experience intellectual and conceptual growth.

Dr. Hattori's mentorship.

(De)colonization is the construct from the conceptual framework that applies to the following narrative. The development of my conceptual framework deepened my understanding of who PI students are and how they are arriving to college; however, I still did not have a sufficiently broad and grounded perspective. I am grateful to have met Dr. Mary Hattori, a Chamoru scholar from the field of educational leadership, whose mentorship guided me throughout my dissertation process. The elements of convergence I experienced were vulnerability and sophistication of analysis.

During the second year of my doctoral program on one of my recruitment trips in Hawaii, I arranged to meet with my future mentor, Dr. Mary Hattori. Dr. Hattori chose a beautiful ocean side restaurant for our lunch. When I entered the doors into the restaurant, I was immediately greeted by a hostess. "Hello, what name is your reservation under?" she asked. "Oh, umm, I believe the reservation is under Dr. Mary Hattori," I told her while scanning the room for the woman I would only be able to recognize through my extensive Google searches.

"It looks like she has not arrived yet, but I can seat you while you wait." She grabbed two menus and took me to a table with an ocean view. When Dr. Hattori arrived, she thanked me for meeting her and told me that she chose this restaurant because she appreciates the view overlooking the ocean. Her preference to have an ocean view differed from the guests at my hotel who requested an ocean view

room. As a Chamoru, Dr. Hattori had a deeper association to the ocean, an authentic connection, which exuded from her body.

I was grateful that she took time to meet with me and I felt a need to prove to her I was not wasting her time. I immediately dove into telling her about my dissertation plans. I described the profound impact of the narratives I had collected for my assignments and that I wanted to move forward with interviews to capture depth. Dr. Hattori explained that independence does not exist in PI cultures and how collectivism is highly valued. She therefore suggested that I consider focus groups as a more culturally relevant way to collect data.

“Oh no!” I thought to myself, “I am disappointing her.” I decided to change the topic, to get her support on an issue I was sure we could both rally around. I complained, “My professors have given me push back for focusing on Pacific Islanders because they make up such a small percentage of the student population. What do you think is the best way to defend the significance of my study?”

Dr. Hattori is thoughtful and intentional every time she speaks. She responded calmly and briefly, “Retention is important no matter how small the population.” She also explained how my study could support the need to address broader social inequities. She suggested taking an asset based approach using a positive deviance lens to identify successful students. She emphasized positive deviance because it acknowledges the many accomplishments of PI students and shows how PI student solutions should be produced from within PI communities.

Then she asked, “What does the rest of your day look like? Would you like to observe a Pacific Islands class?”

Even from this first meeting, I was overwhelmed by Dr. Hattori’s kindness and willingness to guide me. I was a stranger to her, but she treated me like family. Her mentorship comprised of sharing PI culturally relevant articles and books, inviting me to visit her campus on several of my student recruiting trips to Hawaii, being a critical colleague to bounce ideas off, and providing access to two of my focus group sites in Hawaii.

Two theories of Fullan's leadership appeared in Dr. Hattori's mentorship. The first leadership style was Fullan's first practice, "Love your employees." Although I am not Dr. Hattori's employee, the practice is about investing in those you lead through creating conditions for them to succeed (Fullan, 2008), which Dr. Hattori clearly did for me. I also witnessed her promote this practice of demonstrating love with other educational professionals. Fullan describes this practice for educational leaders by showing that we must value teachers as much as we value students to ensure success. For Dr. Hattori to best support PI students, she recognizes the benefits and importance of providing those who work with PI students including researchers, faculty, and student service professionals with the capacity to do so effectively.

Additionally, Dr. Hattori demonstrated Fullan's third practice, "Capacity building prevails." This practice promotes acquiring and continuing the development of competencies, resources, and motivation (Fullan, 2008). Dr. Hattori's mentorship encompasses endless resources. Immediately following our first meeting and through to the preparation of my dissertation defense, Dr. Hattori sent me articles, encouraged me to attend or present at national conferences, invited me to PI cultural events or programming in Hawaii as well as California, and introduced me to essential people who have assisted me in my Ed.D. journey. In building capacity, Fullan also identifies criticizing and being judgmental as behavior to avoid. I learned through Dr. Hattori's modeling, the positive impact of this form of leadership. She has played an integral role in providing me with

the capacity to develop the skills necessary to move forward in my dissertation and to enact change on my campus community.

I am eternally grateful that my dissertation chair connected me with Dr. Hattori; working with her increased my social capital and my commitment to collectively and continuously supporting PI students in higher education. Fullan's leadership-based practices combined with Dr. Hattori's guidance to impact my leadership through the realization that to positively impact PI students, I must also affect a range of professionals in education who actively work with these students. This experience motivated me to be intentional with my dissertation audience. Dr. Hattori empowers those she leads to purposely continue to learn in a way that benefits the collective; I aspire to follow in her path. Dr. Hattori's mentorship is relevant to the (de)colonization construct of the conceptual framework and was epitomized throughout this narrative. Dr. Hattori introduced me to Hau'ofa's (1994) framing of viewing the Pacific as "islands in a far sea" and as "a sea of islands." She provided me with the academic tools needed to scrutinize my Western ideologies, which influenced the conception of my methodology and overall protocol for data collection.

The elements of convergence that arose from this experience were vulnerability and sophistication of analysis. I experienced vulnerability in my first meeting with Dr. Hattori, because I was intimidated by the scope of her knowledge and the depth of her passion for serving Pacific Islanders. I was nervous about saying something that might have been misconstrued as offensive, but I had to allow myself to be vulnerable to learn

from her. A sophistication of analysis occurred when I learned from Dr. Hattori. I initially planned to utilize interviews because I wanted to gather a depth of individuals' experiences, but then learned that focus groups were more culturally appropriate and would likely offer me the insights I hoped to collect. Thus, working with Dr. Hattori shaped and guided my approaches for the remainder of the dissertation process.

Culturally relevant introduction.

Hybridity is the construct from the conceptual framework that applies to this narrative. In my attempts to be considered an insider, I occasionally blatantly outed myself as an outsider. My own experiences with hybridity gave me insight on how PI students may come to embrace and navigate their hybrid identities. The elements of convergence I experienced were vulnerability and insider/outsider status.

I had been working with PI students and families for six years as a college recruiter, but I was nervous about interacting with students to collect dissertation research data. As I prepared for my trip to meet with the focus groups in Hawaii, I recalled the fashion faux pas committed during my first visit to Hawaii, an experience seared into my memory.

On that visit, I went to a Hawaiian high school to recruit applicants wearing a work blouse, black slacks, and closed toe shoes, and from comments and looks from students, I quickly realized that my attire had outed me as an outsider. I learned from that mistake and avoided packing any clothing that could be construed as arriving like a colonizer or seeming to flout a higher status.

While organizing the focus groups in Hawaii, Dr. Hattori offered to assist me with recruiting student participants from her college. She asked me to write an email introducing myself to her students. My introduction included where I worked and various leadership roles I held in AAPI affiliations.

She responded to the email and asked, "Can you send me a brief bio including your personal background (ethnicity, where you grew up, family names) -- this personal info is important when I make an email introduction and sometimes more important than your professional info." I rewrote my bio, but including her recommendations felt unnatural; I had never introduced myself in this manner. I heeded Dr. Hattori's advice to add personal information, but then I took it too far and talked about my lolo's (grandpa) painful massages and my grandma making popcorn balls.

If I were a student, I would have chuckled at my introduction. I learned when PI students speak they are representing their families and I was trying to share my family, including some of their foibles, but in hindsight I knew the details I had shared in the updated bio were frivolous. I knew I had to introduce myself differently, but didn't know how to do it authentically, yet.

The simple task of re-writing my biographical statement and still not getting it right affirmed on a minute scale the tension PI students experience with their Western and Indigenous identities. Further, an understanding of how to introduce myself with a PI culturally relevant lens influenced my experiences with conducting focus groups, especially focus groups in Hawaii. As I gradually became more culturally aware, I was more critical of my role as the researcher. I learned to build on my prior experiences as a college recruiter. Every time I visited Hawaii as a college recruiter, I was forced to encounter and confront my own hybridity in navigating both white and Filipino cultures while in the Hawaiian context. When I returned to Hawaii to conduct focus groups, I struggled with these same positive and negative tensions with my identity, although now in a new role. On few occasions I was able to pass as a local. I appreciated being accepted by the community who viewed me as one of them, but when I was viewed as an outsider, I felt guilty, like I was intruding. Through reflection of my lived experiences, I gained

further insight from Dr. Hattori's mentorship and scholarship, and learned that each new encounter with Pacific Islander students allowed me to be ever more cognizant of how to navigate access and communicate with the student participants.

As noted earlier, Dr. Hattori authored an article where she describes culturally sustaining leadership from a Pacific Islander perspective. Hattori's leadership model pinpoints occasions where PI culture clashes with Western culture, while providing an awareness that does not coerce a need to choose sides. I utilized culturally sustaining leadership to ruminate on my cultural beliefs and values and connect them to how I experience the world. Then I realized that through this connectedness, I could formulate more meaningful leadership practices.

The construct from the conceptual framework that emerged from this narrative about introducing myself in a culturally relevant manner is hybridity. While I was mindful of my colonizer tendencies, I have not always been sympathetic to strengths of my own Filipina identity. Being Filipina enfolds direct experiences involving relationship and community building that I needed to remind myself to draw upon. Thus, I challenged myself to embody a Filipina strength-based mentality throughout the entire process of collecting data in Hawaii. I learned the value of introducing myself in a way that was culturally and appropriately personal for a group of PI students that I predominantly had no direct connection with.

The elements of convergence that I experienced through this narrative were vulnerability and insider/outsider status. I felt incredibly vulnerable writing an

introductory email using a Pacific Islander lens to request participation for my focus group from Dr. Hattori's class. I endured embarrassment with my failed attempt of a culturally relevant biography, which I believed enhanced my outsider status. This experience taught me that it would be erroneous to greet students with a research approach. It was more appropriate to share and craft my story in a way that answers the same questions I was going to ask them. My ability to acknowledge the importance of establishing a personal connection decreased my outsider status. I experienced leadership growth through the understanding that it is important for me to embrace that my Filipina culture has vast similarities to Pacific Islanders, which increases my insider status and is likely why it has felt easy to empathize with the PI experience through their narratives. My Filipina culture has offered a space of connectivity and understanding.

Becoming the Asian Pacific American Student Success Coordinator.

(In)visibility is the construct from the conceptual framework that applies to this narrative. Cal State East Bay originally was not willing to financially support an Asian Pacific American Student Success coordinator. I was given an opportunity to grow vastly as a scholar and as a student service professional in the time between the CSU AAPI initiative launch and my dissertation data collection. When Cal State East Bay posted the job announcement, I was determined to demonstrate that I was an eminent candidate. The elements of convergence I experienced were insider/outsider status and sophistication of analysis.

In the first AANAPISI grant awarded to CSU East Bay, the principal investigators did not include a coordinator role. In fact, the only staff position identified in the grant was for an administrative assistant. The primary principal investigator, Dr. Wu, assumed that if the campus were to be awarded a grant, then the university would demonstrate commitment to their AAPI students by hiring a coordinator, which would be a sustained position on campus with or without grant funding.

The campus, however, never agreed to these terms and when the grant was awarded, the university had no obligation to create a permanent coordinator position.

Dr. Wu was relentless in her fight to secure an AAPI leadership position on campus. In the final year of the grant, the campus complied with her demands and created a new position, the Asian Pacific American Student Success (APASS) coordinator, who would not only oversee the grant, but would also lead AAPI campus-wide initiatives.

This was my dream job. I was eager to apply and interview for the APASS coordinator position. “How have your previous experiences prepared you for this position?” I was anticipating the opportunity to answer this question the most.

Indeed, my experiences in support of PI students in higher education have ranged from the national to the local level. Nationally, I have been active by traveling to Washington D.C. on two separate occasions to lobby in support of AANAPISI programs. At a state level, I had already served as the lead at CSU East Bay’s outreach office regarding the CSU-wide AAPI initiative. I have also presented on AAPI students in higher education at multiple CSU and national counselor conferences. On a campus level, I served as the staff co-chair for the Asian Pacific Islander Faculty Staff Association, where I kept my fingers to the pulse of all issues, concerns, and celebrations of the AAPI community on campus. And at an educational and research level, my dissertation focused on AAPIs in higher education with an emphasis on one of CSUEB’s least visible student

populations, Pacific Islanders. Clearly, the last few years have prepared me to lead an AANAPISI program.

January 3, 2017 was my first day as the Asian Pacific American Student Success Coordinator. The first task assigned to me was to organize a Western regional AANAPISI conference for all programs situated on the West Coast from California to Washington. I was eager to introduce myself to the AANAPISI community and I was humbled and proud to be the coordinator who was serving AAPI students in this capacity.

All my prior experiences prepared me to take on this leadership role where I am positioned to positively affect AAPI students on my campus. I turned to Hattori's (2016) culturally sustaining leadership to mobilize my own cultural identity to build the foundation of the new grant program. Like Pacific Islanders, Filipinos traditionally value collectivism and a sense of belonging, which are two components I aspire to incorporate into the new program. In addition, my experience as the new APASS coordinator encompasses Fullan's sixth practice, "Systems learn." Fullan emphasized the importance of having many leaders. In my second month of this new position, I organized a Western regional AANAPISI conference where I brought both experienced and new grantees together to meet so that we could discuss best practices. I made it mandatory for all my staff to attend and I encouraged them to participate actively. To become an effective leader with the "systems learn" practice, I must continue and expand the ways I develop leadership in others (Fullan, 2008).

In my quest to be “the” AAPI contact on campus, as described in my first pivotal narrative, this form of leadership reminds me that while I aspire to be recognized as highly knowledgeable, to be the most effective, I need to raise others to my level. If continuity is disrupted due to my absence, for example, then I have failed to instill Fullan’s sixth practice. Becoming the APASS coordinator informed my leadership and taught me that I periodically need to remove myself from situations, and allow others to contribute and enhance their leadership skills. “Systems learn,” is a humbling reminder to leaders that although the image of being the expert appears favorable and personally advantageous, the aim is to create and sustain impact, more leadership capacity leads to greater impact.

My new position as the APASS coordinator is applicable to the (in)visibility construct of the conceptual framework. Like Leila, whom I interviewed for my Qualitative Analysis course assignment early in my doctoral studies, I experienced invisibility from my institution not having a confirmed AAPI leader on campus, which created many opportunities where I had to advocate for AAPI students. I was determined to increase AAPI visibility to validate the need for the campus to invest in a coordinator.

The principles of convergence that emerge from this pivotal narrative are insider/outsider status and sophistication of analysis. Prior to officially being named the APASS coordinator, I was the acting coordinator, which provided me with an insider status. Through my insider status, I was very familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of the current AANAPISI grant, because it provided a forecast for the performance of our

new ANNAPISI grant. My sophistication of analysis increased through my identities of being a student service professional and a doctoral student, which provided me with the experiences, aptitude, and knowledge to take on this notable role. The doctoral program deepened my arguments regarding inequities AAPI students' experiences and informed practical solutions to improve access, retention, and graduation for this student population.

Dissertation process.

(In)visibility is the construct from the conceptual framework that applies to this narrative. I experienced visibility with my analytical consciousness; once I awakened this awareness, my dissertation process became clearer. The elements of convergence I experienced were blind spots and sophistication of analysis.

The knowledge and critical analysis I was experiencing in my Ed.D. classes obliterated the model minority myth tunnel vision I entered the program with. I was maturing as a person, but more importantly as a scholar. Nonetheless, I began my dissertation process with a lethargic attitude. I was not taking on the responsibility of putting in doctoral level work. "A good dissertation is a done dissertation." This was a statement often repeated by classmates as encouragement to keep trudging forward. I conceded to the sentiment of just getting it done, until a participant in a focus group asked me, "Now what?"

I realized at that moment the dire need to reframe my perception of the dissertation from just another class assignment I needed to complete, to an instrumental contribution to the literature and to practical action on Pacific Islander students in higher education. I recognize how the doctoral classes have awoken my consciousness and taught me the intricacies and complexities of educational systems. I will never again describe an educational barrier as merely being unfair; instead I will call out the systems of inequity and oppression that create unjust circumstances.

My dissertation became an opportunity to highlight PI student attributes and to learn and teach others how to be culturally sustaining and inclusive with this student population. Unfortunately, this newfound understanding did not prevent me from experiencing roadblocks in writing and making progress on my dissertation, but it did teach me that I needed to be a different kind of student.

Once I learned how to better refine, articulate, and elaborate on the dissertation's problem statement, methodology, relevant literature, conceptual framework, student narrative analysis, and leadership theories, I became better prepared to address my student participants' inquiries of "What's next?"

The Ed.D. program has provided me with the tools, skill set, and resources to be a thorough scholar and has encouraged my growth as a thoughtful and change-oriented leader. Participation in this doctoral program aligns with Fullan's fourth practice, "Learning is the work." This practice prioritizes day-to-day continuous learning in multiple contexts to accomplish growth. Fullan urges leaders to ingrain deep learning in the culture of their educational institutions to support employees with doing their best work. Transformative leadership also guided me through the doctoral process. Transformative leadership takes a holistic approach in addressing educational issues (Shields, 2010) and promotes coalition building to invite campus partners from numerous disciplines to come together to address issues of social justice on campus (Santamaria, 2014). A determination that my work would help my campus and other AANAPISI institutions transition from words to action is a characteristic connected with transformative leaders (Beyer, 2012).

There are two points of convergence in this narrative: blind spots and the sophistication of analysis. I experienced blind spots from the blinders I placed on myself

when I entered the Ed.D. program with such a narrow view of what I aspired to learn and accomplish. I struggled to identify what components of my research needed to be phased out, such as, the model minority myth, and where I needed to further elaborate, such as the multiple phases of my conceptual framework. In time, I transitioned and acquired a deeper sophistication with my analysis. Now when I think of limited access to higher education, I can name contributing factors, such as, social class, the hidden curriculum, and the opportunity gap these students encounter (Anyon, 1980; Darling-Hammond, 2015). I have gained the skills to articulate the problem. Further, I created a conceptual framework to better understand the complexities these Pacific Islander students endure. I know the relevant literature. I have collected data and systematically analyzed it. I have identified actions items for campuses to better support their PI student populations. I have truly transformed.

This experience of taking the rigor and scope of a dissertation much more seriously, and then using it to shape my emerging role as an expert, informed my leadership. It encouraged me to brainstorm opportunities to increase cultural competency for staff and faculty working with PI students on my own campus. After I launched Transfer APASS, I began regularly contacting various campus departments and offering to attend their meetings to present on AANAPISI, so that I can help demonstrate how our campus being awarded this grant is positively affecting AAPI students and supporting larger campus retention and graduation initiatives. This form of leadership has also taught

me the value of consistently and innovatively engaging myself and my staff to learn and improve.

Summary of Leadership Pathways

In the beginning of my journey toward being an effective leader, I exercised charismatic leadership. I had charisma, ambition, and commitment to the mission of helping Pacific Islander students succeed in higher education (Howell & Shamir, 2005). Charismatic leadership proved to be a positive theory of leadership to initiate my dissertation journey, but then I added culturally sustaining leadership to my schema. The goal for this form of leadership was to recognize and incorporate PI cultural values in my practice. I transitioned into this philosophy of leadership through the PI student narratives that I collected in my Qualitative Analysis course. In culturally sustaining leadership, every person matters and affects the mission of the institution. This form of leadership allows all members of a group to be successful and achieve. Although I was an enthusiastic leader, I needed others to believe in the importance of my problem statement and see that my proposed dissertation had an appropriately wide scope. Through culturally sustaining leadership, I understood the value in demonstrating to focus group participants how sharing their stories was creating a path that would help uncover solutions to help other PI students. This insight that I shared with my participants aligned with the PI value, reciprocity.

After I experienced culturally sustaining leadership, I transitioned to incorporating Fullan's leadership-based practices. I first utilized Fullan's leadership theory and then

saw compelling connections in transformative leadership when I was developing the PI relevant conceptual framework for this dissertation, which includes (de)colonization, (in)visibility, and hybridity. Although Fullan's work does not incorporate cultural constructs, it nonetheless provides an ideal leadership theory to utilize when working with the PI community. This is so because Fullan centers his recommendations for change-based leadership on building coalitions and trusting relationships, both of which are sustaining, and align well with Pacific Islander values. Reforms that result from transformative leadership are also meant to be sustaining. Further, transformative leadership helped me build on Fullan's leadership theories because it allowed me to identify the institutional structures that were contributing to the invisibility and displacement of PIs as outsiders.

This dissertation addresses systemic barriers Pacific Islanders experience in higher education settings using a lens that allows leaders to recognize the impacts of colonization and invisibility on PI students. I aspire to disassemble these barriers first through informing educators of my findings. My next steps are to connect with my campus's Office of Diversity to set up presentations where I can share my dissertation findings and recommendations. Hattori's (2016) culturally sustaining leadership from a Pacific Islander perspective promotes and acknowledges value in the native cultures of the Pacific Islands. Toward the end of my research journey, I shifted once more, moving to this leadership praxis because the other forms of leadership lacked a decolonizing component. Mainstream leaderships promote dominant ideologies of good leadership, but

lack input from Pacific Islander culture. Uniquely, Hattori (2016) identifies Pacific Islander culture-based leadership as a pathway to authentic expression, which ultimately, can culturally advance social justice and equity in educational institutions.

In summary, leaders who want to change and grow over time borrow and choose from different elements of leadership depending on time and space. Leaders of funded AANAPISI programs should work together to share effective leadership practices in supporting AAPI students. This dissertation is meant to serve as a resource for educational institutions, especially those in California with elevated PI student populations. I conclude that higher education leaders who are working with PI students should utilize this study's conceptual framework to reframe and reexamine how their institutional practices support or hinder student success. Regarding leadership practices, to advocate on behalf of Pacific Islander students, every style of leadership that leaders consider using must be critically fused with a PI culturally sustaining approach. All the constructs from the conceptual framework, the various leadership theories, and the elements of convergence that emerged from the eight key narratives have contributed to my capacity and confidence in being a leader committed to serving Pacific Islander students in higher education. The following chapter will extend the topic of leadership by providing recommendations for action.

Chapter Four: Implications and Recommendations to Promote PI Success

Chapter Four pinpoints this study's emerging implications and the rationale behind implementing action-based change. This chapter is written as a guide for fellow AANAPISI leaders whose institutions serve a Pacific Islander student population. It is imperative to identify inclusive effective action; the challenge lies with fully implementing action items (Tinto, 2006). In this concluding chapter I offer three forms of recommendations to action: 1) legislative recommendations for political leaders, such as those within the California State Assembly, 2) policy recommendations for AANAPISI leaders at higher education institutions, and 3) practical institutional recommendations for university leaders from Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. The chapter ends with critical concluding insights.

Recommendations for Action

In Chapter Two, students provided varied responses regarding what they wish educators knew about being Pacific Islander. Commonalities among their responses centered around disrupting educators' deficit mindsets, and being more knowledgeable about PI culture, especially the importance of community based initiatives. These recommendations for legislative, policy, and practical action flow from the conceptual frame, evidence, and insight presented across the three preceding chapters.

Legislative recommendations for action. The broad ethnic grouping of AAPI permits the poor academic attainment rates of Pacific Islanders to go unnoticed and under

researched. Further, the national conversation on educational equity and school reform has for too long focused only on Black and Latino students (McKinsey & Company, 2009). The lack of an adequate research base results in the development of educational policies and practices that exclude the needs of Pacific Islander students. Thus, the AAPI label represents the conceptual construct of invisibility.

Masina, the Tongan student who attended a four-year institution in the Bay Area, stated that in her experiences with the term “AAPI” refers to spaces that are filled with Asian Americans only. She said, “The difference is that I feel like we [PI students] are an invisible community.” She has distrust for the AAPI label because it has often been equated with the exclusion of Pacific Islanders. Masina recognizes that institutions use the label loosely to appear inclusive; however, she wishes that colleges would refrain from overusing the label to bring attention to the physical invisibility of her PI community.

Recommendation 1: Mandate all CSU’s to report out disaggregated AAPI data.

In California, the AAPI community has proven relentless in their fight to increase visibility for all communities under the AAPI label. Over 50 California based organizations united to support AB 1726, which pushed the need to disaggregate AAPI data to expose the successes and challenges regarding economic, health, and educational disparities experienced by the community (18MR, 2016). This bill required that on or after July 1, 2017, all public colleges and universities along with public health departments collect and publish disaggregated demographic data. The drive to pass this

bill was to expose the low academic achievement rates of some subgroups, which are being hidden by exceptional academic achievement of other larger portions of the AAPI demographic (Medina, 2016). The AAPI group includes 48 different ethnic categories, and policies affecting this population effectively serve only a small percentage of the diverse umbrella grouping.

On September 25, 2016, Governor Jerry Brown approved the bill, but there were some notable amendments. The bill removed the educational institution accountability (Bonta, 2016). Thus, all three of California's higher educational systems: California Community College (CCC), California State University (CSU), and the University of California (UC), were no longer included or affected by the bill. An argument in favor of the governor's amendment was that the educational component of the bill was unnecessary because the UC system previously adopted this practice and that the other systems already collected the data. CCCs and CSUs do collect detailed demographic data, but there is no mandate to report that data as disaggregated. The passing of this bill without the exclusion of educational institutions could have ensured that the academic challenges encountered by numerous AAPI students enrolled in CCC's and CSU's would have been acknowledged. This disaggregated reporting would have informed the institution's response to provide better support and services.

AB 1726 now requires that on or after July 1, 2022, the Department of Public Health must collect, and report disaggregated AAPI data (Bonta, 2016). This legislation is a victory for the overall AAPI community; however, the pursuit of equity will continue

until there is a bill that will mandate the same practices of reporting disaggregated AAPI data in higher education. Such a disaggregation of data would allow higher educational institutions to examine trends in admissions, retention, academic probation, academic disqualification, and graduation rates. These data should be accessible to administration, faculty, and staff who could make decisions on how to adjust procedures and policies to remove barriers and bolster academic attainment.

To take a specific example, Cal State East Bay's second AANAPISI grant, Transfer Asian Pacific American Student Success (Transfer APASS), will collect and report disaggregated AAPI data and encourage and educate other campus departments to adopt this practice. When colleges promote a culture that values the disaggregation of AAPI data, they position themselves to utilize these data to identify disparities and inform practices to provide the capacity to increase PI academic attainment. They can also enhance the scope and systematic collection of data by increasing the research done on PI students in their institutions.

AB 1726 has only been able to progress to the legislation it is now through a shared vision and a commitment to change. The leaders driving this bill embraced culturally sustaining leadership because they value all students who are included under the AAPI label and want any disparities within the group to be recognized. Educational leaders should apply leadership practices which seek clarity through analyzing data and institutional processes that impact all AAPI students. California is among few states with the largest population of AAPI residents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014), and therefore,

should be a leader in producing effective education policies to promote academic success for AAPI in higher educational settings. To enact change, various levels of leadership need to be proactive in creating action. This section led a discussion on taking a legislative approach to promote change, the next section advocates for action-based decisions through policies AANAPISI leaders can implement.

AANAPISI Policy recommendations for action. Policy recommendations produced by AANAPISI leaders can address Pacific Islander educational issues at their designated institutions. This section discusses three policies that affect college access, the first two policies directly affect American Samoa and the three Freely Associated States - Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau. I opted to focus on American Samoa and the three Freely Associated States because unlike Hawaii, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, where residents are considered U.S. citizens, residents of American Samoa are considered U.S. Nationals, and the citizens of the Freely Associated States are neither U.S. citizens or nationals; they are considered “nonimmigrants” (EPIC, 2014). The U.S. immigration status by Pacific Island of birth evidently affects higher education access.

The first policy recommendation is a higher education institutional policy regarding a regional college tuition savings program, called the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE). The second policy recommendation is for AANAPISI institutions to establish pipelines from the community colleges located in American Samoa, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau to AANAPISI four-year institutions.

The last policy recommendation is to increase PI enrollments at the university level through creating pipelines connecting 2-year and 4-year AANAPISIs. The first and second policy recommendations for action align with the decolonization construct from the conceptual framework. The third policy promotes the conceptual construct, visibility.

Recommendation 2: Encourage staff and administrators who work at the community colleges in American Samoa and the three Freely Associated States - Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau to pursue a WICHE and WUE membership.

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) is a regional nonprofit organization that strives to improve access to higher education within fifteen Western states and the U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States (WICHE, n.d.). The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and Guam fall under the WICHE category of “U.S. Pacific Territories and Freely Associated States.” WICHE acknowledges that American Samoa and the three Freely Associated States - Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau qualify for eligibility toward participation but note that they are not members, and therefore, are not included in the organizations’ programs and initiatives. I believe they are not WICHE members because they are not U.S. citizens and therefore students from these locations encounter more barriers. American Samoa, as U.S. Nationals, can complete FAFSA and are eligible for all forms of financial aid. Whereas, residents from the three Freely Associated States are

“nonimmigrants” and have more restrictions and are only eligible for federal grants but not state grants or federal loans (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2015).

WICHE offers a student exchange program called Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE). WUE students are given a financial break by paying 150% of the receiving college’s resident tuition, which is considerably less than the standard non-resident tuition. As WICHE members, CNMI and Guam are participants in the WUE program that allows students who reside in these two territories to enroll in any undergraduate programs from the 157 WUE participant institutions. The list of WUE participant institutions contains 15 colleges in the state of California, 14 California State Universities, and one University of California campus. In Hawaii, four University of Hawaii campuses are listed. There is only one college listed from the U.S. Pacific territories and Freely Associated States, and that is Northern Marianas College, which is a community college located in Saipan. Saipan is the largest island of the Northern Mariana Islands. The Northern Mariana Islands and Guam are separate U.S. territories but are part of the same island chain within the Micronesian islands region. Missing from the list of higher educational institutions located in U.S. Pacific territories are the 4-year and 2-year colleges in Guam and the community colleges located in American Samoa and the three Freely Associated States (WICHE, n.d.). Thus, students who reside in other WUE regions and wish to pursue college in the Pacific Island territories would only receive a tuition break if they chose to attend the community college in Saipan.

In contrast, students from American Samoa and the three Freely Associated States do not qualify for any WUE tuition discount opportunities, nor would WUE eligible students receive a reduction in tuition costs if they migrated to these U.S. territories to attend college. This section will demonstrate the cost benefits of obtaining a WUE membership. Geographically, the closest four-year university option for students who live in Pacific U.S. territories is in Hawaii. The annual WUE cost of tuition for Cal State East Bay is \$9,300, while non-resident fees are \$15,492 (Cal State East Bay, n.d.), whereas the annual cost of in-state tuition at the University of Hawaii, Manoa is \$11,328, annual WUE tuition is \$16,764, and non-resident tuition is \$32,904 (University of Hawaii, Manoa, n.d.). Thus, while University of Hawaii is physically closer to students residing in the Pacific Islands, tuition at Cal State East Bay is more cost effective for earning a four-year degree. Overall, the WUE program is very successful. In the 2016-2017 academic year 84 students from CNMI and Guam enrolled in WUE institutions for a total savings of almost \$900,000 in tuitions fees (WICHE, n.d.).

To increase access to higher education for the Pacific Islander population, the WUE institutions should be expanded to include American Samoa and the three Freely Associated States as members of WICHE so that their residents can participate in the WUE program. There are a few requirements needed for an institution to join the WUE network. They must maintain their accreditation. They must internally coordinate with three departments, Admissions, Enrollment Management, and the Office of the President. The campus will need to send a formal letter to WICHE from the Office of the President

confirming intent to participate and the academic term they will begin to enroll WUE students at a discounted price. After these steps are taken, WUE staff will connect with the community college leadership from American Samoa and the three Freely Associated States to arrange the details of their membership. Guam's colleges should also be added to the approved WUE list, if they have the capacity to take in non-resident students. All students residing in U.S. Pacific territories should be rendered the opportunity to take advantage of affordable higher education.

Cal State East Bay has been a member of WUE for over a decade. The institutional benefit of WUE is the ability to increase diversity on campus. Cal State East Bay already boasts about being the most diverse institution in the continental U.S. WUE is a source of non-resident diversity. In Fall 2015, Cal State East Bay enrolled 77 WUE students, the highest enrollment of non-resident students at 30%, came from Hawaii, which was also the highest enrollment number out of all California WUE institutions. There were only two students who transferred from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and attended a WUE institution in California, and for one of those students, Cal State East Bay was their destination (WICHE, n.d.). Thus, Cal State East Bay has become a destination college for students who live in Hawaii and it has the potential to expand this reputation to other U.S. Pacific territories.

When I worked as a college recruiter at Cal State East Bay, the campus did target WUE recruiting in Hawaii, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, Arizona, and Colorado. When I first served as the Hawaii state recruiter, Washington state had the highest enrollment of

WUE students. After my first Hawaii visit I observed the importance of relationship building, which differed from how I recruited in California. In my third application cycle after two years of visiting twice a year, I finally increased Hawaii enrollment and pushed HI to the number one WUE state at Cal State East Bay. My success in accomplishing this feat was an understanding that I needed to alter my recruitment style to align with PI values. I focused on building relationships and involving all family members in conversations about whether Cal State East Bay was going to be a good fit for the student. When I left my position as the Hawaii recruiter, I wrote a letter to the staff member who took over as the Hawaii recruiter and stressed the importance of respecting specific cultural values.

Recommendation 3: Increase university PI enrollments by creating pipelines between 2-year and 4-year AANAPISIs.

The AAPI community can learn from transfer support initiatives of other marginalized communities. The African American community created a grassroots organization called Umoja, which enhances the cultural and educational experiences of African Americans and other students. Umoja is in more than 45 community colleges and they play an active role in offering transfer support (Bush & Bush, 2009). The Latinx community has a few programs at the community college level such as, ASSIST, Puente Program, and Transfer Alliance Program, which were developed to increase transfer rates to four-year institutions (Rivas, Perez, Alvarez, & Solorzano, 2007).

AANAPISIs can benefit from the commonalities between Umoja and the Latinx transfer programs by developing a transfer culture and building formal alliances between community colleges and four-year universities. AANAPISIs at the two-year level should focus on programming that actively encourages and supports students to transfer.

AANAPISIs at four-year universities should establish a “transfer receiving culture.”

To promote the continuous success of PI transfer students, AANAPISIs should be more intentional and proactive about creating pipelines from two-year AANAPISIs from both Pacific U.S. Territories and the continental U.S. to four-year AANAPISIs. Although the number of students who transfer from community colleges in the Pacific territories is relatively small, federally funded AANAPISI grant programs were created to increase retention and graduation rates for Native American Pacific Islander students.

Cal State East Bay currently does not have intentional programming set in place to formally partner with 2-year AANAPISIs. In the past, when AANAPISI 2-year colleges came onto campus for a campus tour, they have reached out to Cal State East Bay’s AANAPISI staff to personalize the visit. Moving forward, Transfer APASS can actively host and invite AANAPISI community college students to PI themed events or activities on campus such as: PI student club events, campus tours and student panels, keynote speakers, student awareness campaigns, and celebrations highlighting or displaying PI culture on campus. Cal State East Bay can share our event calendar with two-year AANAPISI programs to increase community college students’ exposure to our university. These opportunities can be used to promote the new AANAPISI program to

prospective students transferring into Cal State East Bay. These are only a few examples, although there are countless approaches for Cal State East Bay to demonstrate care and support for two-year AANAPISI student communities. Continuous communication throughout the academic year will strengthen community support and expand community college student networks with Cal State East Bay students, staff, and faculty.

Institutional recommendations for action. Higher education leaders need to be more knowledgeable and skilled to confront and resolve the institutional challenges Pacific Islander students experience. This dissertation's design was crafted to provide educational leaders with insights on how to systemically support decolonization, PI visibility, and hybrid student populations within their institutions. All three constructs from the conceptual framework are represented in institutional recommendations for action, because the recommendations acknowledge the value of PI culture in the classroom, which is a form of decolonization, and visibility. Hybridity is also present because having their culture incorporated into the classroom allows students to positively experience both their PI and Western identities. Institutional recommendations for action are divided into two sub-categories, Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. The institutional recommendations for action stem from a pro-student discourse to encourage institutions to change and embrace new measures that will better support PI students with their academic endeavors.

Student Affairs recommendations for action. Dominant hegemonic culture does not promote the inclusivity of PIs, which results in PIs being othered or made invisible

(Yeh, Borrero, Tito, & Petaia, 2014). Student Affairs divisions can counter dominant narratives by enhancing academic, career, and personal successes for all students. Student Affairs recommendations for action promote an intentionality for serving PI students in the following areas, campus programs, and prospective student yield events, including orientations.

Recommendation 4: Intentionally serve PI students through campus transition programs.

When a campus hosts an event, and promotes it as an AAPI event, it is essential that both Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are represented in that event. In describing one of her first experiences attending an AAPI event at the university level, Masina was disappointed that she was the only PI in attendance. Masina shared that she felt like a minority in a place that was supposed to be for her, and other PIs. She experienced invisibility as the only PI who attended an Open House for an AAPI student support program. Masina expressed dissatisfaction with the term AAPI, because she recognized an institutional pattern where -- although an all-inclusive term was being used -- only Asian cultures were being represented. Masina expressed frustration and disappointment with not having a community on campus that understood her culturally.

The PI student narratives contained descriptions of disengagement when their cultures were not represented in higher education; however, PI students who are from the PI territories also mention disconnects with transitioning from community college in the islands to a four-year college located within the United States, including Hawaii. Many

student participants in this study shared that they came from first-generation and low-income backgrounds, yet students from PI territories added another layer of tension with being an outsider and feeling unprepared. Chris, who is Samoan, grew up in American Samoa where he attended community college and then transferred to a four-year institution in Hawaii. He identified unfamiliarity with the advanced technology at the university, as one of his primary barriers when he transferred. Other focus group participants who came from the islands agreed that college was their first encounter with witnessing a dependency on technology. They felt lost using online portals to check their to-do lists, register for classes, and participate in class. Various focus group participants also pinpointed financial aid to be an obstacle toward graduation and disclosed concerns of already worrying about life after graduation because of the loans they now had to pay off.

Leaders recognize that the AAPI label does not describe a monolithic population; it is also important to acknowledge the diversity within the Pacific Islander ethnic groups. There are at least 20 distinct Pacific Islander communities living in the United States. Every Pacific Islander ethnic group has its own specific traditions, languages, and immigration statuses (EPIC, 2014). There are existing organizations that honor PI culture and provide impactful programming for college-age students that AANAPISIs can learn from. There are concentrated populations of Pacific Islanders in Southern California, which is where Pacific Islander Leaders of Tomorrow (PILOT) was created.

PILOT is a culturally relevant, community-focused, leadership and empowerment development program. It was established to empower PI youth and to increase the number of young leaders within the PI community. PILOT engages students because it creates a safe space for PI students to learn about their culture and history. The students also discuss hardships and concerns regarding education, health, immigration, civil rights, housing, and economic justice that their communities endure. The program develops young leaders by teaching them how to better craft and articulate their opinions and arguments, so that they can advocate on behalf of the PI community (EPIC, 2014).

Educational leaders who intentionally serve, provide spaces for students to represent their PI culture and offer institutional programming that aligns with Pacific Islander values. Higher educational institutions can use a range of student services to provide PI students with the capacity to positively harmonize their hybrid identities through intentional campus events and resources. Campus programs that focus on transitioning into life on a college campus can alleviate students' anxiety of unfamiliarity when the programs are intentionally inclusive of PI values. When campuses host admission yield events such as Preview Day, Welcome Day, and orientations, they should organize a workshop geared toward Pacific Islander students and their family members. Colleges should anticipate and welcome the practice of PI students attending yield events with members of their families. College institutions may need to reframe how they view transfer events by moving from an individual frame to a collectivist one.

Colleges should offer multiple orientation dates and mandate attendance. It is a disservice to the incoming transfer student population to not require attending orientation.

If transfer students do not attend a mandated orientation, then I suggest that they be required to enroll in one-unit transfer support course. The transfer student success seminar would be designed to help facilitate students' transition into college by improving their knowledge of the university and its resources, by strengthening their academic skills, and by encouraging a collaborative community for learning. The curriculum would integrate discussions, readings, guest lectures, and student contributions, to address the issues that arise during their first term as transfer students. This one-unit course will have an AAPI theme but will be designed to ensure PI culture is included. Also, most students surpassed the optimal plan of spending two years at a community college prior to transferring to a four-year. Many students are not aware, but need to be informed about the possibility of exhausting financial aid after completing an extensive number of units. A transfer support course can connect students with resources for tutoring and advising to increase retention and persistence. I believe the course may prove to be more effective than attending orientation since PI students will gradually receive information and have an established contact person if they still have questions, as opposed to orientations where they are given an overload of information all at once.

One of the focus group participants at Cal State East Bay said that my focus group was the first time she had ever been in a space on campus that was specifically created for PI students. As an institutional leader, it is important to critique what one's college

can improve upon and to get recommendations toward growth from organizations that are accomplishing noteworthy goals, such as increasing the bachelor attainment rate of Pacific Islanders. Cal State East Bay can learn from PILOT by creating a space dedicated for PI students and promoting aspects of PILOT's programs into campus events.

Cal State East Bay offers multiple orientations throughout the summer including a catch-all orientation the week prior to the first day of classes. Transfer orientation is not yet mandatory, but it will be once the school transitions into a semester campus in Fall 2018. The AANAPISI program typically tables during orientation; however, moving forward with intentionality in mind, next year Transfer APASS should offer to host a workshop that welcomes PI students and their families. Offering this workshop indicates that the campus understands PI family ties and the importance of creating a space for new students to meet each other and facilitate community building. Transfer APASS does include a one-unit transfer support course. Transfer APASS students who were not able to attend orientation should be encouraged to sign up for the course. The course focuses on informing students about campus resources, but PI students will also have an opportunity to learn about their culture, history and pressing issues that affect their communities.

Academic Affairs recommendations for action. Higher educational institutions strive for inclusivity; part of achieving that endeavor should include adopting pedagogical practices, which aim to be more responsive toward supporting PI students. The educational leaders who can implement this change are Deans, Department Chairs,

and individual faculty. Deans provide vision and resources. Department Chairs guide the path of each department within a college and make decisions regarding, scheduling classes that are to be taught, assigning faculty to teach the courses, and hiring lectures. The primary roles of faculty can be compartmentalized in two sections: 1) Faculty enact elements of the Dean and Department Chair's institutional vision, when they teach, do research, and participate in shared governance, and 2) Faculty support student success in their classes. This section promotes the strengths of culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) and expands the concepts of CSP to extend outside of the classroom to guide faculty professional development. There are two pathways, which support the fifth recommendation for action.

Recommendation 5: Reaffirm value in Pacific Islander culture.

Student narratives in Chapter Two demonstrated the importance of students having access to curriculum where they are positively represented. Steven, the Chamoru transfer student who attended a community college in the Bay Area credited learning about his Chamoru culture's history in his first Pacific Studies course as academically engaging him. His Pacific Studies course set a positive tone for the remainder of his experience at his community college. Steven is a testament to success because he went from dropping out of high school, to attending community college, and then applying to multiple University of California campuses and Columbia University in New York. In contrast, Kupono felt certain that PI students have low performance rates because the education taught in schools is not applicable to Pacific Islanders.

Curricular practices, such as the Pacific Islands course Steven took, build young people up internally by allowing them to critically analyze what is occurring outside of their personal lives. Similar to Steven, Lani, the Native Hawaiian student who was attending a four-year university in Hawaii, credits Ethnic Studies for her retention and overall enjoyment of her college experience. Another Samoan focus group participant from Steven's focus group indicated feelings of empowerment after her culture was included in the curriculum, and questioned why it took over two decades for her to experience this visibility. Overall, focus group participants who majored in Ethnic Studies, Hawaiian Studies, or Pacific Studies described being transformed into change agents.

In line with Paris's (2012) description on how cultures are not sustained, students have described feeling that success in American schooling equates to purging themselves of any linguistic, literate, and cultural practice that they brought from their homes and communities. Literature in Chapter One demonstrated the importance of students having access to curriculum where they are positively represented. Specifically, students who participate in Cultural and Ethnic Studies courses increase their retention, graduation, and positive self-concept (Kahakalau, 2002; Sleeter, 2011; Teaiwa, 2017). Curricular practices can ignite student agency. It can help students address external issues that are impacting their communities. Most importantly, curricular practices allow students to view themselves through a strength-based lens. The recognition of faculty/staff, and the

institution, affirming value in PI culture can positively impact students who are going through the phases of decolonization (Laenui, 2006).

CSP professional development. Steven stated that “Everybody has their own cultural capital.” Although this is a true statement, not all faculty have the capacity to bring this statement to fruition in their classrooms. Lika witnessed deficit thinking and behavior from a faculty member who asked if she had special needs because she was Pacific Islander and was asking for help. Lika asserts that educators need to be more knowledgeable about PIs.

CSP acknowledges the cultural capital that PI students bring to academia. It counters educational norms, which take on deficit approaches to teaching and learning and view the languages, ways of knowing, and customs of many students and communities of color as inadequacies to overcome (Lee, 2007; Paris & Ball, 2009). CSP calls for educators to be more than responsive and relevant toward students’ cultures. CSP endorses decolonization through the practice of students sustaining their cultural and linguistic heritage and hybridity, while also accessing knowledge from the dominant culture (Paris, 2012). The focus is not cultural seclusion but cultural preservation.

Professional development, such as faculty learning communities, can influence faculty and increase their respect toward students and cultural awareness. Faculty learning communities (FLC) have been identified as a successful approach in higher education to produce student and faculty learning and to transform the campus (Cox, 2001). Miami University has been recognized for its outstanding and effective FLCs.

Their FLCs consist of six to fifteen dedicated faculty and staff. The FLC members are committed to being active participants in a year-long program, which enhances and challenges their teaching and learning through multiple seminars and events (Cox, 2004). Each FLC creates its own set of goals, outcomes, and evaluation criteria. In college settings, early career faculty have been identified as the institution's most valuable human investment (Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin, 2000). Faculty play an integral role in creating a safe learning space where students can feel like they belong, but more importantly a space where students can thrive.

Reciprocity is a cultural practice valued by Pacific Islanders (Misco & Lee, 2012; Teaiwa, 2017). The principle of reciprocity states that if an educational institution asks for a specific performance, such as incorporating culturally sustaining practices, that they must provide faculty with the capacity to produce that performance (Elmore, 2004). Faculty cannot begin to improve the academic attainment of PI students using CSP practices, unless they have been given the tools required to do so. Faculty will need to be provided with professional development opportunities. Research indicates that Pacific Islanders feel strongly about solutions regarding best practices in supporting PI students come from the PI community. Therefore, it is recommended that the colleges seek a Pacific Islander faculty who is respected in their perspective field of academia to lead a training or workshop.

Faculty and staff need to help position PI students to view themselves as successful in different spaces. Faculty can prepare PI students to take advantage of the

world through their assets, for example, as an immigrant, as one proficient in a language other than English, or as having experiences working with other cultures. Faculty can teach students to recognize the gems in their own pockets.

In the nine years that I have worked at Cal State East Bay, Pacific Islander specific programs have primarily occurred during the month of May, which is Asian Pacific American Heritage month. Masina's narrative is an invaluable critique of how Cal State East Bay needs to be more inclusive toward the PI community. Masina sought some refuge with Ethnic Studies, but was overall disheartened by the absence of her culture at the university. As the AANAPISI leader on campus I have heard her loud and clear. I can advocate for a Pacific Islands class. I can also request to present at Back to the Bay, which is an orientation for incoming faculty members; however, my biggest opportunity to reaffirm value in PI culture is in my role as the Transfer APASS coordinator. Transfer APASS is launching this Fall. I am hiring two full time student service professionals and advertised both position in AAPI and PI specific networks. I have already hired student mentors and tutors, and again intentionally recruited PI students. When PI students enroll for Fall 2017, I want them to know that the "P" in APASS is represented. Through the practice of disaggregating data, I will track PI persistence and report out the successes of PI students in Transfer APASS in hopes that the campus may be able to scale up services without compromising community.

Leadership application for institutional recommendations. Institutional leaders should promote the normalization of students representing their native cultures in a

Western educational setting. Educational leaders should take responsibility for bringing attention to critical issues of ethnicity to their institutions for resolution (Santamaria, 2014). Culturally sustaining leaders who want to attract PI student participation should consider bicultural tensions such as: community building versus competitiveness (sense of belonging), opportunities where students take versus opportunities where students can give back (reciprocity), and Faculty/Staff Mentorship versus peer-mentorship (respect for elders) (Hattori, 2016). Academic institutions must strive for an inclusive education to ensure the success for every enrolled student. An inclusive education is when an educational system knowingly removes the barriers toward education to increase student participation (Ainscow, Dyson, Goldrick, & West, 2011). Growing evidence worldwide suggests that disadvantaged students benefit from social inclusion initiatives that focus on equity, access, and participation (Whiteford, Shah, & Nair, 2013).

Recommendations for Future Research

I offer three recommendations for future research: 1) the continued examination of AANAPISIs to ensure prolonged success for AAPI students; 2) extending research on PI and Southeast Asian students; and 3) increased research on Pacific Islander mixed raced students.

One of my recommendations for action is to create a pipeline between 2-year and 4-year AANAPISI institutions. AANAPISIs should conduct more research on the PI experience at community colleges, state colleges, such as the CSU and UC systems, and private colleges to inform best practices, effective measures, and conceive ideas for

future grants. The studies should be longitudinal and follow students from their entrance into AANAPISI community college to baccalaureate graduation from an AANAPISI university. It is imperative to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data on the different AANAPISI experiences. The quantitative data will inform if transfer students are persisting and graduating within 2-3 years after transferring. The qualitative data will inform if both colleges were successful in creating a transfer success environment.

A similar study to this one that would examine Southeast Asians in AANAPISI designated campuses should also be conducted. Southeast Asians are another group under the AANAPISI umbrella that experience invisibility through low enrollment numbers in higher education settings, and like PIs, their histories are not included in mainstream classroom curriculums. They are historically marginalized and have similar attainment rates to Pacific Islanders (CARE, 2013). Many Southeast Asians arrived in the United States as refugees, and therefore, are dispersed throughout the United States with a large concentration in the Midwest. A fellow doctoral classmate, Marlai Ouch focused her dissertation on Hmong, Mien, Lao, and Cambodian students. Her dissertation was an asset-based study involving in-depth interviews with Southeast Asians who have obtained a four-year degree. Her work should be expanded and examined in AANAPISI settings. Like with PI students, I specifically encourage research that focuses on Southeast Asian students who transfer from AANAPISI community colleges to AANAPISI four-year universities.

The last recommendation is research on Pacific Islander mixed raced students. The 2010 Census revealed that more than half of the PI population reported multiple races. PI students already experience invisibility. How will being mixed race affect invisibility if students are only one-fourth PI, but strongly identify with the culture? An examination of ethnic identity, residency, and immigration statuses would present the complex intersectionality that should be recognized and addressed by educational institutions when serving PI students. I am interested in the recent development in academia of Mixed Race Studies and the inclusion of PIs in this new educational discourse. As the racial makeup of students continues to increasingly diversify, I am curious how that will impact policies and monies designated to specific historically marginalized student populations. An increase of mixed race students entering higher education will occur, therefore research on how these students experience and persist through college should be researched.

Conclusion

This research study sought to answer the following three questions: 1) What is the Pacific Islander student experience at AANAPISI designated institutions? 2) What can leaders at AANAPISI designated institutions do to better support Pacific Islander student academic goals? and 3.) What effective leadership theories should educators practice to increase institutional equity?

These research questions are significant because AANAPISIs are the newest component of minority-serving institutions (MSIs). The practice of establishing

AANAPISI designated and funded colleges has only been in existence for a decade. Literature and research on AANAPISIs are new to academia and therefore are in high demand. The AAPI population is predicted to increase to 47 million by 2060 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010), which is likely to result in the growth of AANAPISI eligible, designated, and funded institutions. The findings of these beginning studies are pivotal because they can influence current institutional practices and upcoming grant proposals for AANAPISI funding.

As I conclude my dissertation, I can hear my focus group participants asking me, “What’s next?” The basic incompatibility between maintaining a PI and Western identity in higher education settings was evident. The recurring theme of this dissertation was one of continuous tension, although, the culminating insight stems from promise. Educational discourses of mono-cultural and deficit thinking explanations regarding student academic disparities, must not continue. The United States’ ability to sustain the cultures of diverse populations will make the nation stronger.

There are strengths in PI culture that other cultures can learn and benefit from such as, relationship building and establishing community support. The tensions Pacific Islanders experience regarding (de)colonization, (in)visibility, and the dual experiences with hybridity, are specific to the Pacific Islander populations; however, constructs of this conceptual framework can be utilized as a lens to support all under-represented students. All students have the potential to become the leaders in their communities, and therefore,

higher education settings should provide a safe space to promote transformation and increased student agency.

The literature and data I have collected and analyzed have led me down the path to a new form of leadership that requires leaders to intentionally support PI students with combating colonization and cultural invisibility through the promotion of hybridity within their institutions. Leaders can incorporate hybridity on their campuses by first acknowledging the strengths in PI cultures, and then merging PI values-centered practices into Western schooling settings. Leaders would benefit in obtaining a deep sense of PI collectivism, which relates to Hattori's (2016) descriptions of belonging and reciprocity. Collectivism emphasizes a profound connectedness to others and stresses immense importance in maintaining relationships. Pacific Islanders cherish family support and depend on each other to solve challenging life problems together (Yeh et al., 2006). Higher education leaders should encourage institutional collaboration to replicate PI family support sentiment in educational settings.

It is beneficial for educational leaders to equip staff and faculty to promote and practice inclusivity. In fall of 2016, Donald J. Trump was elected as the 45th President of the United States. The Trump administration has created an unwelcoming political climate toward the AAPI population, which is evident by the removal of the White House Initiative on Asian American Pacific Islanders webpage and the resignation of two-thirds of the members for the President's Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islanders (Bellware, 2017). It is a precarious time, and educational institutions are worried about

future funding to support the AANAPISI vision. The time is now to create research that pinpoints what colleges are doing to increase student success and to discover how to duplicate systemic models of student achievement.

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Appendix A

Focus Group Question Bank

1. Please introduce yourself and share your major, year, if you transferred (if at a community college- plan on transferring) and your ethnicity.
2. What does it mean to you to be a Pacific Islander (PI)?
3. Do you consider Filipinos to be Pacific Islander? Why?
4. What makes being a Pacific Islander different from other students at your college?
5. Tell me about your educational journey starting with high school. What type of student were you in high school and what type of student are you now?
6. What challenges, if any, did you overcome that would have prevented you from going to college?
7. When did you know you were going to go to college?
8. What has your undergraduate experience been like for you?
9. Tell me about your most memorable college experience?
10. What has been the most challenging part about college?
11. Have you ever been confused for another ethnicity? If so, how did that make you feel?
12. What is something that you would like to see changed at your college?
13. How many PI teachers have you had in K-12? In college?
14. What advice would you give to a PI student entering their first year of college?
15. What are some of the stereotypes that exist about Pacific Islanders at your college?
16. Why do you think those stereotypes exist?
17. What do you believe are common misunderstandings that others may have about Pacific Islanders?
18. How do you think Pacific Islanders are viewed on the mainland?
19. Would you rather live on the islands or in the states? Why?
20. For those of you who grew up on the islands, how does that differ from where you live currently?
21. Are you involved in student life?
22. When you are not in class what are you doing?
23. How many Pacific Islanders do you personally know that have earned a four-year degree?
24. What motivates you to stay enrolled in college?
25. What does it mean to be a first-generation student to you?
26. Where do you learn about your culture, example, and cultural practices?
27. What is a cultural saying or saying you heard growing up, that you still live by?
28. Can you share a time where you felt like you were not Pacific Islander enough? Or were accused of being "white-washed?"

29. What language do you speak at home? When out with friends?
30. What is a Western tradition that you dislike? Why?
31. Have you discovered anything new about yourself since you've been in college?
What?
32. Do you feel like you are benefitting from being enrolled in college? Why?
33. Why are you taking a Pacific Islands Studies course?
34. What's next after this? Graduate school? Career goals?
35. Is there anything you would like to add about anything we have discussed, or I did not ask?

Appendix B

HI Two-Year Focus Group Participant Demographics

Participants	Focus Group	State	2YR/ 4YR	Ethnicity	Birthplace	Language(s) Spoken at Home	Major
1	1	HI	2YR	Samoan, Tongan, Tokelan, German	Hawaii	Samoan, English	Automotive Technology
2	1	HI	2YR	Samoan, Tongan, Niue, Mexican, Chinese	Texas	English	Education
3	1	HI	2YR	Samoan	American Samoa	English	Business
4	1	HI	2YR	Samoan	Hawaii	English	Information Computer Science
5	3	HI	2YR	Hawaiian	Hawaii	English	Sociology
6	3	HI	2YR	Native Hawaiian, Chinese	Hawaii	English	Hawaiian Studies
7	3	HI	2YR	Tongan	Hawaii	Tongan	Communication
8	3	HI	2YR	Samoan, Tongan	American Samoa	Samoan, English	Communication
9	3	HI	2YR	Native Hawaiian, Chinese	Hawaii	English	Hawaiian Studies

Appendix C

HI Four-Year Focus Group Participant Demographics

Participants	Focus Group	State	2YR/ 4YR	Ethnicity	Birthplace	Language(s) Spoken at Home	Major
10	2	HI	4YR	Chamoru	Guam	English, Chamoru	Pacific Island Studies
11	2	HI	4YR	Native Hawaiian, Okinawan, Chinese, Portuguese	Hawaii	English, Pidgin	Ethnic Studies
12	4	HI	4YR	Chuukese	Chuuk	Chuukese, English	Environmental Studies
13	4	HI	4YR	Chuukese	Chuuk	Chuukese	Pre-Nursing
14	4	HI	4YR	Samoan	California	Samoan	Communication
15	4	HI	4YR	Polynesian	American Samoa	English, Samoan	Marine Science
16	4	HI	4YR	Marshallese	California	Marshallese	Business/ Economics
17	4	HI	4YR	Chuukese	Chuuk	Chuukese	Nursing
18	4	HI	4YR	Samoan	American Samoa	Samoan, English	Political Science
19	4	HI	4YR	Palauan, Filipino	Saipan	English	Biology
20	4	HI	4YR	Samoan	American Samoa	Samoan	Biochemistry/ Mathematic
21	4	HI	4YR	Yapese	Yap	Yapese	Economics

Appendix D

CA Focus Group Participant Demographics

Participants	Focus Group	State	2YR/ 4YR	Ethnicity	Birthplace	Language(s) Spoken at Home	Major
22	5	CA	2YR	Chamoru	Guam	English	Sociology
23	5	CA	2YR	Samoan	California	Samoan, English	Ethnic Studies
24	5	CA	2YR	Samoan	California	English	Child Development/ Multimedia
25	5	CA	2YR	Samoan	California	English	Criminal Justice
26	5	CA	2YR	Samoan, Mexican	American Samoa	Samoan, English	Criminal Justice
27	5	CA	2YR	Tongan	California	English, Tongan	Undeclared
28	6	CA	4YR	Samoan	California	English	Psychology/ Biology
29	6	CA	4YR	Tongan	California	English	Ethnic Studies
30	6	CA	4YR	Tongan	California	Tongan, English	Sociology
31	6	CA	4YR	Native Hawaiian, Japanese	Hawaii	Hawaiian, Pidgin	Biology
32	6	CA	4YR	Fijian	Fiji	Hindi	Health Science
33	7	CA	4YR	Tongan	California	English, Tongan	Industrial Technology
34	7	CA	4YR	Samoan	California	Samoan	Journalism

Appendix E

List of Institutions that are Both AANAPISI Designated and WUE

<u>AANAPISI and WUE</u>
California
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
California State University, East Bay
California State University, Sacramento
University of California, Merced
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Northern Marianas College
Hawaii
University of Hawaii at Hilo
University of Hawaii at Manoa
University of Hawaii Maui College
University of Hawaii West Oahu
New Mexico
New Mexico Military Institute
Nevada
College of Southern Nevada
Nevada State College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Appendix F

Map of Pacific Islands
(Pacific Islands, 2017)