WHERE ARE THE BROTHERS?

NATIVE HAWAIIAN MALES AND HIGHER EDUCATION

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DEDICATION

No kuʻu mau keiki kāne, ʻo Kualii Jamie Akiona lāua ʻo Kulailai William Rezin Akiona.

Aloha wau iā ʻolua. Aloha kekahi i kekahi. E kūlia i ka nuʻu. No kuʻu wahine, ʻo Jasmine

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study examined the motivating factors for Native Hawaiian male students pursuing postsecondary education at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu. This study sought to deepen understanding of the factors that influence a Native Hawaiian male's decision to pursue higher education and to understand the interplay of masculinities and ethnicity on their educational experiences and aspirations. The four major influencing factors were (1) encouragement and support from ʻohana and friends, (2) academic and co-curricular engagement, (3) gender performance, and (4) ethnicity. Using hegemonic masculinity and Indigenous and Oceanic masculinities, this study provides insight into the positive impact that "disadvantaged" identities had on Native Hawaiian male participants of this study and their decision to pursue a higher education degree. Native Hawaiian men are finding different ways to navigate their masculinities in this Western society. Findings suggest the implementation, continuity, and sustainability of Indigenous cultural programs that support Native Hawaiian males and the development of their kuleana to themselves, their ʻohana, and their community.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Minority men have vast untapped potential that could help support the United States'

social and economic development--but only if higher education institutions commit to

connecting with and retaining these men. (Williams & Flores-Ragade, 2010, para. 1)

Hawaiʻi, like other states, has joined the ambitious national campaign of the College

Completion Agenda to increase the number of 25 to 34-year-olds who hold an associate degree

or higher to 55% by the year 2025. I suggest that it is imperative for educational institutions to

understand what factors promote, and prevent, a college-going culture among the group most at

risk -- minority men in order to meet the goals of this national campaign.

At the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu, Natives Hawaiians make up the largest

ethnicity group at 26.9% (University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu, 2015). The service area of the

University includes Kapolei, ʻEwa, the North Shore, and the Waiʻanae Coast, where the largest

concentration of Native Hawaiians live. In the fall of 2015, University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu

(the closest university to the concentration center of Native Hawaiians) had 207 Native Hawaiian

males enrolled. Of all the Native Hawaiian males enrolled at University of Hawaiʻi – West

Oʻahu, only 26 (12%) were graduates of the public high schools on the coast. Over the last

eleven years, Native Hawaiian male graduates of Waiʻanae Coast high schools enrolled at

University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu made up an average of only 7% of all Native Hawaiian

males enrolled.

Waiʻanae is a 20-mile stretch of coastline on the west side of the island of Oʻahu. This

coastline is said to have the highest concentration of Native Hawaiians, and this may be

attributed to the large and multiple Hawaiian homesteads located within the Nānākuli and Waiʻanae communities. In this study, the term *Native Hawaiian* is used to mean "any individual who is a descendant of the aboriginal people who, prior to 1778, occupied and exercised sovereignty in the area that now constitutes the State of Hawaiʻi." (U.S. Public Law 103-150)

In a 2003 report, The Center on the Family at the College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources at the University of Hawaiʻi noted that Waiʻanae and Nānākuli ranked poorly on child and family well-being measures, including unemployment, income, children in poverty, child abuse, and school safety. Also of concern in these communities are the poor educational performances of the students, high teacher turnover, school attendance, low levels of college acceptance, and a high percentage of youth ages 16-19 that are neither in school nor working. The Center on Family also reported the strengths of the community, such as stable neighborhoods, growing homeownership, strong familial ties, and parental desire to ensure school success for their children.

Waiʻanae has a reputation for being a rough and tough area. According to some, a place that one must use caution when visiting. Fermantez (2007) writes about Waiʻanae in his study,

> In local discourse it is stigmatized as a rough and dangerous place referred to by
> some as the "Wild Wild West." Unfortunately Waiʻanae tends to live up to the
> reputation and the Leeward Coast has more than its fair share of violence, drugs,
> criminality and fatal car accidents...Waiʻanae compares unfavorably to other
> places on the island like middle class Waipio...In the way Waiʻanae is perceived
> by those both on and off the coast, part of it is representation, part of it is self
> fulfilling prophecy, and part of it is reality. (pp. 99-100)

Unfortunately, this is the way Waiʻanae is perceived by many outside of the community, and even to some within. As a Waiʻanae resident for 24 years, I can see how this might be communicated and perpetuated. I also know that a lot of good comes from that community.

Three communities make up the Waiʻanae Coast, and they include Nānākuli, Waiʻanae, and Mākaha. The median household income in 2015-2016 for Waiʻanae (which includes the Mākaha area) and Nānākuli was $55,683 and $68,716 respectively, compared to the State of Hawaiʻi average of $66,420. The percent of the Waiʻanae and Nānākuli communities that graduated from college was 11.9% and 5.4% respectively, compared to the 29.4% State of Hawaiʻi average.

In the 2015-2016 school year, there were 1,803 students enrolled at Waiʻanae High School, of which 61% were Native Hawaiian. Sixty-eight percent of the students received free or reduced-cost lunch, and 15.8% were in Special Education programs. That same school year, there were 1,056 enrolled at Nānākuli High and Intermediate School, of which 70.1% were Native Hawaiian. Seventy-six percent of the students received free or reduced-cost lunch, and 21.9% were in special education programs. This study seeks to provide insight for primary and secondary educational institutions so that they can better prepare Native Hawaiian males, and other minority males, for higher education. This study also seeks to provide a better understanding of this population for higher education institutions so that they can better serve this group when they get to their doorstep.

Statement of the Problem

Native Hawaiians have historically been underrepresented in higher education. In 2007, there were 2,674 Native Hawaiian graduates of Hawaiʻi Department of Education secondary schools, 24.6% of all graduates in the State. Only 34 percent of these Native Hawaiian Hawaiʻi

Department of Education graduates went directly into college the following fall semester, the third lowest percentage of the 13 ethnic groupings studied (Hawaiʻi P-20, 2012).

That same year, 2007, Native Hawaiians made up 24.6 percent of the Hawaiʻi Department of Education cohort. Two years later, Native Hawaiians only made up 17.8 percent of the cohort that was enrolled at a postsecondary institution in the spring of 2009, an enrollment gap of -6.8 percent (Hawaiʻi P-20, 2012). These statistics not only tell us that there are access and enrollment challenges for Native Hawaiians but also challenges of retention and persistence.

More recently, Native Hawaiian males (and other Pacific Islander males) have had the lowest enrollment rates of all the demographic groups in the State of Hawaiʻi (Hawaiʻi P-20 Partnerships for Education, 2015). In the 2017 Office of Hawaiian Affairs report, *Kānehōʻālani: Transforming the Health of Native Hawaiian Men*, it is stated that "in 2014, 15% of Native Hawaiian men 25 and older had a bachelor's degree or higher, half as many as the total male population in the state" (p. 25). The report (OHA, 2017) also revealed that the State of Hawaiʻi saw a 1.7 percent increase for all males 25 years of age or older with a bachelor's degree, while a much smaller increase (0.4 percent) was achieved for Native Hawaiian males in the same age group.

These statistics reveal that Native Hawaiian males do not enjoy the benefits of higher education--higher individual earnings, lower incarceration rates, higher civic engagement, improved personal health, intergenerational benefits (Baum et al., 2013)--at the levels consistent with Asian, White, and other ethnic groups in Hawaiʻi.

The body of scholarship on males, minority males, higher education, and masculinity continues to grow. However, there are few studies, if any, explicitly conducted with Native Hawaiian men in relationship to college aspirations.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to deepen understanding of the factors that influence Native Hawaiian males' decisions to pursue higher education in order to develop strategies to increase Hawaiian male entry and persistence in obtaining a higher education degree. Specifically, I am interested in the factors that influence low-income, first-generation, Native Hawaiian males from Waiʻanae coast of Oʻahu educated through the public school system.

This study will present the perspectives of successfully enrolled Native Hawaiian males and the factors that impacted their college enrollment decision and matriculation at a four-year postsecondary institution.

Research Questions

Three research questions were created and used to guide this study. These research questions are:

1. What are the factors that influence, low income, first-generation Native Hawaiian male from the Waiʻanae coast of Oʻahu, decision to pursue higher education?

2. What role does gender play in a Waiʻanae coast Native Hawaiian male's educational pathway?

3. What role does ethnicity play in a Waiʻanae coast Native Hawaiian male's educational pathway?

In this paper, the term *male* is used to mean "a person who was born with male sex organs and identifies as being male." Male is not used to mean one who identifies as "a man," as "masculine," nor someone whose sexual orientation is limited to "straight."

Waiʻanae refers to the moku (district) of Waiʻanae and all the ahupuaʻa (land divisions) of the Waiʻanae Coast, from Nānākuli in the southeast, to Keawaʻula at the northwest point of the island. The term *low-income* is used to describe any college student eligible for Federal Student Aid, specifically, the Pell Grant, which is a need-based grant available to students whose estimated family contribution towards their child's college education is minimal. *First-generation* is used in this paper to mean "a college student whose parents have not acquired a bachelor's degree or higher." Lastly, the term *higher education* is used to mean "any formal, academic education at a postsecondary institution."

Native Hawaiian males are not attending college at rates comparable to other males in Hawaiʻi. Nearly 30% of the total male population in Hawaiʻi over the age of 25 hold a bachelor's degree or higher (OHA, 2017). When looking at Native Hawaiian men in this age group, only 15% hold a bachelor's degree or higher (OHA, 2017). This 50% gap between Native Hawaiian males and the state average for all males is substantial and worthy of investigation.

I am a Native Hawaiian male, born and raised on the west side of Oʻahu. I was fortunate enough to attend one of the few independent schools on the coast throughout my elementary school years and continued at an independent school in Honolulu for an additional year. In the eighth grade, I transitioned to the public school system and completed my secondary education at Waiʻanae High School. I got to experience both, the private school world and the public school world. They were very different, which in my estimation warrants the use of "worlds" to describe the variance. I assume that the contrast was exaggerated by the schools I attended, Hawaii Baptist Academy and Waiʻanae Intermediate and Waiʻanae High School. Others who have attended an independent school and a public school may not have experienced such drastic differences.

My early educational experiences at the small independent schools and interactions with my cousins and neighbors who attended public schools cultivated a distinctive perspective and opinion of public schools. When I transitioned to the public school system at age 12, I realized there was an obvious difference in resources. Class sizes were larger, students were a lot more vocal and opinionated, and the staff seemed overwhelmed and overworked.

It became harder for me to be academically successful in the public school system. It felt as if I had to be intentionally focused on my success. It was much too easy to just get by with no clear post-high school graduation goals or aspirations.

My own educational journey and observations as a student affairs professional have allowed me to witness the underrepresentation of Native Hawaiian males from my community in pursuit of academic degrees, and much of this phenomenon seems to be linked to gender roles and identity.

It is common knowledge that college education brings economic and social benefits to the individual and the communities where one lives, works, and plays. On average, college graduates also enjoy other benefits at higher rates than non-college graduates, including better health, less incarceration, and steadier employment (Baum, Ma & Payea, 2013; Ma, Pender & Welch, 2016). Educational attainment is positively correlated with income and employment (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017a). Classic social determinates of health are education and income, as well as the physical and social environment and macro structural policies that shape them (Zimmerman, Woolf, & Haley, 2015). This would then suggest that the low college participation rates of Native Hawaiian males are impacting local and state economies, and the quality of life of these individuals, their families, and their communities.

A positive correlation can be observed when looking through US Census data. According to the US Census Bureau (2016), the Waiʻanae community was estimated to have a little over 9% of its adult residents as having earned a bachelor's degree or higher. The average household income for this same community was estimated at $58,807. The Bureau also estimated that just over 25% of Waiʻanae residents were living below the poverty level. In another Oʻahu community, Mililani Mauka, where 48% percent of its members hold a bachelor's degree or higher, the socioeconomic differences are significant. In Mililani Mauka, the median household income was estimated at $107,163 and only 2% are living below the poverty level. There are also significant differences in home ownership, family dynamics, and health statistics between these two Hawaiʻi communities. It should be clear from these statistics how a community's higher educational attainment is correlated with higher income, which in turn has a positive impact on other social metrics like health and well being.

In 2015, Project Kuleana (2015) released a music video for Ernie Cruz, Jr.'s (2001) song titled "Where are the Brothers?" The lyrics begin, "A great injustice has been done, from this problem you can't run…stand up and be proud…a hundred years is much too long, now's the time to right this wrong" and continues, "too many brothers fill our jails, living their lives in a hopeless hell…brothers, think first and do right, united, we will win this fight." Reflecting on the lyrics, I began to think about the underrepresentation of Native Hawaiian males in college, the causes of this phenomenon, and how we might change policy and practice to increase college-going rates for this population.

I asked myself "Where are the brothers?" semester after semester working as a student affairs professional at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu . Over the past three years, the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu and its partners have recruited recent high school graduates

to participate in the ʻOnipaʻa Summer Bridge program from service-area schools on the Leeward Coast of Oʻahu. Each new cohort included a fair representation of the traditionally underrepresented ethnicities that make up the Waiʻanae community, but there was a noticeable underrepresentation of males.

This observation of lower male enrollment in college programs is not unique to my work at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu. I have seen similar sex distributions while working at Windward Community College on the east side of Oʻahu Island, noticed it as a student studying in the University of Hawaiʻi system, see it among my colleagues, and read about it in higher education news articles and research.

I also see the underrepresentation of male participation in higher education through social media. Through Facebook, I am able to connect directly, or through mutual friends, with other Native Hawaiian males from my community. Most are hard-working fathers and contributing members of society. Many follow in the footsteps of other males in working-class communities and enter the trades, making a good living supporting themselves and their families. A few have careers in military service and others achieve success through college and become career professionals.

My high school 20th reunion took place last year. A Facebook event and group were created a year out and the planning began. Although I didn't participate in the actual reunion, I did join the Facebook group/reunion page and got a chance to reconnect with my classmates. There were more than 232 profiles that were a part of the Waiʻanae High School class of 1997 reunion Facebook group. Of the 232 social media profiles of my classmates, there were only 36 that mentioned attending any postsecondary institution, a measly 16 percent. Of the 81 males, only 13 listed a college or university in their "Work and Education" information, again, only 16

percent. I understand that this is not reliable data by research standards, but clearly, the absence of college information is communicating at best an indifference to college participation, and at worst, extremely low college participation rates. If these rates are anywhere near accurate, then this community could potentially be missing out on the multiple benefits that are associated with higher education attainment.

Hegemony, Masculinities, and Gender

Besides my observations of the few Native Hawaiian males entering our university from the Waiʻanae Coast and my class reunion, there are other reasons this particular subject was of interest to me. In my own experiences at the various community colleges and at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa, I observed that the young men that I attended classes with were, in general, not what I would describe as "masculine." There were a few outliers of Native Hawaiian men entering college from the west coast of Oahu, who were very masculine in appearance and behavior, but they were not the norm, and definitely not the same distribution like at Waiʻanae High School in the late nineties. The term *masculinity* is used to mean "the traits, values, behaviors traditionally associated with men." Connell (2005) defines hegemonic masculinity as "The configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (p.77). Western hegemonic masculinity is often referenced using these terms: Patriarchy, dominance, risk-taking, self-discipline, physical toughness, muscular development, aggression, violence, emotional control, and overt heterosexual desire (Demetriou, 2001; Hinojosa, 2010). Most scholars agree that there are multiple masculinities and that the masculinity that one performs is contextual.

In this study I am using the term gender to refer to the non-binary, socially constructed characteristics of women and men, and those other than men and women (third-gender). It is also different from sexual orientation. Gender is a "multi-dimensional, historically changing structure of social relations – relations constructed in active social practices" (Connell, n.d.). The American Psychological Association (2015) defines gender as "the condition of being male, female, or neuter...[it] implies the psychological, behavioral, social, and cultural aspects of being male or female." The website Gender Spectrum (2017) defines gender as beginning with the assignment of sex but does not stop there. "A person's gender is the complex interrelationship between three dimensions…body…identity…expression." Gender Spectrum (2017) describes these dimensions:

> Body - Most societies view sex as a binary concept, with two rigidly fixed options: male or female, both based on a person's reproductive functions (genitals, sex chromosomes, gonads, hormones, reproductive structures). But a sex binary fails to capture even the biological aspect of gender. While most bodies have one of two forms of genitalia, which are classified as "female" or "male," there are naturally occurring intersex conditions that demonstrate that sex exists across a continuum of possibilities. This biological spectrum by itself should be enough to dispel the simplistic notion of the "Gender binary"- there are not just two sexes. (para. 3)

> Identity - Gender identity is our internal experience and naming of our gender. A Cisgender person has a gender identity consistent with the sex they were assigned at birth. For example, a child whose sex was assigned male on their birth certificate and who identifies as a boy is cisgender (you may hear this term shortened to "cis"). A

Transgender person has a gender identity that does not match the sex they were assigned

at birth. So, a child who was assigned male on their birth certificate and who identifies as

a girl is transgender (sometimes this term is shortened to "trans"). (para. 6)

Expression - The third dimension of gender is Gender expression, which is the way we

show our gender to the world around us (through such things as clothing, hairstyles, and

mannerisms, to name a few). Practically everything is assigned a gender—toys, colors,

clothes, and activities are some of the more obvious examples. Given the prevalence of

the gender binary, children face great pressure to express their gender within narrow,

stereotypical definitions of "boy" or "girl." Expectations around expression are taught to

us from the moment we are born, and communicated through every aspect of our lives,

including family, culture, peers, schools, community, media, and religion. Accepted

gender roles and expectations are so entrenched in our culture that most people cannot

imagine any other way. (para. 11)

Hegemony will be used as a theoretical framework to explain how specific social factors

might have influenced these Native Hawaiian males decision to pursue a higher education degree

following their compulsory primary and secondary education. When it comes to the topic of

masculinities, research has pointed out that class and race have a significant impact on how the

performances of masculinities are constructed (Gramsci, 1971; Connell, 2005) However, there

are fewer studies that have explored more fluid forms of gender in relation to hegemonic

masculinities. Whereas some are convinced that theories of hegemonic masculinities can be of

value in understanding minority male experiences (Connell, 2005; Kimmel, 2013; Harper, 2004),

others maintain that more work needs to be done in understanding specific groups of males, in particular, the unique context of indigenous men (Jolly, 2008; Anderson & Innes, 2015). What I will show in this study is that Native Hawaiian men are not subject to the same binary nature of hegemonic masculinities, but have found a more fluid masculinity that both complies and resists hegemonic masculinities (Jolly, 2008; Anderson & Innes, 2015).

First, I provide an overview of the terms that shape my theoretical framework of hegemonic masculinities. Second, I give the historical context of the term hegemony through the work of Antonio Gramsci, then a more current view, with a particular focus on race (Connell, 2005), and finally a critique of both (Jolly, 2008) in order to expand the conversation.

Hegemony is defined by Merriam-Webster's dictionary as the "preponderant influence or authority over others" and "the social, cultural, ideological, or economic influence exerted by a dominant group." Antonio Gramsci's interpretation of Marxist ideology theory, hegemony, is used to demonstrate how a capitalist government and civil society produces and maintains class hierarchies (Stoddart, 2007). Gramsci's concept of "hegemony" makes a clear distinction between coercion and consent as a mechanism. Stoddart (2007) writes, "by contrast, hegemonic power works to convince individuals and social classes to subscribe to the social values and norms of an inherently exploitative system." As stated previously, the mechanism that creates and sustains this form of social power is voluntarism and participation.

Gramsci (1971) explains that hegemony is a view of the world that is "inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed" (p. 333). Gramsci (1996) noted that the State usually employs coercive power, but hegemonic power is consistently endorsed by the larger society, including the church, schools, media, family, and other facets of the "civil society". In industrial capitalist societies, hegemonic power is the dominant form of social power for both the state and "civil

society" (Stoddart, 2007). Hegemonic power plays out in very different and complex ways here in occupied Hawaiʻi. This complexity was present in the participants' ideas and experiences, where sometimes they would push back against the established social power structures, and at other times they unknowingly supported hegemonic masculinities.

Famed French postmodernist Michel Foucault also wrote about social power. According to Foucault, power is not exclusively negative, coercive, and repressive, but rather that "power is everywhere" and "comes from everywhere," makes us what we are, and can be necessary, productive, and a positive force in our society (Gaventa, 2003). The target participant for this study (low-income, first-generation, Native Hawaiian) may seem not to have much social power, but power is evident in the way they were encouraged to persist through compulsory education, aspire for postsecondary education, and successfully enroll in college.

Foucault (2003) explains how social power is created and maintained, "The delicate mechanisms of power cannot function unless knowledge, or rather knowledge apparatuses, are formed, organized, and put into circulation, and those apparatuses are not ideological trimmings or edifices" (pp. 33-34). In addition to discourses that promote and preserve power, what's not said also contributes to the networks of power-knowledge of our society. As expected of most people, the participants in this study revealed discourses that promote and preserve social power. Interestingly, the participants also provided examples of discourses and actions that challenged the mechanisms of power and the validity of the knowledge apparatuses.

Connell (2005) defines hegemonic masculinity, a term she coined in 1985 as "The configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (p. 77). Connell (2005) explains that hegemonic

masculinity is hegemonic to the entire gender order not only in relation to other masculinities. Hegemonic masculinity is the collective privilege that men have over women and the unequal privileges held by different groups of men is the hierarchy within masculinities (Connell, 2005). I was interested to see if Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity may have influenced the educational experiences and aspirations of Native Hawaiian males from Waiʻanae.

Several studies suggest that certain types of masculinity may affect boys, and men, negatively in regards to education (Brayboy et al. 2017; Yavorsky, Buchmann, & Miles, 2015; Lloyd, 2014; Frank, Kehler, Lovell, & Davidson, 2003). In a study (Yavorsky et al., 2015) that analyzed data collected in the mid-1990s, they found that there was a negative correlation between "typical" masculine traits and overall GPA, even when controlling for race and socioeconomic status. Similar results were found in Lloyd's (2014) study on African American males, where there was a "significant and negative association between masculinity and GPA" (p. 84). Reflecting on previous masculinity and education studies, Frank et al. (2003) write, "Not only are some forms of masculinity at odds with academic achievement, but that specific forms of achievement are at odds with heterosexual hegemonic masculinities (p. 122).

Since a conception of hegemonic masculinity is tied to social status, Lusher (2011) measured friendship and influence levels of boys at two Australian all-boys schools and compared it to their academic performance. He found some association between academics and social status when it came to influence, but he did not find that social status, achieved through friends, at odds with academic achievement. Lusher (2011) explained that there may be "multiple and competing masculinity profiles with regard to who is seen as most influential" (p. 671). While there is evidence that suggests that a relationship between masculinity and educational performance can be problematic, Lusher (2011) advises that we not forget the

"nuanced and context-specific ways in which masculinities intersect with academic performance" (p. 656).

Before enrolling in my first college course, I was a part of the carpenters union. As new recruits in the union, we were required to go to class on Saturdays at Honolulu Community College. This is where I observed the highest concentration of young men who embodied stereotypical, working-class masculinities and exhibited these characteristics on an ongoing basis.

Another experience that solidified the topic of masculinity and education for me was a more recent conversation that a few of us had with a colleague and her husband. The colleague and her husband are both born and raised in Nānākuli on the Waiʻanae Coast, attended and graduated from Nānākuli High and Intermediate School, and are both of Polynesian descent (she, Hawaiian, he, Samoan). One Friday night after work, a bunch of us from the university went to the bar and grill near the university. The server told our colleague that she looked very familiar and asked, "Where do I know you from? You look so familiar?" Our colleague smiled and politely said that she wasn't sure and that this happens to her all the time, where strangers often feel like they know her from somewhere.

When the server left the table, our colleague once again explained that this happens to her all the time, even while she was attending college. She started to talk about this one particular instance where her husband came to pick her up after her class and this other college student, a young man, stopped and asked how he knew her. Her husband recalls the conversation between his wife and this other guy whom he denied was another college student. She assured her husband that he was a fellow student to which he suspiciously refrained, "No! No, he wasn't...*college guys* don't look like *that*!"

That night at the bar and grill, it was clear that the young man who was talking to our colleague was perceived by her husband as a potential threat and did not fit into his ideas of what college guys look like nor how they behave. Reading between the lines of their conversation, one could easily deduce that this young man was probably a hegemonic masculine profile, physically strong, and attractive, not your stereotypical college-going male, less masculine and less attractive, from the west side of Oʻahu.

There have been many studies on masculinity over the last three decades (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). These studies looked at masculinity in relation to many things including education, health, careers, relationships, etc. Some of the heavily-cited scholars of men's studies and masculinity studies include Raewyn Connell (1989; 1995; 1996; 2000; 2002; 2005), Michael Kimmel (1994; 2007; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2015), Michael Messner (2016), Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman (1994), Jim O'Neil (2008).

Connell does not consider masculinities as equivalent to men, stating that masculinities concern the position of men in a gender order. On her website, Connell (n.d.) suggests that masculinities "can be defined as the patterns of practice by which people (both men and women, though predominantly men) engage that position."

Connell (2005) observed and identified other configurations of masculinities that she categorized as *complicit*, *subordinate*, and *marginalized*, all of which is organized lower in the hierarchy of masculinities. Complicit masculinities refer to the men who support the dominance of the hegemonic masculinity and reap the benefits of such a patriarchal configuration. This particular configuration includes the majority of men. Subordinate masculinities include those that undermine the goals of hegemonic masculinity. This configuration usually includes gay and academically inclined men due to their association with femininity. The final configuration,

marginalized masculinities, is complex due to the intersectionality of gender and other factors

including socioeconomic status and race/ethnicity (Lusher & Robbins, 2010; Connell &

Messerschmidt, 2005).

Minority men as a group also face more barriers than other groups when it comes to

college enrollment, persistence, and completion. Some studies suggest that certain types of

masculinities (i.e., hyper-masculinity, compensatory masculinity, protest masculinity) may affect

boys, and men, negatively in regards to education (O'Neil, 2008; Yavorsky, Buchmann, &

Miles, 2015; Lloyd, 2014; Frank, Kehler, Lovell, & Davidson, 2003). These types of

masculinities– hyper-, compensatory, and protest –are often used interchangeably to describe the

masculinity performed by some marginalized (usually economically and or ethnically) men.

These men create alternative forms of masculinity that defy hegemonic masculinity and are

achievable even with their subordinated status usually associated with their socioeconomic status

and or ethnicity/race. These alternative forms usually include risk-taking activities, aggressive

behaviors, and is often destructive, chaotic, and alienating. Connell (2000) adds that even

transsexualism and homosexual desire are examples of protest masculinity.

Similarly, Kimmel believes that masculinity is continually changing, constructed and

manipulated depending on the context and our relationships with ourselves, others, and the world

around us. Kimmel (1994) writes,

> All masculinities are not created equal; or rather, we are all *created* equal, but any
>
> hypothetical equality evaporates quickly because our definitions of masculinity
>
> are not equally valued in our society. One definition of manhood continues to
>
> remain the standard against which other forms of manhood are measured and
>
> evaluated. Within the dominant culture, the masculinity that defines white, middle

class, early middle-aged, heterosexual men is the masculinity that sets the

standards for other men, against which other men are measured and, more often

than not, found wanting (p.124-125).

Kimmel's quote supports the idea that hegemonic social hierarchies shape the thoughts, actions,

and aspirations of young Native Hawaiian males who have multiple "disadvantaged" identities.

This study supports the need to explores how social hierarchies created by hegemony shaped

social hierarchies created by hegemony affects masculine males to pursue "masculine" careers

(trades/vocational), and less-masculine males to pursue careers where their success is less

influenced by hegemonic masculinity.

There has also been important scholarship on Native Hawaiian masculinity, identity, and

colonization (Anderson & Innes, 2015; Goodyear-Kaʻōpua, 2013; Tengan, 2008a; Vasconcellos,

2014; Walker, 2011). Tengan (2008a) writes about the disempowerment Native men feel as a

result of colonization, the feminization of Native Hawaiians by the tourism industry, and how a

group of Native men has reasserted their masculinity through traditional practices.

In a section titled *Hawaiian Education and Masculinity*, Tengan (2008a) writes about

educational experiences of some of the men of the Hale Mua O Maui. This Hale Mua, organized

organically in 1995 by Kyle Nākānelua and Kamanaʻopono Crabbe, was the first modern version

of the traditional men's house. It provided a group of Native Hawaiian men the setting to

reconnect with their Hawaiian ancestry and once again partake in traditional knowledge,

practices, and protocol.

Tengan found commonly held sentiments about the Western educational model among

members, and how the supportive structures of the Hale Mua promoted education and learning

for Native Hawaiian men. One of the men interviewed talked about his preferred hands-on,

tactile learning style, not often engaged through the common pedagogical approaches of academia. Tengan (2008a) writes, "Many of the men felt that the classroom was an elitist, haole, and alien space and often a feminine one as well" (p.140), referencing the colonial discourses of Hawaiians as "stupid" and "lazy." Contrasting the Western classroom, Tengan (2008a) explains that the Hale Mua provided an environment for the Native Hawaiian men that was conducive to learning. These structures and dispositions included the equalization of status between the leadership and the participants, the egalitarian ethos, the focus on men, and a safe and comfortable space away from women.

Another scholar that analyzed Native Hawaiian male masculinity, colonization, and politics is Isaiah Helekunihi Walker. Walker (2011) writes about how Native Hawaiians have successfully resisted colonization and marginalization in the surf zone of the surrounding Hawaiian waters and focuses in on the surfing group called "Da Hui" and their efforts of resistance.

In *The Seeds We Planted*, Goodyear-Kaʻōpua (2013) writes about ideas of gender at Hālau Kū Mana, a public charter school located in Kalihi. She tells a story about the naming of loʻi (taro fields) by the male-dominant senior class and the female-dominant junior class. They named their respective loʻi in what appears to be an inversion of typical western gender characteristics. The senior class named their loʻi after a behavior that is typically associated with the feminine in Western society, and the junior class named their loʻi after the male progenitor of the Hawaiian people. Goodyear-Kaʻōpua (2013) also talked about gender and hula in her book. She writes that at Hālau Kū Mana, hula and oli (chant) are offered as an opportunity to challenge the ideas and discourse that hula is feminine, that it is for women and māhū (homosexual, effeminate males, gay men, and transgendered women). For one of the male students, hula and

oli allowed him to be a "better Hawaiian" and made him proud of his culture. Participating in hula and oli provided an opportunity for this student to shed previously held assumptions about these cultural practices, to grow, mature, and develop a sense of responsibility to himself, his parents, and his community that contrasted his "delinquent" past. It seems as if these examples support the notion of Indigenous practices challenging hegemony.

There is a limited amount of research that examines the intersectionality of masculine identity and the decision to pursue higher education for minority males. For example, Vasconcellos (2014) studied Native Hawaiian male adolescents' ideas about masculinity and what it means to "be a man", and how education and media influence their perceptions of masculinity. Vasconcellos (2014) found that the adolescent Native Hawaiian males qualified a Native Hawaiian man as someone who "feeds, fends for his family and is a father" (p. 239). However, scholarship on masculine identity for Native Hawaiian males and its effect on their decision to pursue a college education have not been done. Most comparable is research on masculinity and other minority populations, namely African American and Latino males and their college experience (eg. Harper, 2004 & 2006; Dancy, 2011 & 2014; Cerezo, Lyda, Beristianos, Enriquez, Connor, & Levant, 2013; Sáenz, Mayo, Miller, & Rodriguez, 2015). These combined experiences piqued my interest in understanding more about how ideas of masculinity and gender identity affect one's decision to enroll and pursue a higher education degree. Understanding more about the interplay of masculinity and education may help institutions and organizations have more effective messaging, recruitment, retention, and college success initiatives for their male students.

This introductory chapter has given a context for the study as well as presented the conceptual framework that supports this exploration of college aspiration and Native Hawaiian males. I have drawn on the work of Gramsci and Connell (2005) with hegemonic masculinity as "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (p.77). Connell (2005) explains that there are four types of masculinity including *hegemonic*, *complicit*, *subordinate*, and *marginalized*. She affirms, "We must recognize the relations between the different kinds of masculinity: relations of alliance, dominance, and subordination" (p. 37). Connell's masculinity types served as a very useful lens to analyze the experiences and ideas shared by the participants that "exclude and include, that intimidate, [and] exploit" (Connell, 2005, p. 37). However, a critique of Connell's work also provided another lens to articulate a more fluid understanding of gender with the participants of this study.

Jolly (2008), who critiques Connell's notion of hegemonic masculinity, states that it tends to "follow the privileged scripts of culture, nation, and heterosexual desire" (p. 5). Connell emphasizes the way that "being a man" is bounded to the male body and sexuality, privileging corporeal forms while deeming the feminine and deviant (Jolly, 2008). Other critics (Demetriou, D. 2001; Moller, 2007) have posited that Connell's hegemonic masculinity falls short for its binarism (non-hegemonic masculinities vs. hegemonic masculinity), limited consideration of the complexities and nuances of men's practices and motivations, the "closed and unified totality that incorporates no otherness" (Demetriou, 2001, p. 347). My own view is that the participants of this study were able to define their masculinities in ways that do not conform to Connell's notion of hegemonic masculinities, which I will discuss in my findings chapter.

Part of my analysis was looking for examples of Indigenous masculinities within the dialogue of the participants. Traditional Indigenous masculinities emerge from a much different place than the very patriarchal structure of Western society as presented by Gramsci and Connell. Central to Indigenous epistemology, culture, and society is balance. In *Indigenous Masculinities* by editors Anderson and Innes (2015), Sneider (2015) writes, "Central to…social balance lies an ethic of complementarity between individuals and the community to which they belong" (p. 62). This traditional focus on balance was evident in the participants' educational experiences and everyday lives.

I felt it was critical to include a lens that is more representative of the Polynesian culture and experience as a way to acknowledge the ethnic identity of my participants. Jolly (2008) emphasizes that Oceanic masculinities are "fluid, moving…across time and place" (p. 1). She argues that Oceanic masculinities are constructed in relation, and in resistance, to the hegemonic forces of colonialism. These hybrid versions, influenced by colonialism, have diverged in places like Hawai'i and New Zealand. In Hawai'i, the effects of colonialism have resulted in an emasculation of Native Hawaiian men through the feminization of the Hawaiian Islands, non-violent petitions and protests that followed the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, and how the Native men and women were portrayed (Tengan, 2008a; Jolly, 2008). In contrast, colonialism resulted in hyper-masculine Māori men through discourse, wars as resistance, and the colder climate. The effects of colonial divergence are summed up by the iconic cultural performances known around the world that these islands are known for – Hawaiian hula and feminine accommodation versus Māori haka and masculine resistance (Tengan, 2008a).

Traditional Indigenous masculinities have changed with colonialism and assimilation. The complementarity of Indigenous women's and men's authority and leadership was perceived

as a barrier and threat for colonizers and their heteropatriarchal society (Sneider, 2015). Indigenous ideas and practices of sexual agency and non-binary genders were also sites of conflict as colonizers vied for control over Indigenous peoples (Morgensen, 2015). The perpetuation of white supremacist patriarchy is pervasive, impossible to escape, conveyed and reproduced through education, news, and entertainment institutions (Anderson & Innes, 2015). Although traditional Indigenous masculinities are still present and practiced by the participants in this study, also evident and influential on their experience are the post-colonization hybrid masculinities as well as the nature of Connell's hegemonic masculinities. For some Native men, the latter two may promote behaviors (i.e. hyper-masculinity, protest masculinity) that further marginalize their status within Western society.

Today, "Indigenous men have a high risk of adopting negative lifestyles that lead to violence, addictions, and incarceration, and…these challenges can be linked to race and gender bias" (Anderson & Innes, 2015, p. 9). Indigenous men have not only accepted negative perceptions about them, but also internalized them as a result of the colonization of their lands, minds, and bodies (Anderson & Innes (2015). As I will show in the findings, the participants in this study have identified these kinds of perceptions about them, using it as motivation to persist, earn a college degree, and contribute to the well being of their communities.

In summary, Native Hawaiian males are not attending college at rates comparable to other males in Hawai'i. The proportion of Native Hawaiian males over the age of 25 with a bachelor's degree is half that of the state average for all males in Hawai'i (15% vs. 30%). In the University of Hawai'i system, the gap between males and females of Native Hawaiian ancestry is also much larger than the gap between all males and females (23% vs. 15%). What is happening to Native Hawaiian males that results in such dismal statistics? How does ethnic and

gender identity influence experience and one's decision to pursue a higher education degree? Some scholars point to gender order and masculinity as contributing to some of the social issues that males face including declining educational achievement.

Next, I present a review of the literature on minority males and education, within the historical context of Hawaiʻi and Native Hawaiian male success in college, followed by a critique of Western binary systems of gender and hegemonic masculinities to provide a more nuanced context for this study. Chapter 3 justifies the research design, including planning, data collection, and analysis. The data analysis is presented in Chapter 4, followed by the potential implications for continued research, practice, and policy in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

When it comes to the topic of college aspirations, the literature clearly shows that Native Hawaiian males are less likely to attend college than most other ethnic groups in Hawai'i. At more than twenty percentage points lower than the state average (30% compared to 56%), disadvantaged Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander males have the lowest college-going rates in Hawai'i (Hawai'i P-20, 2016). Where this agreement usually ends, however, is knowledge of the factors that influence the decision of low-income, first-generation Native Hawaiian males from the Wai'anae coast of O'ahu, to pursue higher education.

Therefore, there is a need to examine the factors that influence Native Hawaiian males from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue higher education and how institutions throughout the educational pipeline and their communities can increase college aspirations and support them through their educational journey.

My own view is that the factors affecting first-generation, low-income, Native Hawaiian males' aspirations cannot be reduced to Western binaries understanding of gender. I present a review of the literature about college success for minority males, followed by a critique of Western binary systems of gender and hegemonic masculinities to provide a more nuanced context for this study. Binaries, or dualisms, are contrasted opposites and is a key concept to structuralist cultural studies thought that favors one and oppresses the other. Al-Saidi (2014) postulates that "the perceived binary dichotomy between civilized/savage has perpetuated and legitimized Western power structures favoring "civilized" white men" (p. 95). The existence of this binary opposition develops "layers of meaning that work to maintain and reinforce a society or culture's dominant ideologies" (EnglishBiz, 2009). In essence, this is how colonialism and the broader idea of hegemony work and is maintained.

Higher Education Gender Gap. The gender gap in US colleges and universities is widening. Some argue that boys' behavior in primary and secondary school may cause setbacks that eventually affect academic preparedness and ultimately postsecondary enrollment (Owens, 2016; Belsky & Beaver, 2011; Blair & Diamond, 2008; DiPrete & Jennings, 2012). Others have argued that limited access to post-baccalaureate occupational opportunities that serve as incentives for minority males could also be a challenge for enrollment (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). In a report published by the Center for Economic and Policy Research (2014), it states that in 2013, the unemployment rate for Black college graduates between the ages of 22 and 27 was over 12 percent. This employment rate is more than twice the rate for all college graduates in the same age range at 5.6 percent. The report (Center for Economic and Policy Research, 2014) concluded:

> Black college graduates of all ages consistently have higher unemployment rates,
> higher underemployment rates, and lower wages than their white counterparts,
> even when Black students complete STEM majors, reinforces concerns that racial
> discrimination remains an important factor in contemporary labor markets (p. 13).

The National Center on Educational Statistics predicted that for the academic year 2016, male college enrollment would be 14 percentage points lower than female enrollment (43% male: 57% female). In the fall of 2017, there were nearly 19 million college students enrolled in the US, of which 42.7% were male (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2017). When the intersection of race, gender, and socioeconomic status is examined, enrollment gaps widen even further. The gap is considerably larger when looking at Indigenous (American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian) enrollment and gender. Brayboy et al. (2017) reports that only 13% of American Indians and Alaska Natives complete a bachelor's degree

compared to 29% of the general population. The authors assert that "although Native women/girls tend to fare better in educational attainment, Native boys and men lag far behind their Native and non-Native counterparts" (Brayboy et al., 2017, p. 8).

Across the University of Hawai'i ten-campus system, over the last eleven years (2005-2015) the average enrollment by gender was 42% male and 57% female (University of Hawai'i Institutional Research Office). Over those same eleven years, Native Hawaiian males on average made up only 38% of the Native Hawaiian enrollment (61% female) (Native Hawaiian Student Services, 2016). There is a gap of 23 percentage points between Native Hawaiian males and Native Hawaiian females, nearly ten percentage points larger than the national average, and eight percentage points higher than the average of all males to all females in the University of Hawai'i system.

The gap increases when you look at Native Hawaiian enrollment by gender and high school. Filtering the University of Hawai'i System enrollment data of the last eleven years to include only Native Hawaiian graduates of Wai'anae Coast public high schools, namely Wai'anae High School, Kamaile Academy Public Charter School, and Nānākuli High and Intermediate School, the gap between Native Hawaiian male and female enrollment increases to 41 percentage points (29% male: 70% female). This gap further increases when we look at just the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu Native Hawaiian enrollment. At the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu, over the last eleven years (2005-2015) the average male percentage of the total Native Hawaiian enrollment has been only 17% (82% female). This represents a gap of 65 percentage points between Native Hawaiian males and females at the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu and a difference of 51 percentage points between the national gender gap and the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu gender gap of Native Hawaiian students.

Table 1.

Average Enrollment by Sex in the United States and the University of Hawai'i System

Groups of Students	Male	Female	Gap
All US College Students by Sex (2017)	43%	57%	**14%**
All UH System Students (2005-2015)	42%	57%	**15%**
All Native Hawaiian (NH) Students in the UH System (2005-2015)	38%	61%	**23%**
All NH Students of Wai'anae Coast Public High Schools in the UH System (2005-2015)	29%	70%	**41%**
All NH Students of Wai'anae Coast Public High Schools at UHWO (2005-2015)	17%	82%	**65%**

As the statistics presented above suggests, not only are the differences between how the different genders pursue higher education, but those differences among genders are magnified when considering race and class. Economically disadvantaged boys (and men) of color are succeeding at much lower rates than most other groups.

Intersectionality of Gender, Poverty, and Race. In discussions of boys, masculinity, and education, one controversial issue is the impact that race and class have on school success. On one hand, some scholars argue that race and ethnicity, and more specifically cultural orientations of certain races and ethnicities, impacts educational experience (Rosen, 1959). On the other hand, some argue that socio-economics and social class is more impactful on

educational outcomes (Morgan, Farkas, Hillemeire, & Maczuga, 2008; Jensen, 2009). Others

even maintain that it is the combination of both, the intersectionality of certain races/ethnicities

and classes that creates a recipe for poor academic achievement (Lee & Burkam, 2002; Bécares

& Priest, 2015). Add in gender, particularly masculine identity, and the nonsuccess is

exacerbated.

 Referencing the issue of masculinity, race, and education, particularly Black masculinity

and education, O'Connor (2000) writes:

> We are repeatedly reminded in both the popular and academic press that the Black
>
> male is "at extreme risk" for failure both within and outside of school. We are
>
> bombarded by statistics that illustrate the poor performance of Black males on
>
> academic achievement measures, their underrepresentation in programs for the
>
> gifted and talented, and their overrepresentation in special education classes. We
>
> are reminded that they are not only the most likely to be categorized as
>
> emotionally or behaviorally disabled but also are disproportionately represented
>
> in the disciplinary rolls in almost every school in America. Their probability of
>
> dropping out of secondary school is high, and their chances of going to college
>
> are low. These statistics are subsequently linked to the overrepresentation of
>
> Black males among those who are unemployed, those who engage in criminal
>
> activity, and moreover, those who eventually end up in jail (p. 365).

 I suggest that deficit discourses like this about Black males are also common for males of

other minority groups including Indigenous males of American Indian, Alaska Native, and

Native Hawaiian ancestries. In education, Indigenous peoples experience discrimination and

racism in school settings, low college enrollment rates, and lower graduation rates at both the

secondary and postsecondary levels when compared to other populations (Brayboy et al., 2017).

Brayboy et al. (2017) acknowledges that "among Native men and boys, feelings of isolation, confusion, and despair, connected to the loss of cultural identity and the presence of historic trauma negatively influence their experience" (Brayboy et al., 2017, p. 9).

Native Hawaiians and Education

While there have been educational gains for minority groups, there is still a substantial gap between advantaged White and Asian groups, and African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders (Benham, 2006). Some of the explanations for these differences in educational achievement for minority groups include "achievement-motivation, parent socialization and parent/family-child expectations toward academic achievement, parent/family-school participation/involvement, literacy and language differences, degree of historical consciousness (attitude toward colonization), and political and economic dimensions" (Benham, 2006). How, and to what level, parents and families socialize their children towards achievement impacts their attitude and motivation towards education and academic performance (Bempechat, 1992). If many in these minority groups (African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders) are also of lower socioeconomic status (SES), then it would align with previous studies that show a correlation between lower SES and lower parental engagement and socialization towards achievement (Georgiou, 2007; Lareau, 1987, 2011; Schimpl-Neimanns, 2000; Schmitt & Kleine, 2010). Some scholars found that lower SES parents are less likely to believe that management of their child's education is part of their responsibility; are often less educated, resulting in lower self-efficacy and limited skills and knowledge that they can offer; and often have jobs that require long and unpredictable hours, impacting their ability to be more involved in the home and their children's education (Heymann, 2000; Hoover-Dempsey &

Sandler, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler, Whetsel, Green, Wilkins, & Closson, 2005;

Lareau, 2011).

The correlation between lower SES and lower parental engagement and socialization may

also hold true in Hawai'i. Benham (2006) asserts that in Hawai'i, "Native Hawaiians and Pacific

Islanders (and Filipinos) are among the most underserved with the lowest test scores, less than

suitable high school graduation rates, disproportionately high rates of grade retention, and low

rates of post-secondary enrollment" (p. 32). These groups (Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander,

and Filipino) are also overrepresented in the lower end of the socioeconomic scale. According to

Okamura (2008), Native Hawaiians, Filipinos, and Samoans are underrepresented in white-

collar/high status occupations such as management/business (all, males only) and professional

(all, both sexes), and overrepresented in blue-collar/low status occupations including

construction/maintenance (Native Hawaiian males only), production/transportation (all, both

sexes), and service (Native Hawaiian males, Samoan males and females).

Ethnic stratification in Hawai'i is dominated by Chinese Americans, Whites, and

Japanese Americans (Okamura, 2008). These groups generally have higher occupational status

and higher family incomes. Okamura (2008) writes,

> The lower end of the ethnic stratification order is occupied by Native Hawaiians,
>
> Samoans, and Filipino Americans, as was the case from 1970, if not earlier, to
>
> 1990 (Okamura 1982, 1990 and 1998c). These groups continue to have the lowest
>
> occupational, income, and educational status of the ethnic groups included in my
>
> analyses. They continue to be excessively represented in the lower-level
>
> occupations, while represented below parity in the higher employment categories.
>
> As a result, their income is below the Hawai'i median for families, men, and

women. The low occupational and income rank of Samoans, Native Hawaiians,

and Filipino Americans is clearly related to their low level of educational

attainment. They persist in having bachelor's degree or higher completion rates

far below the Hawai'i median, and the college or graduate school enrollment

percentages of Samoans and Native Hawaiians are considerably lower than the

state median (see Chapter 4). Their continuing subordinate socioeconomic status

reflects the cumulative effects of ethnic inequality transmitted from one

generation to the next among these three groups. (p.53)

Limited educational achievement by these three groups (and other ethnic minority groups

including Puerto Ricans, Tongans, Chamorros, Vietnamese, Laotians, Cambodians, etc.) results

in their continued socioeconomic subordination in Hawai'i (Okamura, 2008).

Native Hawaiian Student College Success

It is hard to be successful in college if you are not going to college in the first place. One

issue of concern and the impetus of this research is the low number of Native Hawaiians that

participate in higher education. In a 2014 report titled *Ka Huaka'i: Native Hawaiian Educational*

Assessment, Kamehameha Schools found that Native Hawaiians were the least likely of

Hawai'i's major ethnic groups to be enrolled in college (Kamehameha Schools, 2014). A gap of

10 percentage points exists between the number of young adult Native Hawaiians enrolled in

college (25.7 percent) and the statewide average (35.7 percent).

Besides the issue of getting more Native Hawaiians to pursue higher education, there are

also significant challenges in helping them succeed once they are enrolled and attending.

Between 1990 and 2000, there were promising gains in bachelor degree attainment for Native

Hawaiians. Since 2000, progress slowed and eventually plateaued over the last decade (Kamehameha Schools, 2014).

The overwhelming majority of Native Hawaiians in the University of Hawai'i system attend one of the seven community colleges. There are more Native Hawaiians at each community college respectively than at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and at the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa has more Native Hawaiians enrolled than any other University of Hawai'i system campus, but that campus also has over 20,000 students, many more programs, including graduate and professional degrees. With enrollment at just under 8,000, Leeward Community College only has approximately 600 Native Hawaiian students less than the flagship institution, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

At the University of Hawai'i Community Colleges, Native Hawaiian students have a success gap of 6 percent when compared to the average. The success rate of Native Hawaiians (28.4) is even more pronounced, a gap of more than ten percentage points, when comparing against Filipino (41.9) and Japanese (43.8) students (University of Hawai'i, 2012).

At the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, the success rates are similar. Only 6 percent of Native Hawaiians complete a 4-year degree in 4 years, half the rate of the institutional average (12%). Moreover, nearly half of the Native Hawaiian students who enter the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa as first-year students drop out or stop out (University of Hawai'i, 2012).

One challenge that Native students face is "cultural discontinuity." Agbo (2001) explains that indigenous groups experience reality in a completely different way than the dominant culture. This discontinuity between home and school can have a negative impact on academic achievement (Lovelace & Wheeler, 2006). Creighton (2007) argues that low academic achievement of Native American students is not necessarily due to an "inability to adjust, to

genetic inferiority, cultural impoverishment, or cultural differences, but lie in cultural discontinuity" (p. 6). The low achievement of Native American students may be attributed to the way in which the American educational system is constructed (Creighton, 2007). The worldview and experiences that native students acquire through their own culture and language do not align with Western school systems regarding routine, concepts of space and time, discrepancies in the curriculum, and the discipline system, which often results in lower educational achievement (Hawthorne, 1967).

According to Oliveira (2008), four areas help to promote Native Hawaiian student success in higher education: parent encouragement, high school experience, financial aid, and a Hawaiian sense of belonging (p. 36). Of these four areas, Oliveira found that financial aid was the most likely predictor of bachelor's degree completion. Oliveira (2008) found that "financial aid from Kamehameha Schools greatly increases the likelihood of Bachelor's degree completion by 14 percent" (p. 74).

In contrast to the idea of "cultural discontinuity," a Hawaiian sense of belonging did not prove to be a strong predictor of college success. Oliveira (2008) did explain that this finding may have been affected by the fact that many participants in the study were attending colleges throughout the continental United States, where a Hawaiian sense of belonging would not be logical or of high priority.

Hokoana (2010) found that at a small community college on Oʻahu, Native Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians faced similar barriers to college success. Differences were more pronounced when it came to socioeconomic status rather than their cultural background. Hokoana (2010) noted that students that received the Federal Pell Grant, a government subsidy for students with

financial need, reported more frequently that financial issues and family obligations were barriers to college than non-recipients of the grant.

Also in Hokoana's (2010) research, he found that there were no significant differences between Native Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians regarding help-seeking behaviors and resources. However, there was a significant difference found in help-seeking behaviors and resources when comparing students who received Pell Grant and those who did not. The students who received the Pell Grant were more likely to seek assistance from financial aid and student support services than non-recipients of the Pell Grant.

Hokoana (2010) found that Native Hawaiians believed more often than non-Hawaiians that programs that integrated their culture into the pedagogy would assist them better. He also found that Native Hawaiian students, over non-Hawaiian students, thought that learning about their culture would also assist in their success and believed that culture is an important determinant of college success.

In summary, males are enrolling and succeeding in college at lower rates than their female counterparts. This disparity may be the result of multiple factors that are associated with their gender, including academic preparation, race and ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Minority males pursue college at lower rates than their White and Asian counterparts. This trend is consistent for Native Hawaiian males. In Hawaiʻi, Native Hawaiian males from disadvantaged backgrounds pursue higher education at the lowest rates in the state (Hawaiʻi P-20, 2015). This statistic guided this study as I tried to gather a better understanding of the few Native Hawaiian males from disadvantaged backgrounds that were currently enrolled at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu.

In the next section of this chapter, I will critique three Western binaries beginning with a discussion of Native Hawaiian masculinities.

Western Binaries

Native Hawaiian Masculinities. Some of the Native Hawaiian scholars who have written about masculinity and male identity discuss the "emasculation of the Hawaiian male" (Tengan, 2008a). This definition of emasculation is seen as the result of colonialism and modernity through "loss of land, tradition, authenticity, culture, and power" (Tengan, 2008a, p. 8). Hawai'i is eroticized and feminized, most notably, in the tourism industry. Hula girls are most often the image associated with Hawai'i, while Native Hawaiian men are out of sight, relegated to the inferior roles, the buffoon, and or portrayed as a "boy toy" whose physical and sexual prowess promote the erotization of the islands (Tengan, 2008a).

The narrative about this population is very similar to other native men who have been colonized. Most common narratives include the inability to thrive in the modern world, often "trapped in a cycle of substance abuse, violence, and criminal activity" (Tengan, 2008a, p. 9).

In traditional times, the gendered roles were very distinct and specific. Young boys would transition from the Hale Aina (women and children's eating house) to the Hale Mua (men's house) usually between the ages of six and eight. The first tying on of the malo (loincloth) was a rite of passage into manhood for a young Hawaiian boy and the first of many lessons that he would learn in the Hale Mua.

Not only did men prepare the food for everyone at the Hale Mua, they also ate there (separate from the women), worshiped there, and taught and learned there about fatherhood, husbandry, warrior-hood, and life skills. Tengan (2008a) writes, "It's the place where the skills,

the moʻolelo and the kuleana of the family and community were instilled into young boys; they had to learn about our role in society first as young boys, then ʻōpio, then mākua status.

Tengan (2002) writes about the effects that Western contact and colonization has had on indigenous men -- marginalization, loss of land and economic and cultural assets, the replacement of traditional beliefs and customs, and deterioration of traditional structures of leadership and community. In multiple reports on indigenous community health, these mechanisms of colonization have contributed to the social issues that haunt many native men, including lower academic achievement and unemployment, substance abuse, violence, poverty, crime, and incarceration. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (2017 & 2018) recently released reports on the health and well-being of Native Hawaiian men (*Kānehōʻālani: Transforming the Health of Native Hawaiian Men*) and Native Hawaiian women (*Haumea: Transforming the Health of Native Hawaiian Women and Empowering Wāhine Well-Being*) In *Kānehōʻālani* (OHA, 2017), it is reported that "Native Hawaiians were over-represented in Hawaii's prison population. While Native Hawaiian men accounted for 17.7% of the total adult population in Hawaiʻi, they were 37% of the male prison population" (p. 32). When compared to other groups in Hawaiʻi, Native Hawaiian men participate at higher rates in risky lifestyle behaviors, including smoking and e-cigarettes, binge drinking, heavy alcohol consumption, and drunk driving (OHA, 2017).

Tengan (2008a) observes that there is a new model for warrior masculinity, one that is being constructed as an ideal to strive for in relation to rebuilding and reclaiming central components of Native Hawaiian culture and wellbeing, specifically ʻohana (family, including extended), ʻāina (land, earth, "that which feeds"), and lāhui (people, nation, collective). Tengan (2008a) describes this new-old Hawaiian masculinity as:

Strong, healthy, heterosexual, working- or middle-class, between twenty and fifty

years old, possessing "local" Hawaiian sensibilities, styles, and looks, educated

and knowledgeable in some cultural practice, nonviolent to women and children,

responsibly providing for one's family, respectful of one's elders, having a

tangible relationship with the land and sea, exhibiting spiritual facilities and

mana, courageous and ready to fight for the people -- a modern day warrior chief

(p. 11).

Reconnecting with ʻāina, tradition, and language may create and strengthen identity and

authenticity, reversing the effects of Western contact and colonization and ultimately

result in better social statistics for Native Hawaiians.

In this next section, I will critique the relationship between the English language

and ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi (Native Hawaiian language) as a larger discussion about the impact

of colonization on education in Hawaiʻi. One of the more powerful mechanisms of

colonization is the changing of the language of the colonized to that of the colonizer. As

in other colonized places around the world, mastery and competence of the colonizer's

language becomes a measure of intelligence and success. Reflecting on his experience

growing up in colonized Kenya, Wa Thiongʻo (1986) writes, "English became the

measure of intelligence and ability…[it] became *the* main determinant of a child's

progress up the ladder of formal education" (p.12). The prioritization of English over

ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi since the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom has not only "muted

(Native Hawaiian) voices and made them feel inferior" (Kahumoku, 2003, p. 165), but

has caused cultural alienation, manifesting itself in dismal education statistics,

overrepresentation in prisons, and some of the worst health statistics in the state (Hawkins, 1999; OHA, 2017).

History of Hawaiʻi and Its Effect on Education. The history of Hawaiʻi is not unlike other occupied and "colonized" independent states. Before White European contact and the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, Native Hawaiians thrived in their island kingdom through a long tradition of valuing formal learning and education and participating in a complex society that supported a population similar to current census numbers. The colonization process post-Western-contact of 1778 resulted in a foreign political system that eventually overturned the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893. The transition from Hawaiian Monarchy to the Provisional Government and eventually the Republic of Hawaii resulted in the 1896 ban of Native Hawaiian language in both public and private schools. This formal ban on the Hawaiian language would severely impact Native Hawaiian cultural practices, knowledge, and identity for the following four generations. Monumental policy changes effectively replaced the native land tenure system as well as the educational system.

In partnership with Western missionaries, Native Hawaiians built a national school system that thrived under a Native-led government. Goodyear-Kaʻōpua (2013, pp.14-15) writes about the critical role that Native Hawaiian leaders and teachers had in the achievements of literacy and the establishment of a public school system in the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi. Literacy rates for Native Hawaiians climbed from nearly zero to some of the highest around the world. Lind (1980) explains that by 1896, 84% of Hawaiians and 91.2% of Part Hawaiians over the age of six were literate. In 1910, those numbers increased to 95.3% and 98.6% respectively (Lind, 1980). Compulsory education at the elementary level began as early as 1842 in the Hawaiian Kingdom, ten years before any state in the U.S. enacted a law.

Competing interests in the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi's future attempted to influence the purpose of the nation's public schools. White businessmen were interested in using schools, guided by Christian values, as instruments to assimilate Native Hawaiian children, to sort and segregate citizen-subjects for a plantation society, and transition from traditional family living and natural resource management to a capitalist economy (Goodyear-Kaʻōpua, 2013). In contrast, Native Hawaiian leaders were trying to separate schools from the church affiliations, promoted Hawaiian language literacy, and increased funding for "common" school that served working-class Hawaiian and Asian students (Goodyear-Kaʻōpua, 2013).

In 1896, the Republic of Hawaiʻi made English the official language of the public school system. These political changes that impacted everything from land use and tenure to education and identity quickly eroded much of the hope for Hawaiian sovereignty and self-determination (Benham & Heck, 1998; Kahumoku, 2003). Following colonization and occupation, there has been a disconnect between Native Hawaiians and the Western educational system. Benham & Heck (1998) explain,

> The result of prolonged contact with foreign values and government has been perhaps most devastating. Western domination has largely stripped us of our language, customs, social position, self-governance, and cultural identity. In education, we have often been denied equal access to quality schools and, therefore, more promising economic and social status. (pp. 3-4)

Western colonization and occupation have significantly impacted the well-being of the Native Hawaiian people through the loss of sovereignty, loss of land, and loss of language and identity.

Māori educator and scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) acknowledges that indigenous communities continue to have mixed feelings about the role of Western education and of those

educated through western universities (Smith, 2012). Perhaps some of the sentiment that Smith references will be revealed in the final section of this chapter where I will critique the binary of Western/Indigenous education, beginning with native epistemologies.

Native Epistemology and Pedagogy. Education has always been extremely important to and valued by the Hawaiian people as evident in a motto of King Kamehameha III, Kauikeaouli*, "He aupuni palapala koʻu; o ke kanaka pono ʻoia koʻu kanaka"* (Pukui, 1983). This ʻōlelo noʻeau (traditional Hawaiian proverb) translates to "Mine is the kingdom of education; the righteous man is my man" (Pukui, 1983).

Effective learning for many native peoples happens through ways that are not practiced regularly in Western educational settings. This misalignment is palpable in the educational statistics of native peoples who have been colonized and educated though Western systems. In *Nānā I Ke Kumu: Look to the Source Volume II* (2001) Pukui, Haertig, and Lee assert that "Hawaiians, once masters of their honored crafts, poets and wits in their own language, gave way to generations discouraged and embarrassed in school systems designed by and for Western culture" (p. 232).

Differing philosophical tenets between Western and Indigenous educational systems engenders how each approaches epistemology, pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment. A major distinction between Western and Native Hawaiian systems is how each understands and interacts with the natural world (Lemus, Seraphin, Coopersmith, & Correa, 2014). In the Western system, elements that are physically tangible or those that can be measured or manipulated are considered. In contrast, the Native Hawaiian system considers both physical and metaphysical phenomena as valid (Kanahele, 1978).

Native Hawaiian scholar Manulani Meyer (1998) explains that Hawaiian ways of knowing are not separate from spirituality, place, the senses, relationships, utility, language, and the mind-body connection. Reflecting on the wisdom of 20 Native Hawaiian mentors, Meyer (1998) concludes,

> Can one really understand and *experience* Hawaiian culture, in a Hawaiian epistemological sense in a *classroom*? Schools represented a place where <u>information</u> was gathered and <u>information</u> was processed. It was seen as an important aspect of quality education, but it was not considered part of the structure of *Hawaiian ways of knowing*. That came elsewhere. Sites of practice, where the product, process *and* context were Hawaiian—that was where both information and practice synergized and strengthened the threads of cultural continuity. Information that held the context of our natural world, the balance of morality, the cadence of a more organic system—this was *not* found in a mainstream school setting. (p. 143)

Not only have the cultural histories and practices of native students been systemically left out of Western curricula, but perhaps even more impactful on the achievement gap for native learners is the absence of native ways of knowing in formal educational settings, pedagogy, and assessment.

Native American epistemology is ethically informed, considers all experiential information valuable, and requires a mutual respect for all things.   In his book *Spirit and Reason: The Vine Deloria, Jr. Reader* (1999) Deloria explains, "The real interest of the old Indians was not to find the abstract structure of physical reality but rather to find the proper road along which, for the duration of a person's life, individuals were supposed to walk" (p.46). According to Deloria (1999), "Indians believe that everything that humans experience has value,

and instructs us in some aspect of life" and that "we cannot misexperience anything; we can only misinterpret what we experience" (pp. 45-46).

Meyer (1998) writes, "Hawaiian epistemology is endemic to place, specific to genealogy, unique to the hopes of passed relatives, and alive within the practices of Hawaiians today" (p. 149). The "cultural discontinuity" (Agbo, 2001) of native learners and Western learning systems could be contributing to the lower success rates of native students. McAlpine and Crago (1995) assert that "if teachers come from cultures where the communication patterns are very different from those of their students and the teachers do not modify their interactions, children will find it more difficult to participate in classroom structures and succeed" (p.404).

The ʻōlelo noʻeau (traditional Hawaiian proverb) "Nānā ka maka, hoʻolohe ka pepeiao, paʻa ka waha, hana ka lima" (Observe with the eyes, listen with the ears, don't talk, work with the hands) (Pukui, 1983) is the basic concept of traditional pedagogy. In a report titled *Nā Lau Lama Community Report* it states, "In traditional Hawaiian pedagogy, learning is experiential and relies on focused observation and extensive practice that increases in complexity under the guidance of kuaʻana, mākua, kūpuna, kumu, loea, and/or kāhuna (older siblings, parents, grandparents, teachers, skilled practitioners, and/or experts)" (Kamehameha, n.d).

Another Native Hawaiian scholar, Pua Kanahele, has also researched Hawaiian knowledge systems. Papakū Makawalu is an abstract concept for Hawaiian epistemology, pedagogy, assessment, a "program, lifestyle, philosophy…from a different time, different era…a Hawaiian method of studying and understanding the universe" (Kanahele, 2009). Taken from 13th paukū (verse) of the two thousand-line cosmogonic genealogical chant *Kumulipo*, the concept Papakū Makawalu refers to the organization and categorization of the natural world that

signifies "the dynamic Hawaiian worldview of the physical, intellectual and spiritual foundations from which life cycles emerge" (Edith Kanakaʻole Foundation, 2004, para. 2).

The Western paradigm of education values and validates the education one receives in a school setting and considers education outside of this setting as informal and invalid. Indigenous education is often considered "informal" from a Western perspective. This dichotomy perpetuates the unequal power within education and the continued marginalization and control of minority groups (Burns, 2001).

Coombs, Prosser, and Ahmed (1973) define formal education as, "the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded 'education system', running from primary school through the university and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialised programmes and institutions for full-time technical and professional training" (p. 10). In contrast, informal education is a lifelong process where the learner acquires attitudes, values, skills, and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences from the environment (Coombs et al., 1973). The National Science Foundation (1997) described informal education as

> Learning activities that are voluntary and self-directed, life-long, and motivated mainly by intrinsic interests, curiosity, exploration, manipulation, fantasy, task completion, and social interaction. Informal learning occurs in an out-of-school setting and can be linear or non-linear and often is self-paced and visual- or object-oriented. It provides an experiential base and motivation for further activity and learning. (para. 3)

Indigenous peoples have used advanced educational systems for thousands of years, and the absence of its pedagogy in contemporary educational systems may be contributing to the lower rates of academic success for Indigenous learners and their continued marginalization. George Burns (2001) wrote, "The dichotomy in formal and informal education is also a dichotomy in

social power relations. Both exist as dichotomies of Aboriginal and white western world views; dichotomies which are the result of the hegemonic forces of Eurocentricity" (p. 3).

While there is some overlap of the knowledge systems, there is an entire aspect of Indigenous systems that is dismissed, undervalued, and forgotten in Western practices. In native systems, elements associated with the metaphysical systems were as valuable and valid as those associated with the physical.

Native Curriculum and Content. In *For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonization Handbook*, Wilson and Yellow Bird (2005) argue that "the US educational system has been one of the most hostile and oppressive aspects of colonialism" (p. 16). Benham and Heck (1998) maintain that the curriculum in the Western school system implemented in Hawai'i focused on Western culture while simultaneously devaluing Native Hawaiian culture. The replacement of "Native ways and Native thinking with foreign ontologies" (Benham & Heck, 1998, p. 32) is standard procedure in the colonization of Native peoples.

In *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (1986) Wa Thiong'o argues that "language carries culture, and culture carries…the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world" (p. 16). Changing the language and content of "formal" education for native students has caused colonial alienation, a disassociation from their natural and social environment and an association of their native language with "low status, humiliation, corporal punishment, slow-footed intelligence and ability or downright stupidity, non-intelligibility and barbarism" (Wa Thiong'o, 1986, p. 18).

The modus operandi of colonization is what Wa Thiong'o (1986) describes as the "cultural bomb" and it is disastrous, annihilating "a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and

ultimately in themselves, [making] them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement …[and] imperialism…as the cure (p. 3). Supplanting native language (and culture) with the colonizer's language (and culture) takes natives further and further from themselves to other selves, from their world to other worlds (Wa Thiongʻo, 1986).

Relevant educational environments that are reflective of student realities, background, and culture, have proved beneficial (Kanaʻiaupuni, Ledward, & Jensen, 2010; Goodyear-Kaʻōpua, 2013). Studies (Christman, Guillory, Fairbanks, & Gonzalez, 2008; Kaiwi & Kahumoku 2006; Kanaʻiaupuni 2007) have found that a strong cultural and ethnic identity mitigates "negative experiences, increasing self-confidence, self-esteem, and resiliency among both children and adults" (Kanaʻiaupuni et al., 2010, p. 3).

Culturally-relevant educational environments include place-based (ʻāina-based) and project-based teaching and learning that integrates culture, language, community, and authentic experiences like outdoor learning laboratories in the natural environment (Kanaʻiaupuni et al., 2010). The curriculum provides opportunities for students to connect to their ʻāina (land), wahi (place), and kaiāulu (community) "that nourishes spiritual, physical, and educational well-being" (Kanaʻiaupuni et al., 2010, p. 3). Additionally, this connection to the curriculum, their place, and their community establishes a sense of kuleana (responsibility), resulting in higher levels of engagement (attendance, timely completion, postsecondary aspirations) (Kanaʻiaupuni et al., 2010).

Native Assessment. The incongruence between the Western and Indigenous educational systems continues into the area of assessment. Western assessment focuses on subjective data, hard evidence, elements that are measurable, malleable, and hypothesis-testable. From the native perspective, this approach dismisses valid metaphysical data that can be just as important and

impactful. Assessment in the traditional Hawaiian context values the metaphysical "dimension of spirituality…and the appropriateness of the nature, demeanor, and disposition of the learner in relation to the task…measured internally, in the naʻau, spirituality adds a deeper level of meaning to the learning process" (Kamehameha Schools, n.d., p. 38).

Native Hawaiian assessment is formative, requiring the learner to internalize and apply the criteria for excellence in both process and product (Kamehameha Schools, n.d.). It is a strengths-based approach that emphasizes the abilities of the leaner rather than their deficiencies and hones in on the individual learner's zone for optimal learning, prioritizing individual growth and internalized standards of excellence (Kamehameha, n.d.).

Indigenous approaches to assessment seek to deepen "the view of the whole student and the holistic student experience into one of a whole community, widening the assessment cycle to overlapping spheres of influence that incorporate, rather than reject, the significance of all parts of our external and internal worlds" (Endersby, 2015). This approach highlights the importance of community, acknowledges the interconnectedness of all things, and promotes an ethos of responsibility and accountability for the betterment of all. Palmer (2014) asserts that the "national obsession with quantifiable assessments of mental proficiency overshadows other conceptions of educational excellence—namely, high-ordered analytical thinking, self-actualization, and social responsibility, which benefit society in sundry and immense ways" (p. 28).

The Native Hawaiian concept of Makawalu (having eight eyes) is one form of analysis and assessment. Kaiwi and Kahumoku (2006) state that "this culturally relevant model encourages teachers and students to venture beyond factual, historical, chronological, and often

disconnected, disjointed approaches to the analysis," acknowledging and validating "Kanaka Maoli epistemology, axiology, and ontology" (p. 184).

A Native Hawaiian working group on reports that indigenized accountability and assessment of Native Hawaiian learners that is fair and effective requires the use of "tools and methods that reflect the value systems, goals, and traditional practices and knowledge of our communities" (Kamehameha Schools, n.d.).

Summary

The higher education gender gap exists and is more pronounced among minority students. The gender gap increases to some of the highest rates in the US for Native Hawaiian students. It widens even further for Native Hawaiian students from the Waiʻanae Coast, and then again when looking at the local university (University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu).

The overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom and colonization of Hawaiʻi has had tremendous effects on the education of Native Hawaiian students. Epistemological, ontological, axiological differences between the two cultures (Hawaiian and Western) have resulted in contrasting approaches to pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment. The transition into a Western education system has been problematic for most, and tragic for many. Even after a century, Native Hawaiians continue to occupy the lower stations of educational statistics at every level.

Over the span of the educational pipeline, the misalignment of native learners and the Western educational system have translated to higher attrition rates, lower graduation rates, and lower college enrollment. Compared to non-Native Hawaiians, Native Hawaiians transition from middle school to high school at lower rates, are retained more often, less likely to graduate from high school, to enroll in college, and to complete a bachelor's degree (Benham, 2006). In 2003,

18% of all Native Hawaiians in the Hawaiʻi public school system received special education services, compared to 11% of non-Hawaiians in the same system.

At the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa, Native Hawaiian retention and graduation rates are lower than that of non-Hawaiian students (Balutski & Wright, 2012). Native Hawaiians are retained at about five percentage points less than non-Native Hawaiians. On-time graduation rates for all are on the lower side, but Native Hawaiians that graduate within four years (6.6%) only account for half of the percentage of non-Native Hawaiians (12%). The gap widens when comparing the graduation rates within six years, where Native Hawaiians are at 42.1% and non-Native Hawaiians at 53.8% (Balutski & Wright, 2012).

Although educational statistics for Native Hawaiians are lagging behind non-Native Hawaiians, there has been some progress towards closing the gap. Enrollment, retention, and graduation for Native Hawaiians have all seen positive trends over the last decade.

As mentioned in the introduction, Native Hawaiian male college-going rates are among the lowest in the state and lag significantly behind their female counterparts. Without support, Native Hawaiian males may continue to face obstacles that inhibit their college aspirations and limit their enrollment in higher education institutions.

The purpose of this study is to deepen understanding of the factors that influence Native Hawaiian males' decisions to pursue higher education in order to develop strategies to increase Hawaiian male entry and persistence in obtaining a higher education degree. Specifically, I am interested in the influencing factors for low-income, first-generation, Native Hawaiian males from Waiʻanae coast of Oʻahu educated through the public school system. This study seeks to understand the interplay of masculinity and education, how each influences the other, what

external factors influence their Native Hawaiian male ideas of masculinity and education, and how hegemonic masculinity affects their decision to pursue higher education.

In the following chapter, the qualitative methodology used for this study will be explained. The research questions for this study focused on influencing factors for low income, first-generation Native Hawaiian males from the Waiʻanae coast of Oʻahu, to pursue higher education, including the role that gender and ethnicity plays in Native Hawaiian males' aspirations for college.

The use of and critique of hegemonic masculinities within the factors of ʻohana, engagement, and ethnicity is used to analyze the data gathered through semi-structured interviews.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the purpose and design of the study, including the research questions, research approach, methods for data collection and analysis, sampling strategies, participant criteria, institution information, interview questions, and ethical considerations.

The primary purpose of this study is to deepen understanding of the factors that influence a Native Hawaiian male's decision to pursue higher education. It is also to understand the interplay of masculinities and ethnicity on their educational experience and aspirations.

The secondary purpose of this study is to contribute to the body of knowledge regarding recruitment, retention, and success of indigenous and minority males. In exploring these factors, this study seeks to provide insight for educators and policymakers to address institutional and student needs to support the success of Native Hawaiian males and males from other underrepresented populations.

The following research questions were explored in this study:

1. What are the factors that influence, low income, first-generation Native Hawaiian male from the Waiʻanae coast of Oʻahu, decision to pursue higher education?

2. What role does gender play in a Waiʻanae coast Native Hawaiian male's educational pathway?

3. What role does ethnicity play in a Waiʻanae coast Native Hawaiian male's educational pathway?

Research Design and Data Collection

In an effort to understand the factors that influence a Native Hawaiian male's decision to pursue higher education, a qualitative study was conducted for collecting data. A qualitative approach paired with an interpretive analysis using hegemonic masculinities (Connell, 2005) and

Indigenous and Oceanic masculinities (Anderson & Innes, 2015; Jolly, 2005) as theoretical

lenses were used to uncover how ethnicity and gender performance and (lack of) social power

informed the career and educational pathways for these Native Hawaiian males from the

Wai'anae coast.

  Qualitative Research. A qualitative approach provides the opportunity to generate rich,

detailed data, and way to keep the perspectives of the participants intact and provide multiple

contexts for understanding the phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). This approach is especially

important for this particular group of individuals who usually have multiple identities and

demographics that are often associated with challenges and may include their socioeconomic

status, race and ethnicity, geography, gender, sexual orientation, and others. A qualitative

approach should allow for a better understanding of the intersectionality of gender, race, and

class for Native Hawaiian males as it relates to masculinity and education.

  Participant Selection. For this study, I wanted to focus on Native Hawaiian male

graduates of Wai'anae Coast public high schools. For this reason, purposeful sampling technique

was employed to acquire this specific demographic of college student. Most qualitative research

uses purposeful sampling of a homogenous group of participants (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996).

The participants were selected from the case study institution, the University of Hawai'i – West

O'ahu.

  As a Student Affairs professional, I was involved with different programs that targeted

this population, including a summer bridge program that recruited from coastline high schools

(Wai'anae High School, Kamaile Academy, and Nānākuli High and Intermediate School). In

casual conversation with program participants, I was able to identify potential study participants

who met the criteria - Native Hawaiian, graduates of the public school system on the Wai'anae

coast, first-generation, low-income, and male. This selected sample is homogeneous because of the shared traits between the participants (Creswell, 2008).

After verbal commitments, an email was sent to each potential participant with more information about the study and their participation. I sought to acquire six participants but was only able to secure four participants. Those that declined to participate did not share why they were not interested. This challenge of securing more than four is in itself indicative of the phenomenon that is lower enrollment and persistence of Native Hawaiian males and the importance of this study.

Case Study Institution. The University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu was founded in 1976 and is one of three universities in the University of Hawai'i system, which includes a total of ten college campuses. The university is the smallest in the University of Hawai'i system, at only 2,800 students and approximately 120 faculty members. Unlike most universities, there are no colleges or schools at the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu, nor any graduate programs. Five divisions house six majors and 32 different concentrations between them. The University focuses on professional and applied fields of study but does have a Hawaiian-Pacific Studies concentration within the Humanities division. There are also two Title III grants that provide programming that supports the high number of Native students that are served at this institution.

The service area of the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu includes the surrounding Kapolei area, 'Ewa, Waipahu, Pearl City, parts of the North Shore, and the Wai'anae Coast. The area that most University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu students come from is Honolulu, followed by Kapolei, 'Ewa, and Waipahu.

Of the 2,836 students enrolled in fall 2016 in degree programs, 29% are self-identified as Native Hawaiian or Part Native Hawaiian. Only 11% of all Native Hawaiian students enrolled at

the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu in the fall 2016 semester graduated from Waiʻanae Coast public high schools. Sixty-five percent of the Native Hawaiians come from Hawaiʻi public schools or Adult Education programs. The school that graduated the largest number of Native Hawaiian University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu students was Kamehameha Kapālama campus at 113 (14%). The next three schools are Waiʻanae High School at 53 (6.5%), then Mililani High School at 50 (6.1%), and Kapolei High School at 45 (5.5%). Thirty-five percent of all the Native Hawaiians graduated from independent schools or schools outside of Hawaiʻi. Of all the Native Hawaiians, 18 to 24 years of age, with Waiʻanae addresses, only 48% percent graduated from Waiʻanae Coast public high schools.

Participant Pool

There were a total of four participants in this study. The purposeful sampling criteria for the participants included being male, Native Hawaiian, resident of the Waiʻanae Coast, graduate of an area public high school (Waiʻanae High School, Kamaile Academy Public Charter School, of Nānākuli High and Intermediate School), low-income, first-generation college student, traditional age (18-24 years of age), and currently enrolled at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu.

Finding willing participants that met each of these requirements was very challenging. At the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu, where the student body is nearly 2,800, there were hardly any students that fit these criteria. The reason for such limiting criteria for this study is because that is the population that is arguably one of the least represented groups in institutions of higher education.

Although each participant was Native Hawaiian and lived on the Waiʻanae Coast, not every participant met all the criteria. Three of the four participants did attend and graduate from

the State of Hawaiʻi Department of Education Waiʻanae Complex high schools, one graduated from Waiʻanae High School, and two graduated from Nānākuli High and Intermediate School.

Two of the four participants did receive the Federal Pell Grant, which is usually an indicator that their family could contribute little to no financial support to their college-aged child. Although the other two participants did not receive Federal student aid, this should not suggest that they were not eligible. Many students who qualify for Federal student aid often do not complete the application due to a handful of reasons, including unfamiliarity with the process, the need to have parents' tax information, they assume that they do not qualify, and other reasons.

One participant did not meet the first-generation criterion due to his mother finishing a bachelor's degree at the same time he was initially approached to participate. However, due to the challenges of finding others that met the criteria, it was decided that this particular participant continue with the study.

Another participant also did not meet every criterion initially set. This participant did not graduate from one of the three public high schools on the Waiʻanae Coast nor lived on the Waiʻanae Coast for the entirety of his childhood. Instead, he attended and graduated from a Hawaiian Language Immersion school located in Honolulu and lived on the coast during his primary school years. A factor that led to the decision to include this participant was that he did live on the Waiʻanae Coast for some time and continues to frequent the area. His father was born and raised on the Waiʻanae Coast. Lastly, the majority of the students that this participant went to primary and secondary school with were from the Waiʻanae Coast.

Qualitative Interviewing. I used semi-structured interviews and reserved the option for a follow-up interview should the data analysis call for such. Before the initial interview, each participant was emailed the consent form to participate in this study.

The interviews were conducted at a time and place that was convenient and comfortable for each participant. An informal approach was used to promote comfort and encourage easy conversation. Each interview went on for about an hour, and each participant was interviewed on two different occasions. These face-to-face interviews were also audio recorded for easy transcription.

After all the scheduled interviews and transcriptions were completed, and initial analysis was underway, I was able to speak with three of the participants individually. In these casual conversations, I was able to follow up on some of the answers they gave in their respective interviews.

My initial intent was to use a smaller sample size for this qualitative study, a target of six to eight participants. Purposeful sampling was employed to recruit participants for this study. Selection of individuals that will serve as "information-rich cases," will provide an opportunity for one to learn much about the issues of at the center of the purpose of the research (Patton, 2002). For this reason, I intended on recruiting participants of Native Hawaiian ancestry, between 18 and 24 years of age, low-income, first-generation, educated through the public school system on the Waiʻanae Coast, and current students at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu.

The four participants who I was able to secure did not meet every criterion of the purposeful sampling. All participants were of Native Hawaiian ancestry, between 18 and 24 years of age, first-generation, and educated through the public school system. However, three of

the four participants were low-income (received the Pell Grant). Three of the four participants

also attended public schools on the Waiʻanae Coast. All participants were also current students at

the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu at the time of the interviews.

Interview Questions. An interview protocol (see Appendix A) was used to guide the

questions but allowed for flexibility, comfort, and ease. The questions focused on the

participants' background, including family, mentors, educational experiences, goals and

aspirations, and other sources of influence. Additional questions focused on their college

experience, current sources of influence, and the various resources that are supporting their

college success. Questions about the participants' identities, specifically their cultural/ethnic

identity as well as their gender identity, were also asked during the interviews.

During the interviews, I used a tool to better understand their ideas of gender

performance and where they saw their own gender identity and in relation to others. The tool

used was basically the concept of a continuum; where on one extreme is the feminine and the

opposite end masculine. For easy plotting, I arbitrarily assigned the feminine extreme the value

of zero and the masculine extreme the value of one hundred. I asked each participant to plot

himself on the continuum, asked them to describe characteristics and behaviors of more

masculine and more feminine values, and also to plot others on the continuum.

Figure 1. Gender Continuum Tool

Feminine   **Masculine**

0   **100**

Methods of Data Analysis

Data collection and analysis is dynamic, free-flowing, and often times concurrent (Merriam, 1988; Creswell, 1994; Patton, 2002), beginning with the initial contact with the participants and continues throughout the writing process. Creswell (1994) refers to data analysis as "eclectic" and having no "right way." I used a free-flowing, concurrent method to the collection and analysis of the data. I collected data through the interview, did some preliminary analysis between interviews, reflected on their answers, followed up with the participants, and referred to the literature, often doing two or more of these things simultaneously.

I used an inductive approach, which allowed for themes to emerge and serve as a guide for my interpretation and meaning-making. Emerging themes may provide "rich and detailed insight into the micro and meso levels of intersubjective experience" (Williams, 2008, p. 248).

The data analysis for this research included engaging with the data starting with transcribing all interview recordings, followed by interactive readings and note-taking, and then "developing a general sense of the data, and then coding description and themes about the central phenomenon" (Creswell, 2004, p. 244).

All dialogue was imported into an Excel Spreadsheet for easy coding and sorting. Previous literature, keywords, and recurring phrases were used to aid in identifying key themes in motivating factors and influences, as well as persistence and college success. These included the participants' Native Hawaiian identities, their communities, and family members and family histories to name a few. Once themes were identified, they were organized and examined for regularities and irregularities, and connections were established.

Pseudonyms were used to protect the identities of the participants. All data was locked and password protected on my laptop. Immediately following the completion of this research, all data were completely destroyed.

Member checks were also employed in this study, which ensured that the participants' thoughts and words are accurately received. It also provided an opportunity for participants to redact or withdraw any information they may have communicated in their interviews.

The use of and critique of hegemonic masculinities within the influencing factors described by the participants is used to analyze the data gathered through semi-structured interviews.

Study Limitations/Strengths

The original purposive sample for this study targeted 18 to 24-year-old, low-income, first-generation Native Hawaiian males, educated through the public school system on the Waiʻanae Coast, and currently enrolled at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu. There were only a total of eight Native Hawaiian males currently enrolled at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu who were graduates of the public school system out on the Waiʻanae Coast. Two were above the age of forty. Three of the remaining six agreed to be in this study, two declined, and the last potential participant did not respond to any attempts at recruitment. The final participant did not graduate from one of the three target public high schools but did live for years on the Waiʻanae Coast.

Only two of the four participants received Federal Financial Aid. This does not automatically mean that the other two participants were not eligible, it could be that they just did not apply, which is often the case at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu.

Although low college enrollment is an issue for Native Hawaiian males in general, this study only looked at a very small cross-section of this group at the University. Despite the small number of participants, data gathered I suggest, still provides a rich context to deepen understanding about Native Hawaiian men and their aspirations for college.

I conducted two interviews with each participant. Each of those interviews only lasted a little over an hour. I also did impromptu follow up interviews with three of the four participants. These lasted only about half an hour. I believe a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences could have been discovered through additional interviews and group interviews.

I would suggest that all the participants seem to perform marginalized masculinity (Connell, 2005). This lack of diversity with participants could be a limitation within the study. With more diverse indicators of gender performance—those that would plot themselves at higher levels on the continuum, are less fluid, or more *complicit* masculinity (Jolly, 2008; Connell, 2005)—perhaps a better understanding of how gender affects the decision to pursue a college education might be achieved. The difficulty in finding a more diverse self-identified gender distribution at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu in itself may be telling of the importance of studying gender identity and college aspirations, enrollment, and success for Native Hawaiian males.

Although I used a gender scale very informally, a more reliable and validated gender scale tool, such as the Traditional Masculinity-Femininity (TMF) scale (Kachel, Steffens, & Niedlich, 2016), may have strengthened the study. Each participant had his own ideas of what masculinity is, and what it is not. There was not as much consistency between each participant's ideas and thoughts about gender as there could have been had a gender scale been used to provide points of reference.

Ethical Considerations

To reduce the possibility of risk to participants, a proposal for this research was submitted to the University of Hawaiʻi Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB approved this study to be completed.

While my roots in the Waiʻanae community do not extend many generations, my family has been living there as long as I have been alive, thirty-eight years. My parents moved out to Mākaha in 1979, the same year I was born. This is the community that raised me. This is the community that I have aloha for and care deeply about. Although this could be seen as a limitation, I suggest that my positionality is one of the strengths of this study. My questions, curiosities, and motivation for this study stem from my personal experiences and professional knowledge as a student affairs professional in Hawaiʻi and as a minority male who has successfully persisted and achieved a higher education degree.

As a Native Hawaiian male from Waiʻanae, I reflected on my positionality; how my own biases may misconstrue the data and represent the participants incorrectly. I strove to be cognizant of the participants' background, feelings, and experiences while data was collected as well as before, during, and after each interview. I knew that questions about their life, identity, and experiences could bring up emotions of joy and pain. .

After completing the interviews, data analysis, and writing, I used member checks to ensure the accuracy of the participant's voices and stories.

In the next chapter, the qualitative data gathered through interviews is analyzed and presented.

CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS

This chapter revisits the purpose of the study and presents participant profiles. Secondly, I address the influencing factors of participant's ʻohana (family), engagement with academics and curriculum, participation in the co-curricular aspects of school, and the friends that they kept to answer the research question: What are the factors that influence a Native Hawaiian male's decision to pursue higher education? Finally, I provide a more rigorous discussion of hegemonic masculinities in context of this study to answer: What role does gender play in a Native Hawaiian male's educational pathway? What role does ethnicity play in a Native Hawaiian male's educational pathway?

Statement of the Problem

Native Hawaiian males (and other Pacific Islander males) have the lowest enrollment rates of all the demographic groups in the State of Hawaiʻi (Hawaiʻi P-20 Partnerships for Education, 2015). These statistics reveal that Native Hawaiian males do not enjoy the benefits of higher education—higher individual earnings, lower incarceration rates, higher civic engagement, improved personal health, intergenerational benefits (Baum et al., 2013) at the levels consistent with Asian, White, and other ethnic groups.

Some scholars (O'Neil, 2008; Yavorsky, Buchmann, & Miles, 2015; Lloyd, 2014; Frank, Kehler, Lovell, & Davidson, 2003) have suggested that gender—specifically certain masculinities—may be affecting some boys negatively. For Native Hawaiian males, there may be multiple forces influencing their educational experiences and worldview, including hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005), Indigenous masculinities (Anderson & Innes, 2015), Oceanic masculinities (Jolly, 2008), and their ethnic identity and cultural practices.

The body of scholarship on males, minority males, higher education, and masculinity continues to grow. However, there are few studies, if any, explicitly focused on the interplay of ethnicity, gender, and higher education with Native Hawaiian males.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that influence Native Hawaiian males' decisions to pursue higher education. Specifically, I am interested in the influencing factors for low-income, first-generation, Native Hawaiian males from Waiʻanae educated through the public school system on the coast. This study seeks to understand the interplay of masculinity and education, how each influences the other, what external factors influence their ideas of masculinity and education, and how it affects their decision to pursue higher education.

Participant Profiles

Caleb. Caleb is a recent high school graduate and just finished his first semester of college. Caleb was born and raised on the Waiʻanae Coast, and has lived and continues to live with his parents in Nānākuli. Caleb is the second youngest of twelve children, of which eleven are male. His parents both work in the construction industry. His mother works for a construction supplier, and his father works in the electrical trade.

In early elementary, Caleb attended one of the Catholic private schools on Oʻahu. He then transitioned to Hālau Lōkahi, a Hawaiian culture-based public charter school in Kalihi. In the tenth grade, he enrolled at Nānākuli High and Intermediate School and stayed there until graduation. Caleb was a good student throughout primary and secondary school. He was engaged in the curriculum at the charter school, participated in student government, and played organized sports until high school. In high school, Caleb participated in other co-curricular activities like managing the wrestling team at Nānākuli High and Intermediate School.

Prior to his high school graduation, Caleb enrolled in the summer bridge program between the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu, Leeward Community College, and the three public high schools on the Waiʻanae Coast.

Kalani. Kalani is also a recent high school graduate and participant in the summer bridge program at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu. Like Caleb, Kalani was born and raised on the Waiʻanae Coast. He is an only child and lives with both his parents in Nānākuli. His mother works for a health insurance provider, and his father is a heavy equipment operator in the construction industry. His mother recently graduated with her bachelor's degree.

Kalani also attended a public charter school, located on the Waiʻanae Coast, for his primary and middle school years. After attending Ka Waihona o ka Naʻauao, Kalani transferred to a regular public school in his ninth grade year. At Waiʻanae High School, Kalani was involved with different sports, including football and cheerleading, as well as student government.

Kyle. Kyle was born and raised on the island of Hawaiʻi. He grew up in the foster care system and was raised primarily by his aunt, his father's sister, and her husband. While in high school, his aunt and uncle divorced, and in tenth grade, he and his sisters moved to Oʻahu with his aunt's ex-husband. His uncle works in the construction industry as a tile setter. Kyle graduated from Nānākuli High and Intermediate School. Kyle currently lives with the sister of his aunt's ex-husband in Nānākuli, with her two children. She is a college graduate and works as a teacher.

While at Nānākuli High and Intermediate School, Kyle was very engaged in sports and student government. He played soccer, baseball, bowling, golf, and also participated in community and individual sports like martial arts and hunting.

Kyle was a part of the first cohort for the summer bridge program at University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu. He is in his junior year at the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu and is scheduled to graduate in a year.

Kalama. Kalama currently lives in Aiea. Half of his upbringing was set in Wai'anae, where his family lived for some time. His father is from Wai'anae, and most of his father's family still lives out on the coast. Kalama is one of five children. His mother works in retail, and his father is in the construction industry.

Kalama is the youngest of his siblings. His parents have adopted the children of their friends who are not able to care for them at this time. Currently, he lives at home with his parents, two of his siblings, and five of his hānai (adopted) siblings.

Kalama attended Hawaiian immersion schools throughout both primary and secondary school. Kalama graduated from Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenue, one of the Department of Education's public schools that deliver instruction exclusively through the medium of Hawaiian language. He started at the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu as a freshman. Since the interview, Kalama has graduated with two bachelor's degrees (double major) and is currently working at the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu.

Kalama is technically not considered a first-generation college student as one of his grandmothers did complete a bachelor's degree. I argue that even though his paternal grandmother was a college graduate, his rearing was very similar to other first-generation students. Neither of his parents attended college. His father (whose mother was the college graduate) did not graduate from high school. Both of Kalama's parents have working-class occupations and none of his siblings attended college. In my estimation, it was as if he was a true first-generation college student.

Influencing Factors

Some of the stronger influences that the participants referred to in their interviews included their 'ohana (family), their engagement with academics and curriculum, their participation in the co-curricular aspects of school, and the friends that they kept.

'Ohana. Each participant talked about how different family members supported their education and encouraged them to pursue higher education. Some of the familial influence was direct encouragement through dialogue, and at other times, it was indirect through observations of actions and circumstance.

For working-class families, having a member acquire a higher educational degree is not only a point of pride, but also brings promise of economic success and upward social mobility. For Kalama, a college degree was not only encouraged by economic pressures, but also as a way to gain the knowledge and credentials to lift his community as his grandmother did.

Each of the participants had at least one father figure present throughout their childhood and upbringing. These men modeled characteristics that are associated with Native Hawaiian masculinity including loving, providing, feeding, caring, hard-working, and even hānai (adopting). Five siblings (children of family friends) were hānai by Kalama's father (and mother) while some of their own biological children were still school-aged, including Kalama. Kyle and his siblings were also hānai by his uncle and aunt (his father's sister and her husband).

Kyle shared that his aunt and uncle would check in with him daily regarding his homework and class assignments. This dialogue between him and his aunt and uncle continued throughout all of primary school. After his aunt and uncle divorced, his uncle moved to O'ahu and Kyle moved to O'ahu to live with his uncle while attending secondary school, and the

checking-in continued. The constant dialogue served as positive pressure to stay in school and to do well.

Kyle also talked about indirect motivation to pursue a "better life" through education. When asked what influenced his aspirations, Kyle shared "...the incidents that happen...like being put in foster care...and like my mom doing like a whole bunch of stupid drugs and stuff like that. It kind of was, just like motivation, to just not want to be there in my future. So, since a young age, I knew I wanted to go to college." Kyle made the connection at an early age that a college education would provide more opportunities and increased potential for a "better life."

Kyle talked about conversations he would have with his uncle when he was still in high school and how his uncle supported and encouraged him to pursue a college degree. His uncle had aspirations for him to earn a college degree so that he would be able to access higher level positions and make a "better life" for himself:

> Well, I know my uncle was really supportive about me getting into college
>
> because the place he works at now is like a tile place near the airport. And he has
>
> to wake up like super early to get there in time to beat like morning traffic out of
>
> the west side. I know he always talked about, like when I told him, "Oh, yeah, I
>
> think I'm going to go for business management." He was like,"Oh yeah, that's
>
> super good, like, I kind of want you to go to college so you can come out and be
>
> my manager you know." So it was always joking kine, like pushing, like make
>
> sure you go to college, so, you know, 'you do better than me in life' type of stuff.

For participant Caleb, his mother constantly told him to "Go to school, get good grades." Education was important to her, and she would remind him that "education will help you get a great job in the future." His father shared the same value of education as his mother. Referring to

college, his father said: "go get your education while you can...while you've got help from people [moral support from family members and technical support from summer bridge program staff]." Caleb shared that both parents believed that education would provide for a "better life."

Kalani shared that his mother was a significant influence on him regarding education and his decision to pursue higher education. His mother graduated with a college degree after he agreed to participate in this study. Although his mother consistently communicated the importance of education throughout his childhood and before her own college enrollment, her decision to pursue college and her progress as a non-traditional student has definitely had a positive effect on his perception of higher education and his confidence in completing a college degree of his own. In reflecting on his mother's educational journey, Kalani shared, "I guess it's never too late to go back to college. And I guess looking up to her and thinking, 'Oh, yeah, OK, if [she] can do it, and [she] being out of school for so long...I think she was top of her class or one of them, [then I can do it]."

Like the other participants, family support and encouragement was a significant influence on Kalama's decision to pursue higher education. His mother would constantly "drill into them" the importance of education. He shared that the strongest motivation for him to graduate from high school was his father because his father dropped out and did not finish high school.

Kalama shared that his strongest influence to pursue a higher education degree was his grandmother, who was a college graduate. He recognized that her college education was an important factor in her contributions to her family and the Hawaiian community. The impact that she has had, and the legacy she has left, encouraged him to finish a higher education degree and motivated him to use the knowledge gained from his college experience to have a positive impact on his family and community as his grandmother did many years before.

Kalama went on to say that another motivating factor for him to complete his degree was the struggles that he saw his parents go through trying to provide for him and his siblings. Kalama said, "I saw the kind of things my mom and dad had to do growing up, and like, they had to make sacrifices so that me and my siblings could have things. So that was always a defining factor for me." In the interview with Kalama, there was definitely a reference to higher education leading to better opportunities, including access to stable employment and higher earning potential.

All four participants spoke how their family members were critical in messaging the importance of education and higher education throughout their childhood. In every instance, education was promoted as a vehicle for upward social mobility and creating a better life for themselves.

Engagement. Another significant influence that has come from the interviews was the level of engagement with school and school-related activities that these participants revealed. Research has shown that engagement at the college level is a critical factor in the success of a learner. Scholars like Chickering (1987; 1993), Harper (2009), Harper et al. (2004, 2009); Kuh (1995, 2005), Pascarella et al. (1991, 1996), all reference engagement, both academic and social, as part of the success equation of college students that matriculate and graduate.

Vincent Tinto (1993) identified three main sources of college attrition: (1) difficulties adjusting to the academic rigor of college, (2) the student's failure to determine their educational and career goals, and (3) the student's failure to engage in the academic and social life of the institution.

According to Tinto's (1993) model, students need to be engaged formally and informally through the academic and social interactions of the institution. The formal interactions include

their experiences and engagement in class. Informal interactions are the student's engagements with their peer-group through extra- and co-curricular programming. Tinto (1993) states, "the more frequently they make contact with faculty and other students about learning issues, especially outside the class, the more students are likely to learn" (p. 69).

Kuh et al. (2005) write that student engagement leads to student success through two components: the time and effort students commit to their studies and other activities, and the way institutions support and provide these engagement activities.

Engagement in co-curricular and extracurricular activities can have a positive effect on academic achievement even at the primary and secondary education levels. In a study published in 1997 (Silliker, S. A., & Quirk, J. T.), extracurricular activity participation had a positive correlation with academic performance. In a previous study (Harvancik, M.J., & Golsan, G., 1986) a positive correlation between extracurricular activities and academic success was also found. However, the researchers did share that high school grades were self-reported and could have skewed the results.

Each participant shared various examples of how they were engaged in and out of the classroom. Three of the participants mentioned high levels of engagement with the curriculum at their Hawaiian culture and Hawaiian language based schools. All four participants played organized sports, and all four participated in student government in their primary and secondary school years.

Academics. All participants described themselves as "good" students in primary and secondary school. Each shared the grades he received which primarily consisted of As and Bs. It seemed like the motivation to do well for these students was more intrinsic and has proved to serve them well through grade school and into college.

Three of the participants (Kalani, Caleb, Kalama) talked about the relevance of the curriculum and how that contributed to their interest and engagement with the content and ultimately their success. All three of these participants attended schools where Hawaiian culture and language was the basis for their curriculum.

From early elementary through middle school, Kalani attended a Hawaiian culture-based public charter school on the Waiʻanae Coast. This culture-based curriculum provided relevancy and allowed him to engage with the lessons easily, "...from elementary to intermediate I was at Ka Waihona Public Charter School, it's kind of more modernized, but I learned a lot of our Hawaiian ancestry. You know the basic stuff, like, to the overthrow [of the Hawaiian Kingdom], and I come to realize that a lot of other schools don't teach their students that." He also referenced the rigor that he experienced at Ka Waihona:

> In fourth grade...we had this around the island trip. And I was assigned to talk
> about Nuʻuanu Pali so I had to learn a lot of...moʻolelo...and I had to share it with
> the class, so, the transition I guess the transition from being at Nānākuli
> Elementary to Ka Waihona was really crazy because it's more than just math,
> English and naptime or whatever.

The school's culture-based curriculum added depth to his learning and when contrasted against his previous experience at a general public school, was viewed as more challenging and engaging.

Caleb also attended a public charter school up until his first year of high school when he transitioned to Nānākuli High and Intermediate School. Caleb talked a little about his experience at the public charter school and the culture-based curriculum there:

I actually, ok, the first year I was kind of nervous because it's all these new

culture, this cultural thing coming in like I just came out of a religious school, and

now you're like learning all the opposite things that we told you. But then yeah, I

liked going to Hālau Lōkahi, because, like I've never really got to study anything

with my Polynesian culture, so it was really good there, and then I got to learn my

language and cultural stuff, like hula and moʻolelo, as far as that goes, for seven

years, which is really great.

Kalama attended and graduated from a Hawaiian language immersion public school. He

shared that he loved going to the language immersion school, "because...I got to see where I live

and I got to see Hawaiʻi in a different way...not [what] other people...would normally see it as...I

got to see Hawaiʻi as if nothing was here kind of a thing. And I loved it." Again, relevant place-

based/ʻāina-based curriculum that provided cultural continuity played a critical part in the

engagement of the student and his success.

Teachers and Classes. Only one participant mentioned teachers as having some sort of

influence on his educational and career pathway. Kyle shared how certain teachers would notice

where his strengths were and provided suggestions for potential pathways:

I never had like a straightforward pathway. I know in high school I was like

changing my mind every single quarter on what I wanted to be because other

teachers like we are good at math you should be this. Or I see you're kinda

interested in this, yeah you're right, I should definitely do that. All right. And then

like it wasn't until like senior in high school that I think I can go into business.

In the interviews with the other participants, none of them shared any dialogue with

teachers or counselors about their educational and career pathway. Perhaps there were

conversations and guidance with teachers and counselors, but not necessarily impactful enough to mention when asked about influences and aspirations.

Caleb did, however, share that one of his teachers, Kumu Hina, was very supportive of the students' different identities, creating a place for those that did not conform to the Western binary categorization of gender. Kumu Hina, a Native Hawaiian māhū (transgender woman), is an honored and respected teacher, cultural practitioner, and community leader. The film *Kumu Hina: A Place in the Middle* (Hamer, 2015), documents Kumu Hina Wong-Kalu's efforts to maintain Pacific Islander culture and values within a Westernized Hawaiʻi, including creating a place "in the middle" that Caleb referenced in his interview. The supportive environment created by Kumu Hina provided the comfort and safety that allowed Caleb and others to focus on other things such as academics and co-curricular activities.

This gender fluidity practiced by Caleb and his kumu embodies traditional ideas of balance and the recognition and acceptance that we all embody both masculine (Kū) and feminine (Hina) energies. This is a clear example of Oceanic masculinities and the loosening of the restrictive nature of Western hegemonic structures (Jolly, 2008).

Sports. As stated earlier, organized sports and student government were two extracurricular activities that tied all four participants' experiences together. Sports are activities commonly associated with masculinity, both in Western and the hybrid masculinities of Oceania (Jolly, 2008; Hokowhitu, 2008 & 2004; Diaz, 2002; Tengan, 2008a). Kyle played a variety of team sports and individual sports. In high school, he participated in track, cross-country running, soccer, volleyball, golf, and bowling. Outside of school he also participated in hunting and martial arts.

Kalani was also very involved in sports. He played football, baseball, and was also a part of the cheerleading squad. Caleb played soccer, basketball, and football. He also was a manager for the wrestling team. Kalama played volleyball, football, and paddled canoe.

In addition to promoting responsible social behaviors, confidence, health and fitness, and strong relationships with individuals and institutions, studies have shown a positive correlation between participation in organized sports and academic success (Ewing, Seefeldt, Brown, 1996). Braddock, Royster, Winfield, & Hawkins (1991) identified involvement in athletics and organized sports as "an instrumental mechanism" that promotes academic resilience and strengthens the relationship students have to their school and academic goals.

In a study on African American males in eighth grade, the researchers found that "sports participation is positively associated with...aspirations in high school to enroll in academic or college preparatory programs, to have definite plans to complete high school (interscholastic sports only), and to attend college (Hawkins & Mulkey, 2005, p. 84).

Student Government. Another activity that all four participants were involved in prior to college was student government. Kyle talked about his recent move from the island of Hawai'i to Nānākuli. His first friends were the students who caught the same bus as he did. After a while, they started hanging out after school and catching a later bus home. The hanging out after school eventually turned into something productive as they all joined student government.

Kalani joined student government in his senior year. He decided that he would not play football his senior year due to differences in the coaching staff and the direction the team was headed. With an open schedule now, he agreed when friends asked if he would join student government.

Caleb was also involved in student government as a public representative. He shared that his role was a liaison between the senators and the student body. He would relay information between the students and the governing members. Kalama was also involved in student government. His participation as a student representative was throughout his elementary school years.

Higher education scholars have found that what happens outside of the classroom, such as student government, can contribute to the positive outcomes of college (Astin, 1997; Astin 1993; Chickering & Riesser, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). However, these outcomes can vary depending on the level of engagement and the individual (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). The participants all shared that their experience in student government allowed them to build relationships with other students and staff, and ultimately provided for a stronger attachment to their respective schools.

Friends. Some of the participants talked about the impact that their friends have had on their decision to pursue higher education. Kyle shared that he and one of his closest friends were going to go to college. The decided early on that they would both go to the University of Hawai'i Maui College to study culinary arts and start a bakery together. He also mentioned that he and his soccer friends talked about someday going away and playing collegiate soccer together. This he said faded as they began to realize that their skill levels were probably not going to afford them much opportunity.

Of all the participants, Caleb had the strongest evidence of how friends can influence one's decision to pursue higher education. Caleb shared that there was one friend that he attended two different schools with prior to high school graduation. He and this particular friend both attended a Hawaiian culture-based public charter school in Honolulu for many years. They

both transferred to Nānākuli High and Intermediate School in their sophomore year. Not only were they in the same grade, they were in the same classes. Their close friendship allowed them to hold each other accountable when it came to completing homework and class assignments, reports, and studying for exams. They would encourage each other and push each other to do their best.

This encouragement and accountability continued throughout high school graduation and even into the summer bridge program that brought them into the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu. They still study together and have most of their college classes together. According to Kuh, Kinzie, and Buckley (2006), the pre-college experience, which includes family & peer support, is one of three main factors that affect student success. The relationship between Caleb and his friend has been mutually beneficial to their college success thus far.

Kalama talked about his two closest friends and how they approached their education. Kalama has been friends with one of the girls since primary school, and together they befriended the other female in secondary school. The three have been best friends since. Kalama shared that of the three, he was the most outspoken, and most engaged in academics and co-curricular activities. Only one friend chose to pursue a higher education degree, starting at a community college, but "flunked" out. She has since successfully completed a certified nursing assistant program as is currently working at a health clinic. The other friend chose to go straight into the workforce and is currently working in operations for a shipping company.

An interesting fact from the interviews is that each participant shared that their closest friends were females. This is an example of the *marginalized* masculinity (Connell, 2005) that these participants practiced. Males who perform *hegemonic* or *complicit* masculinities are usually found in male homosocial environments where non-masculine practices are denied and

"marginalized" (Connell, 2005; Demetriou, 2001). This practice of having mostly female friends is another example of fluid Oceanic masculinities and protest via the loosening of restrictive Western forms of hegemonic masculinity (Jolly, 2008). Perhaps these young men were able to pick up some of the behaviors and dispositions associated with female students in the classroom. Only two of the participants named another male as being among their circle of friends.

   Masculinity and 'Being a Man'. During the interviews with the participants, I asked specific questions about their ideas on masculinity, their identity as males, their thoughts of education, and how each influenced, the other and ultimately their decision to pursue higher education.

   One of the questions I asked of the participants is to define what masculinity meant to them. As expected, all of them shared the stereotypical ideas, Western hegemonic ideals, of masculinity, and also those associated with what Connell (2005) categorized as marginalized.

   Kyle's ideas of masculinity included physical size and strength, a care-free attitude, sports, tattoos, and traditionally male-dominated careers:

> Normally, I think of like the typical muscular person I picture them as an
> "orange", you know, you know they can just like talk to people well or just like
> interact with a bunch of people they're into football, I'm not into football. They
> might have worked construction, tattoos, or like a certain type of tattoos. And like
> the voice like, that uh, the tone, or like how deep their voice is...

Kyle also pointed out that masculinity and ideas about masculinity may be different when comparing two geographic locations that have demographic variance:

> Like masculinity in Waiʻanae could be something totally different to like
> downtown, or like, that side could be more like how muscular you are, like how

much tatts you have and stuff like that, like how big you walk, while like in

town, masculinity could be like defined more as like, like how successful you are

or more like how you carry yourself compared to like people who aren't.

The distinction between geographical masculinities that Kyle references here is tied to both race/ethnicity and class. Those in "town" are assumed to be of either Japanese or White ancestry, and from the middle/middle-upper class. According to Connell's (2005) concept, these men in "town" are performing *hegemonic* or *complicit* masculinities. The men in Waiʻanae are usually of Native Hawaiian decent and are working-class. Kyle's description of their masculinity performance echoes that of Connell's (2005) *marginalized* men who often protest the *hegemonic* by redefining masculinity through the magnification of physicality and toughness.

Kyle continued to describe masculine characteristics, "I think the main one that like most people can point out it's like the way they carry themselves or the way that they act towards other people. Yeah, the way that they act towards other people. It's a dead giveaway to how masculine they are."

For Kalani, masculinity is portrayed through physical strength, status, toughness and bravery, hardworking, and the determination to get things done. This industrious description is aligned with masculinities that Connell (2005) describes as *hegemonic* or *complicit*. Tengan (2008b) explains that the US government initially recruited Native Hawaiian men from Kamehameha Schools to inhabit the Equatorial Islands in the 1930s and 1940s. These young men were targeted for their discipline, obedience, and industriousness, expected as graduates of Kamehameha Schools (Tengan, 2008b), and which up until 2002 operated as a nationally recognized US military training school.

In speaking about being a man, Kalani said that it is usually someone who is "physically in shape, physically attractive….and the way they carry themselves (with confidence)." He also shared that for him, masculinity is problematic, especially when a male does not meet society's expectations and ideals of a "man." "Masculinity is just, I feel, it's a really...I think it's a problem...everybody wants a 'man' but...I don't know, I guess...it's just awkward."

Kalani went on to mention that "being a man" includes humility and caring about how one's family is doing. When asked to think of someone who meets his ideas of a "man," he shared this:

> Um, I think my grandpa, my dad's dad. Because, um, he's into his line of work, well not, not anymore, but as much as he was into his line of work with truck driving, he was very humble. He wasn't always about the...competition and stuff...he, like, whenever you would go over to their houses it was always, "Oh, how you doing?", "How you been?", "What's new?" It was just that kind of...and he's very strong in his...Mormon religion too, like, very strong.

The care and humility shown by Kalani's grandfather is an example of Native Hawaiian masculinity and its focus on family and collectivist approach to community wellbeing.

To Caleb, masculinity is physically demanding. When asked about the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about masculinity he said, "Ugh, WORK." He clarified his comment by implying that masculine males do physical work,

> I guess I just visualize like masculine males like, because like, I've never really seen one like in business. Like you know what I mean...they all mostly just go to construction, and at the early age and just start doing stuff like that. Like I never

really see one like, in an office, like you know just running a company kind of

thing. It's normally like Asians, or like just thinner males.

Again, here is an example of masculinity that is informed by ethnicity and class. As Okamura

(2008) observed in Hawaiʻi, Chinese-Americans and Japanese-Americans (along with Whites)

are the ethnic groups with higher occupational status and income. Caleb's association of office

(and professional) work (and those that often occupy those positions) as less masculine, is

evidence of the *marginalized* (Connell, 2005) masculinity that he was brought up around in

working-class Waiʻanae.

Caleb continued by saying that masculine males are "in charge of stuff". He again refers

to traditionally male careers as qualifiers for masculinity, "I normally just see like men in like

office/business attire kind of thing. But then like for masculine males, you don't really see them

in an office environment it's normally like in an outside setting or, yeah, just working out with

construction or whatever else they want to do."

Caleb also talked about doing outdoors activities as part of masculinity and is reflective

of Native Hawaiian culture and pedagogy. His papa would take him fishing, take him to the

beach, teach him how to sew and repair fishing nets, and also teach him when the best times to

go fishing were. His brothers taught him how to "clean yard" and "build wall."

Masculinity to Caleb also included an aspect of provider and protector, and the will to do

whatever one can to ensure the wellbeing of his family:

Like I said look very masculine and manly. There's that, and then like he still has

like that home kind of thing. I don't know what it's called but like, he's like has a

father personality like he's home with he needs to be like provides for us as well

as my mom. But yeah that's like what my dad does. He takes care of us stuff like

that. I feel like it's like a father role he plays that makes him seem like a man to me. If we need help he'll do whatever he can, or do it all, just is always there....just the simple stuff like that, very family oriented.

Kalama spoke of masculinity much in the same way as the other participants. Being masculine definitely has elements of being outside and doing outdoors things. Kalama was also very adamant about "not crying" as being a characteristic of masculinity and something he was taught from a young age to prevent others from taking advantage of him and portraying weakness.

Kalama also talked about taking care of one's family and providing for them as masculine traits. According to Kalama, another very masculine behavior is playing and watching sports. Kalama said in qualifying some of his behaviors as masculine, "[I] like sports, I hate football, but watch it. I like basketball, softball, baseball, stuff like that, UFC, you know those kinds of things."

When asked about what comes to mind when he hears the word masculine, he said, "My dad." He explained, "He has tattoos, he fuc...he LOVES football. He drinks a lot, well, not...he's not like an alcoholic, but, you know, he loves to drink. I would say 'typical Wai'anae'." He continued to list masculine qualifiers, "Like hunting fishing and working construction, or driving a truck, and then your real car or whatever, like your day-to-day vehicle is one truck...you have like a big family, you super Hawaiian, yeah, that's my idea of masculinity, it's my dad. And not being weak, in any way, shape, or form." Kalama also included being "headstrong," "confident," and not taking "shit from anybody, [regardless of] who you are."

When asked of his thoughts about "being a man," Kalama shared, "Being respectful...being the provider...not being weak, and...yeah, I think those things, those three to

me defines 'manhood.'" Kalama went on to say that those things do not change with circumstance or situation, "No, they will always be the same to me. Providing, respect, and not being weak. Oh, and love. Loving."

Kalama also described the characteristics of someone who would meet his ideas of "a man," and again he began to talk about his father:

> He's strong. Physically, men...mentally, emotionally. He always provides for us.
> If he had to, you know, like, if he needed to rob a bank, he probably would. He
> loves hard, my dad loves all of us, even...even our extended family he pretty
> much does what he has to. He never puts himself before anyone else. He may say
> he does, but he never does...my dad has a super soft heart. So like, under all of
> that harsh exterior, my dad's [soft-hearted]...Most guys I know who are like my
> dad, are like soft-hearted like him. They won't show it, but I know [they are].

When asked if he met men masculine like his father that were not soft-hearted he said that he had not. He continued to explain that if they did not have a soft-heart that they were not truly masculine, but rather "just a dick." Intimacy, vulnerability, and emotion do not conflict with traditional roles for Native Hawaiian men. It is healthy for the wellbeing of men and their families. Kalama describes his father as soft-hearted man who works hard to provide for and feed his family, and even goes above and beyond through the hānai (adoption) of five additional children. Kalama's father's actions align with traditional attributes of Native Hawaiian men that supports a less restrictive nature of gender roles. Diaz (2002) writes about 'masculinity-in-softness' in reflecting on the Native Hawaiian football coaches he played for while growing up in Guam. These transplanted Native Hawaiians in Guam would gather after games and practices to kanikapila (play instruments) and sing songs of Hawai'i, which for Diaz didn't seem to align

with the rugged image you associate with football. This 'masculinity-in-softness' (caring, familial kuleana, 'ohana, etc.) is rooted in Oceanic traditions (Jolly, 2008) and is not an uncommon trait among Native Hawaiian men.

Gender Performance and the Gender Continuum. The participants were asked to describe themselves in terms of their male identity. Also, to better understand the participants' ideas of masculinity, femininity, and their own gender identities, an imaginary feminine-masculine continuum was used as a tool during the interviews (see Figure 1 on p. 55). Participants shared where they viewed themselves, others, and those that they would consider as successfully achieving masculine status along the feminine-masculine continuum.

It was described to the participants that on the far left side of the continuum is femininity and to the far right, masculinity. Participants suggested numbers during their plotting for clarity. For computation ease, it was determined that 0 would be the most feminine, and 100 would be the most masculine, 50 being neither or a perfect balance of both traditional masculine and feminine values, attitudes, and behaviors.

Participant Kyle described his male identity, which for the most part was more balanced between masculinity and femininity:

> I am not as masculine...as your stereotypical male per se. I do get in touch with
> my feminine side a bit more because I did grow up with all girls in the house. I,
> but then I do enjoy like sports and being active, trying to be active. But then also I
> do like cooking and baking and more like feminine things as well...crafting stuff
> like that.

When asked if masculinity was a major feature of his identity, Kyle said, "I wouldn't say so. I'm pretty sure, or like it's pretty obvious, between...me and all the people I hang out with that I'm not like the most manliest or masculiny-ist person."

In his description of males in the 80 and higher range, Kyle says, "Like McGregor, I'm not like a big UFC person but yeah like people who are like part of UFC would be like on that side like in the 90s. I'd say the Rock is up there, probably 87."

On the gender continuum, Kyle placed himself at a 55, but shared that others, those not close to him, might place him quite higher on the continuum:

> I think other people might see it like 60, maybe 65. Just because like a lot of
> people don't ask me questions, or like ask me about my personal life or stuff like
> that, so, a lot of stuff that I do at home or like, not around them, they don't know
> that it's a lot more feminine. A lot of the stuff that, or more of the stuff that
> happens around them is a little bit more masculine than what I actually do.

The discrepancy in Kyle's gender identity (55) and what he decides to show (60-65) to others, reveals the conflict between the fluidity of Oceanic masculinities (Jolly, 2008) and the rigidity and exclusivity of Western hegemonic masculinity. Kyle recognizes that certain forms of masculinity have more value in certain environments. This play of masculinity shows a sophistication of understanding about gender from Kyle.

Kalani shared that masculinity was a major feature of his identity and stated that the reason for this was not because that is who he really is, but rather because of societal pressures, "being a boy, um, being any kind of feminine is considered, like shame...to you or your parents or your family. So, it's kind of looked down upon."

Kalani continued by saying that his gender behaviors were definitely influenced by the environment and who was around:

> When I'm at home, I am basically my total masculine side is on...is on that side. I,
> I help my dad, um, well, actually today I have to help my dad with a cement
> pouring job. And when I come around friends, I can actually be myself, I can
> relax. I can just talk story, but um, when I'm at home with my family and my
> parents, I really have to watch what I'm saying...where I feel like I have to be
> very secretive.

Kalani described the men in life, his father and grandfathers, as traditionally masculine. He placed them all at 75 on the gender continuum. He then went on to qualify their 75 placements by sharing that while they were masculine, they still performed less-masculine behaviors:

> They're more towards the...they're all towards the more masculine side. But I
> know that my dad does have a soft side for, for people, especially me and my
> mom, 'cause, umm, even like, ok, so if we are arguing about something, he will
> take the time to sit down and talk about it and try to squash the situation which I
> really appreciate.

Kalani said that wanting to work it out, talk and have a conversation were less masculine traits, "I feel like some men just like, brush it off and don't want to talk about it ever again." Although in Western society this might seem less masculine, this approach by Kalani's father to talking it out and sharing authority and leadership is reflective of traditional masculinity and the complementary relationships commonly found in Indigenous cultures (Morgensen, 2015; Sneider, 2015). He hinted that his papa, his mother's father, was in some ways more masculine

than his father and his father's father due to him being emotionally closed off, complicated, and difficult to deal with during disagreements. The repressing of emotion is commonly associated with *hegemonic* masculinity (Connell, 2005). Kalani also pointed to their careers as factors of their masculinity, which consisted of truck driving, heavy equipment operation, and automotive mechanic.

Kalani placed himself towards the middle of the continuum. He said that his friends would also place him at 60. Qualifying this placement, he referred to his social behaviors in class:

> If I go to class...I would consider myself very social, I mean I just talk to whoever is sitting by me...I think that's more on the feminine side. I feel like a boy would just sit there and be like.... just look at the people sitting next to him…

Caleb said that masculinity was a feature of his male identity when it needed to be. He described those times as when physical labor was required, which was often in his family because of the cultural things they would do, like digging imu and building rock walls. He said those closest to him would describe him as feminine, "if you were to ask my cousin this question, my cousin would probably say, he's like, um, feminine, very slim, Polynesian nose, haha, and stuff like that, haha." Again, another example of the participant loosening the restrictive hegemonic structures that pervade Western society (Jolly, 2008).

Caleb placed his father as an 89 on the gender continuum and described him as "very masculine and manly". While his father was very protective of him growing up, he said that his character and gender identity was not influenced much by his father. He mentioned that he was more influenced by his grandpa, who was a pastor and very humble. He placed his grandpa at 67 because of his humility.

On the gender continuum, Caleb placed himself at 49. Caleb said that there are certain times when he does identify with his masculine side, but more often than not, he is in between:

> The majority of time, I would just be in the middle, just chill over there. But then like, I don't really think I was really...I'm not really strong with my male identity...side. Like, I will be a male like if I have to do like men's work kind of a thing, but then other than that, no, I just chill in the middle.

As stated before, Caleb's reference to chilling "in the middle" is reflective of the supportive environment that was created by Kumu Hina while at Hālau Lōkahi.

Kalama shared that while masculinity was not a major feature of his identity, it was definitely a feature:

> Like...I'm not masculine...physically...like my dad, but I'm not weak, and I'll never show anyone, even on my worst day that I am. I pretty much do everything that my dad does. I love the ocean, if I had to frickin' hunt, I probably could. Um, I love driving trucks. I come from a big family. I don't have any tattoos yet, but I want one, and yeah, I think the defining one is that I'm not weak.

Here Kalama contests the colonial logic that femininity equals weak. Kalama continued by stating that others would describe him as "a guy...that I'm not weak. I can do things that guys do. I just don't do it all the time." As it is for other participants in this study, masculinity is associated with strength - physical strength, mental strength, and emotional strength, but femininity is not necessarily equated with weak. Perhaps this perspective of gender equality has perdured from traditional complementary Indigenous society where leadership and authority were not gender specific (Morgensen, 2015).

Kalama placed his father, his two older brothers, and his father's friends as 100 on the gender continuum. These men all work in the traditionally male-dominated construction industry, work long and hard hours, have lots of tattoos, get dirty, and drink alcohol often.

Kalama placed himself at 50 on the gender continuum but shared:

Well, if I had to choose to do what my dad and my brothers do, then I think I'd be at 100, but, I don't want to be there, I don't want to get dirty every day. I don't have to come home late every day. And, I don't know, I like being a guy...it's just some of the shit they do, I don't like doing.

Kalama's association of laborious and dirty jobs as the most masculine (100) shows how his environment and the men he was reared by and with could be categorized as *marginalized* according to Connell's (2005) concept of gender order.

Each participant was clear to communicate in their respective interviews that although they placed themselves more towards the middle of the gender identity continuum that they could still perform masculinity when needed. They stated that being in the middle is where they felt most comfortable and felt most like themselves. However, when needed, and if the chose to do so, they could perform like any other male on the continuum. The determination of each participant to communicate this fact in their interviews is an indicator of hegemonic masculinity, its pervasiveness, and how we all continue to reinforce current structures of power, even in our subordinate positions. Their decision to choose to live most of their lives closer to the middle is reflective of fluid masculinities found in Oceanic and other Indigenous cultures (Jolly 2008, Morgensen, 2015).

Thoughts About Education. As expected of college students, each participant thought that education was important. They talked about the benefits for individuals and communities, and how it provides access to certain opportunities, and potentially "better" lives.

Kyle talked about how higher education allows him to be around like-minded people and to better one's self:

Personally, I enjoy it. Not ENJOY educ..well, yeah, I enjoy education. I mean it's, it's a place where you get to know better people like in a way of like people who have this common interest as you compared to people if you just go straight into work after school like you might have the same job as them but that just might be because your life decisions came out that way instead of towards college or through higher education. You're kind of making friends with people who have the same interests as you because you guys are going towards the same degree. So, all in all I think higher education and college itself is a good idea. I think just bringing people together wise and like furthering yourself and your life.

Kalani shared that education is all around us, in different forms and setting. There is learning in everything, in every occupation. For Kalani, college is important and a must for some depending on their career pathway. He was very cognizant of the cost of college, the potential return on investment, and the value that Western society has placed on "formal" education. Higher educational pursuits are also one aspect associated Western hegemonic masculinity.

Caleb remembered his mother constantly telling him how important education was. When asked if he thought that higher education was important, he said, "Yeah definitely. Because not everyone has the chance and I feel like if you received this opportunity you should just take

it...even though if you feel like it's not for you, you still like, should try it out, because you'll never know."

Like Kyle, Caleb mentioned the connections one makes with others while in college and the potential for growing one's professional network:

[College] allows me to meet new people along the way. Like oh it's a great way for like connections like everybody is going to major in something different from you, and probably like later on in the future, like, "Oh I know a good person who can do that, I'll link you guys up, just go together" so you kind of have those connections.

Kalama talked about how higher education empowers those who engage in it, exposes you to other people and cultures, and ultimately makes you a better thinker:

It empowers individuals...it opens up your world to a...to different understandings...um, it helps you understand other things and other people better, you're not stupid...I mean I'm not saying that people who don't go to school are stupid, but, to me, I feel like those who don't just have a basic understanding of things. Whereas college and universities, you go into depth and you understand why.

Kalama also talked about the importance of education, especially for minority and marginalized communities. For Kalama, education in general, and notably higher education, is crucial for the health and well-being of the Hawaiian community:

Yup. Because...I think...especially now, with everything going on about sovereignty, and all of that stuff, you know...Native Hawaiians especially...they've just become so relaxed. And...you go to all of these rallies, there's probably like,

what, 10 out of the 100 that go...who actually know what the hell they're talking

about. The others don't. One of them is my uncle...and he irritates me

because...Hawaiians, we're not stupid people, we're smart. So why represent us as

a dumb people? And if they ever want to be sovereign, then they need to smart the

hell up.

Every participant referenced the socio-economic benefits that are afforded to college

students and graduates. This is the reality for most students from lower-income communities:

higher education is the most practical vehicle for upward social mobility and life success. Only

Kalama, the eldest who completed his bachelor's degree shortly after agreeing to this study,

talked about the non-tangible benefits, specifically how higher education can provide

opportunities for one to expand his or her knowledge and appreciation of the other, and to be a

better thinker.

The Interplay of Native Hawaiian Identity and Education. Being that this study

targeted Native Hawaiian males in college, I felt it was important to ask how, if at all, did their

identity as a Native Hawaiian male influence their educational experience, and how, if at all, has

their educational experience had an effect on their identity as a Native Hawaiian male.

For Kyle, being Native Hawaiian was neither one of his stronger identities nor one of the

stronger influencing factors in his decision to pursue a higher education degree. Kyle shared that

being a Native Hawaiian male in the schools that he attended prior to college was not a big deal,

especially since he was just one Native Hawaiian among many. He added that being Native

Hawaiian was beneficial once he entered college because of the access to certain scholarships

and support programs.

Having been in college for a couple of years, Kyle reflected on his experience as a Native Hawaiian male college student and realized the issues that minorities face, and the severity of these issues for minority males:

> I think higher education does...well, it fits...but doesn't fit at the same time, for
> Native Hawaiian because...a lot of times, not a lot of Hawaiian males go to
> college, so it doesn't fit in that way. But then it does fit because it does help those
> numbers that show that...Hawaiian males can go to college and it's kind of like
> lead by example...similar to Rouel when he was at Mānoa and how he was like
> one of the few Filipino guys that was there, which like eventually got a lot more
> people to go to Mānoa, like I'm pretty sure it wasn't just him, but like the amount
> of people that eventually went.

His statement communicated the importance for Native Hawaiian males to participate in college and serve as role models for other Native Hawaiian males who may have difficult time seeing themselves as college students.

Kalani shared that his identity as a Native Hawaiian did have an effect on his educational experience, especially as motivation to challenge the popular narrative that Hawaiians are less-than:

> Well, because everyone, well from what I'm hearing, everyone is saying that
> Hawaiians are the dying race, basically dying out, I feel it's given me a little bit of
> a push to want to be successful, and um, if people ask me where I'm from, I'll be
> like I'm from Hawaiʻi, I'm Native Hawaiian, I, I did it. We're not...we're not stupid
> people.

Kalani also talked about how education can provide one with the knowledge and confidence to engage in social justice issues and to fight for one's rights:

> Some people are very, are trying to be activists, you know like, Native Americans and they really fight for their land. I guess whenever someone from Hawai'i tries to defend, tries to defend their culture, or, their beliefs, somebody always comes back and, "Oh, why are you taking this so serious, it's not even a big deal", but it is a big deal. I want to tell people, "Yeah, I'm Hawaiian." And I made it. I'm successful and I'm happy at where I am.

Caleb talked about how his identity as a Native Hawaiian male has shaped his educational experience. Like other participants, it motivated him to take advantage of the opportunity that was not afforded to his family members:

> I feel like it actually motivated me to keep going to school because I know like, probably like my grandfather's generation, they didn't even have education opportunities for a lot of his cousins or brothers and him. It was like, "start work early", and no one had time for school because they had to help their parents pay some bills or support the house and stuff like that. So no one really had the chance to keep going to school or even be in school.

Caleb added that his educational experience in college has not had a significant impact on his Native Hawaiian identity, but earlier educational experiences at the charter school did:

> It's probably neutral right now for college, but I know for intermediate and high school, it was very drastically changing like, growing up Elementary all I knew of was that I was Hawaiian but in intermediate it was, like, since there were like very culture about things, that I got to learn a lot of stuff and be more intertwined,

intertwined with, um, who I am as a Native Hawaiian and what it means to be

one. So I think that was the connection that kind of brought two and two together

for me. But as of now for the university just kind of chill right now.

Kalama explained that his identity as a Native Hawaiian male has impacted his

educational experience through motivation: "It shaped me because I don't want to be like all the

other Native Hawaiian males I know." In his experience, Native Hawaiian males, in general, do

not pursue higher education. Kalama added that a higher education degree would be a distinctive

factor that would separate him from his Native Hawaiian male peers:

I'm not better than them, but, I just don't want to be them. Like if there was a scale

to me, I'd say most of the Native Hawaiian males are here. We were all born to be

different. So why would you just stop there? I'd want to start there. I don't want to

get lost in a sea of people. So, I went to school.

It seems that there is both competing and complementary pressures in play here. On the larger

level, Kalama is pursuing success through means (higher education) associated with Western

hegemonic structures. At the same time, his pursuit of a higher education degree and the careers

available with such credentials is a form of protest against the hegemony that exists within

working-class Native Hawaiian families and communities.

Kalama added that his identity as a Native Hawaiian male has also provided motivation

to pursue higher education and the opportunities that are made available to those with college

degrees. He also talked about how education can help with nation-building:

In our culture, males were always, you know, the leaders. They did everything.

And I think, over the years males...Native Hawaiian males have lost their place in

our culture. A lot of these initiatives where they want to get back to our lives and

stuff like that. They're all led by women, and so I think if males were to, Native

Hawaiian males were to educate themselves on traditional roles, and what we did,

as males then, you know, it would enrich them, and we could take our nation

someplace.

According to Kalama, education has also had an impact on his Native Hawaiian identity:

It allows me to see what really affects our people. And education is that, it affects,

it affects a great amount of Native Hawaiians...and my education, allowed me to

see that. Even in immersion, there's a lot of Hawaiians, but not a lot of them know

what we are, who we are, what we do. And in college, just added it to that...like

not...there's plenty Hawaiians who don't go to school, who don't go to college and

if I can show them, in you know, the Hawaiian community that...what college can

do for me, then yeah...if that even made sense.

Kalama continued by sharing how higher education, in particular, fits into his identity as a

Native Hawaiian male. He states that academic pursuits are fitting and appropriate, citing the

capabilities of his Hawaiian ancestors:

Because Native Hawaiians aren't stupid. My ancestors weren't dumb. We were

one of the most literate countries in the world...so....I understand that, so fits my

perspective and my understanding of the Native Hawaiian.

Overall, the participants' ethnic identity was influential in their decision to pursue

a higher education degree as a means to combat negative narratives, uplift the Native

Hawaiian community, and to challenge restrictive structures of gender and class from

both outside and within their own communities.

The Interplay of Gender Identity and Education. Also part of the interview were questions that asked how the participants' gender identities affected, or not affected, their perspective of education, their educational experience, and their decision to pursue higher education.

Kyle shared how his gender identity played a part in his decision to pursue college:

I think in a way it did, because I know, that at one point in time I did want to go to college to play sports, like maybe my junior year I think it was yeah, I could definitely do this. And then, after that year when senior year started coming around, I think it was more like realizing that maybe that's not for me to like I enjoyed playing sports maybe you know like I'm not the best or something like that, so...maybe I should focus more on schooling side of college or getting in through that way which kind of had to detach more of the masculine side of playing sports and stuff like that and focus more on like studying and working on my grades.

He continued by saying that in his experience, being academic and doing well in school is less masculine.

For Kalani and Caleb, who were freshman at the time of the interviews, did not feel that there was any interplay between their gender identity and education. While Caleb felt that there was no influence by either on the other, he did share that college did provide an environment for him to be comfortable. Perhaps the lack of influence, or ability to identify and articulate an influence, is due to their age and limited time in college.

Kalama talked about the importance of balance in one's life and how balance has benefited him, even in his educational journey:

You cannot just be one-sided, You can't just be Hina, and you can't just be Kū. I

understand my place in both, Kū-Hina, and I use that to my advantage because it

allows me not to be just one-sided, it allots me versatility in different areas,

including school. I think this is why many Native Hawaiians don't go to school,

it's not macho enough for them, like for my dad them...because there is such a

disconnect between our people and our culture, and how Kū and Hina work

simultaneously to bring balance to our lives. Many NHMs are so stuck on Kū, that

they don't want to know Hina.

By focusing on the Kū side, Kalama says that Native Hawaiian males close themselves off from

various opportunities for learning and growth.

For many people today, Kū is viewed often as one-dimensional, and sometimes in a

negative light. Tengan (2008a) writes that Kū is more than just war and conquest, which he is

famously known for. "Kū is also the akua of governance, productivity, work, industry, upland

forests, deep-sea fishing, and of course, war" (p. 144).

Perhaps if more Native Hawaiians males knew more about their culture, they would

understand that Kū represented more than war. Perhaps they would also learn and understand

that traditional masculinity was more dynamic than war and sex. Some of the male leaders in the

Native Hawaiian community have explained masculinity and the role that men had in traditional

times, and its continued relevance in contemporary society for healthy families and communities.

The Other Men. The participants were asked about their thoughts on other Native

Hawaiian males in their families and in their community. What the participants shared echoed

what the literature said about young men from working-class families, that there is definitely a

strong desire to adhere to traditional gender roles and follow the traditionally gendered career pathways.

Kyle thought that gender identity could be a major factor in the decision for Native Hawaiian males, on either extreme of the continuum, to pursue higher education or not:

I'm not 100 percent sure just because in Nānākuli, there are both sides of the spectrum for Hawaiian males, like there's those like upper 90s like they've been drinking since they were like 13, and then there is like the other side of the spectrum, where they're like full māhū (transgender), who will come to school dressed up, or stuff like that. And in both cases, a lot of them don't go to school. I know there are a few them that like attempted or tried just doing like barber school or something like that, but, yeah, on both sides like there's a good amount of them that didn't attend college.

I think it also ties back into their, their parents or whoever is guiding them through life just because a lot of the manly or masculin-ier guys, they may not have that mindset of "college is important", just because they're too occupied doing something else or trying to impress their father who just so happens to be masculine as well so that they're like, "Oh I have to make [money]", like so they think that like right after school they have to get a job real quick because they have to help their dad pay something so that's why they go straight into construction because it's like quick money and it pays pretty well for just out of high school. Whereas to like, the other side where they...whereas to the other side where they're so open about it, maybe it's because their parents accepted them like, I don't know if it's too fast or they just accepted like and I don't know like, I

don't want to say, I don't want this to come off as a bad way, but like promote them for them just doing whatever. So I think that's where that might fall off where their parents are allowing them to just do whatever they want, so instead of them focusing more on like the college side or the educational purpose they're kind of just letting their mind go out and do whatever they feel like they want to do because they have all that freedom now since their parents except them, verses like on the masculine side, they feel like they have to get approval from the parents by working right after high school.

Here Kyle explains his observation that males on the far ends of the continuum, those that are very feminine and those that are very masculine, are both underrepresented in higher education. Kyle assumes that those considered very masculine are heavily influenced by their fathers' expectations and or familial obligations. On the other end, for males that are very feminine or transgender, Kyle postulates that supportive and accepting parents and families may overcompensate for their child's gender identity, resulting in laxity and lower expectations.

Kalani talked about why he thought that gender identity might play an influential role in the decision to pursue higher education for Native Hawaiian males:

I think it does. So, um, well I mean, and you can be completely masculine and...but, still want to go to college. I know a few who are at HCC (Honolulu Community College), but it's all for trade jobs...for trade careers, like welding, automotive...more hands-on, physical labor, masculine...more manly jobs.

Caleb talked about his observations of those who chose to pursue a higher education degree:

> What I would notice in high school, like majority of people, or individuals that
>
> wanted to go to college and get a better or higher education, would be females,
>
> and not so much males, they would be like, I guess after high school they would
>
> just jump straight into work and stuff like that, but females...more of the females
>
> would just start applying for universities and colleges to attend.

Caleb was not sure if it gender identity was the major influencing factor and talked about other influences like role modeling:

> It might just be the different influences they had in the past or what kind of
>
> decisions that they see people are making just things that they take into
>
> consideration as individuals that help them decide if they want to keep going with
>
> education or doing something else with their life.

> Kalama believed that gender identity does have an impact on Native Hawaiian males decisions to pursue higher education or not:

> They see what money...quick money, can do for you, and the kinds of things that
>
> you can obtain quickly. You know, like, girls, trucks, stuff like that...and school
>
> doesn't do that for you...well not yet at least. So, yeah they may be good at school,
>
> but, if their influences...if their outside influences are stronger, then it shapes them
>
> and makes them who they are.

> **Thoughts on Education as Gendered.** To address the postulation by some scholars and

critics that education has been feminized and or is viewed as leaning towards the feminine side,

the participants were also asked their thoughts about education in general, and if they had to

assign a gender to their idea of education, what would that look like.

> Caleb described higher education as neutral, neither masculine nor feminine:
>
> I just feel like, everyone just has the sa...equal opportunity, like male and female. So like,
>
> with it being right in the middle like, it's kind of easier. I don't, or I feel like education
>
> shouldn't lean towards a gender. So, like, in the middle and if, that's what you want, then
>
> it's right there, so to speak.

Caleb added that if higher education had to lean towards one side of the gender continuum, it

would be slightly more feminine at 49. Although Caleb felt that higher education was

androgynous or undifferentiated, or should be, he did go on to say that one's own gender identity

probably does have an impact on their perspective of education and their decision to pursue or

not pursue a college degree.

> Kalama placed higher education at a 40 on the gender continuum and explained his
>
> reasoning:
>
> I'd honestly put it at a 40. It's more...and I think too, because like...it's like a
>
> house, and, I don't know, I, and being domesticated is more of a female thing, not
>
> a male thing....And doing that in school, and not providing, you know, it's, not a
>
> male thing to do.

When asked if he thought that education being more feminine had an impact on the low

enrollment of Native Hawaiian males from the Waiʻanae Coast Kalama shared:

> Definitely...because it's not something...being in the classroom all day it's not
>
> something males do. It's not masculine...not for Hawaiian males. Because you
>
> ain't providing for your family, where you're spending like six hours here, you're

not doing anything...you know. It's...I'm SERIOUS. You could spend those six

hours working, making money for your family, instead of coming home, and

fucking doing homework.

Kalama's explanation that going to school may be perceived by some as wasting time is

mirrored in some of the comments found in a study done in the United Kingdom. Archer, Pratt,

and Phillips (2001) found in the data of a previous study some information about this very idea

of not being able to work because of the studying that needed to be done. Two working-class

men shared their thoughts about men who go to the university:

If you've got to be there swotting over a book, you can't be out grafting can you?

And you can't have a social life, if you're like me and you've got to do so many

other things. (Derek, 29, white Irish labourer) (p. 436)

They've been broke for three years and they're still broke! [General laughter]

That's all wrong! They ain't had no girl, no love—nothing! (Drew, 21, Black

Caribbean shop assistant) (p.436)

In addition to not being able to work and earn money, Kalama also talked about the limitations

that school can have on one's social life, in particular relations with females, as the two young

men mention in the comments above.

So perhaps this perspective of higher education--wasting time, not earning money,

limited social life--if commonly held by others in the Hawaiian community, especially males,

may indeed have some influence on their decision to pursue or not pursue college.

Summary

From the interviews of the four participants, it seems that the strongest influencing factors for the decision to pursue higher education were their family and friends, their academic and co-curricular engagement, their identity as a Native Hawaiian (from Waiʻanae), and their gender identity. The interviews also highlighted their multiple, contextualized masculinities that shifted in response to the people and environment around them.

Participants shared that constant encouragement from family members to pursue higher education was a factor in their decision to enroll in college. Also motivating was the fact that none of their family members, save for one participant's mother recently graduated with a bachelor's degree and another participant's grandmother, had college degrees. All participants mentioned that others in their family - parents, siblings, and cousins - had previously enrolled in college, but stopped out due to different reasons.

Three of the four participants referred to their friends as having played a part in their decision to go to college. Two made plans with their friends while still in high school to attend the same college. All three participants all joined a summer bridge program with friends and continue to participate in the support program.

Being Native Hawaiian also had an impact on their decision to enroll and be successful in college. All participants were aware of the status of Native Hawaiians in general, know the stereotypes of their community, and the popular discourse that Native Hawaiians are "lazy" and "stupid". These internalized perceptions of Native Hawaiians motivated each participant to prove the deficit narrative wrong and add to the positive statistics on the Hawaiian community and their hometown communities.

Gender identity was not explicitly identified as a factor by the participants, however, their values, attitudes, and behaviors as related to gender performance may have created opportunities for them to be successful in certain arenas where other males may have found challenges. Each participant felt that their more fluid and balanced gender identity served them well, especially in the current structures of education and Western pedagogy and andragogy where performing the "right" kind of masculinities will lead to better outcomes and educational success.

While not necessary for their chosen career pathways, a college degree was something that all four participants felt was beneficial and important for their knowledge and skill set, as well as for their professional and personal development. They communicated that the acquisition of knowledge and higher education degree through college was something that would not only benefit themselves and their personal lives, but also uplift their communities.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I discuss the influencing factors that led to college enrollment for four young Native Hawaiian males at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu, and the implications for various stakeholders, including parents and families, primary and secondary institutions, postsecondary institutions, and community organizations.

The study set out to address the following questions:

1. What are the factors that influence a Native Hawaiian male's decision to pursue higher education?

2. What role does gender play in a Native Hawaiian male's educational pathway?

3. What role does ethnicity play in a Native Hawaiian male's educational pathway?

The qualitative interviews produced a wealth of data about how these four young men of Native Hawaiian descent made decisions about their participation in higher education and their career pathway.

As presented in chapter four, there were four main areas of influence for these young Native Hawaiian males to pursue higher education: family and friends, academic and co-curricular engagement, Native Hawaiian identity, and gender identity. The first area revealed the impact that family and friends had upon each participant's perspective and relationship with education. The second area of influence comes from the participants' engagement and participation in academics and co-curricular activities.

The third and fourth areas of influence stemmed from the participants' identity. Their identity as Native Hawaiian males from the Waiʻanae Coast was arguably the strongest influence. The fourth area of influence for these four participants was how they performed their masculinities. Each participant's self-described gender identity was a balance of feminine and

masculine. All participants placed themselves near the middle of the gender identity continuum and explained how they move to the left or right depending on the situation and environment. Participants' placement on the gender continuum could extend previous research to show that just as working-class boys who aspire to be truly "masculine" must avoid the feminine, which includes academic success, boys who are more fluid in their gender performance may have greater academic success. (Willis, 1977; Mac an Ghail, 1994; Connell, 2005).

Major Findings

The four participants in this study shared a lot about who they are, their background, including family life and childhood, their educational experiences and reflections, and their own gender identities. They also shared their assumptions about other Native Hawaiian males in their families and communities. Through their stories, I have attempted to interpret influencing factors for their decision to pursue higher education as I discuss next.

'Ohana. The first finding is that **family and friends** had a significant impact on these four Native Hawaiian males' outlook on education, how they engaged with their academics and co-curricular activities, the connection between education and increased opportunities, and ultimately, their decision to pursue higher education. There was an essence of kuleana (rights and responsibilities) when they spoke about their 'ohana and their educational pursuits. Most of the participants were first-generation college students, and it was important that they achieve higher education success and acquire a degree not only for themselves but also for their families.

Cultural Knowledge and Hawaiian Epistemology. Another theme that revealed itself through the interviews was **engagement**. Although these four participants did not name a particular academic or co-curricular activity as a motivating factor, their involvement in these activities may have indirectly affected their educational experience in a way that promoted

continued engagement and positive association with and connection to the educational structures, programming, and faculty and staff at their primary and secondary institutions. Being involved in sports and other co-curricular activities not only required them to maintain a good grade point average, but it also allowed them to build and strengthen meaningful and positive relationships with faculty, staff, and school. Also along the theme of engagement, the participants' involvement with co-curricular activities seemed also to have a positive effect, although more indirectly, on their decision to pursue higher education. All participants played organized sports and participated in student government while in primary and or secondary school. Most, if not all, of these co-curricular activities, required student participants and athletes to maintain a certain grade point average. One participant even mentioned his interest in continuing as a student-athlete at the collegiate level and how it led to preliminary college planning.

Perhaps what this study adds to the literature is the role of culture-based schooling as an influencing factor for low-income, first-generation Native Hawaiian to pursue a college education. What seemed to be especially impactful was the curriculum that three of the four participants experienced. These participants referenced their positive experiences at the Hawaiian culture-based and Hawaiian language-based schools that they attended. They connected to the Hawaiian language and culture curriculum at their schools, which provided the relevancy for them to stay engaged, allowed them to develop their identity as Native Hawaiians, taught them the unfiltered history of the Hawaiian Islands and the Hawaiian people, and importance of education as a tool to uplift themselves, their ʻohana, and their community.

Proud to be Native Hawaiian from Waiʻanae. The third finding was the influence that their **identity as Native Hawaiians** had on their decision to pursue higher education rather than enter the workforce immediately after graduating from high school. For all four participants, the

importance of earning a higher education degree was fueled by their identity as a Native Hawaiian from the Waiʻanae Coast, and even more so as a Native Hawaiian male from the Waiʻanae Coast. The perceived lack of social status and power seemed to provide the energy and motivation for participants to succeed academically and pursue a higher education degree, acknowledging that power comes from everywhere and is necessary (Foucault, 2003).

As mentioned in a previous finding, the Hawaiian language and culture-based curriculum that three of the participants experienced in their primary schools built and solidified their identity as Native Hawaiians. Their identity as Native Hawaiians on the Waiʻanae Coast undoubtedly influenced their decision to pursue higher education, as it was a way to ensure better employment opportunities, higher income, and a better life than what they were raised in and around. For all four participants, it was essential for them as Native Hawaiians to earn a higher education degree as a way to change the narrative of Hawaiians as "stupid" and "lazy." Discourses like this were also found in other studies (Tengan, 2008a; Gallimore & Howard, 1968) and is another example of the lasting effects of colonization and the "cultural bomb" (Wa Thiongʻo, 1986).

Balancing Kū and Hina. The last finding was the participants' **gender identities**. The participants' marginalized (Connell, 2005), Indigenous (Anderson & Innes, 2015), and fluid Oceanic (Jolly, 2008) masculinities influenced their attitudes towards education and specific career pathways in a way that encouraged them to be more successful academically and ultimately pursue a higher education degree.

Two participants described the interplay of their educational experiences and their gender identity. One participant talked about how his ability to detach from masculine activities and perspectives allowed him to focus more on school, studying, and improving his grades. The way

he described this action was putting any masculine aspects of his being aside so that he could be successful in the classroom. The other participant spoke at length about the positive effect that his gender identity has had on his educational experience. He referred to the Hawaiian concept of pono (balance), and how his ability to balance his Kū (masculine) and Hina (feminine) sides allowed for him to be successful in his educational pursuits.

The other two participants, both freshmen, said that they did not feel that there was much interplay between their gender identity and their educational experiences. However, they did share that gender identity could be a significant factor hindering Native Hawaiian males from pursuing higher education and the careers that require such credentials. One participant said that while gender identity should not be a factor, he did observe that the college-bound seniors at his high school were overwhelmingly female. The other participant shared that some of the masculine guys from high school were in college, but their college participation is in pursuit of trades education or athletics, not necessarily academic programs.

Okopny (2008) writes, "pressure to conform to one's gender role often create circumstances in which men and women are faced with limited choices...vocational choices are limited by the overwhelming pressure to stay within traditional gender norms as well as demands from teachers, parents, friends, and patriarchal social norms" (p.220).

Through these themes of balance and protest of hegemonic masculinity, you can see the impact that Hawaiian culture has had on these young men, and yet, you also see the presence, pervasiveness, and power of hegemonic masculinity. Not only was Connell's (2005) concept of gender order and hegemonic (and complicit) masculinity very apparent in the stereotypical ways that the participants described masculinity and what it means to "be a man," but it was also evident in various comments throughout the interviews. Also present were aspects of traditional

Indigenous masculinities (Anderson & Innes, 2015, Morgensen, 2015; Sneider, 2015) and

Oceanic masculinities (Jolly, 2008), and the hybridity that has emerged post-colonization.

In addition to placing himself and others on the gender continuum, participant Kyle was

also asked to place me, the researcher, on the continuum. Kyle thought for a few seconds, then

blurted out "20!" Kyle quickly followed up with, "nah [laughter], just kidding!" This playful

teasing between the participant and I communicated hegemonic masculinity and the power

structures that exist in society. Kyle's placing of my gender on the feminine side of the

continuum was clearly intended to playfully offend me. This perspective is consistent with the

ideas of hegemony, where femininity and masculinities other than the hegemonic masculinities

are subordinated and more importantly to communicate where status and social power lay within

the continuum and where it does not.

Another example of hegemony is the way that these four participants all communicated

that although they may have fluid gender identities, they were adamant about their ability to be

masculine and perform masculine activities if they chose and if certain situations required it.

This communicated their acknowledgment and support of hegemonic structures of power, and

how it is important to not give up that channel of power that they were given having been born

male. Harper's (2004) study revealed a similar hegemonic notion of masculinity with African

American males on college campuses in the Midwest. He quotes one of his participants:

> Playing basketball in the rec. center, lifting weights, shooting hoops, partying, and
>
> showing off... they think those are masculine activities. I can be blunt, right? How
>
> many girls they can screw and who they've slept with. Those are the activities
>
> that most brothas' on this campus would use to define masculinity. You'll find
>
> them talking about these things in a boastful way all the time. I don't believe that

holding a leadership position in student government has quite found its way onto

the list of masculinity (p. 97).

The thoughts of this young African American male on masculine activities (lifting

weights, partying, sexual prowess) and less masculine activities (student government

participation) is related to the that of the participants in this study, reflecting the

marginalized (Connell, 2005) masculinity that is common among minority male groups.

Kalani shared that femininity in a male is unattractive and often brings shame to one's

family. Again, this is evidence of hegemonic masculinity, where femininity and other forms of

masculinity are subordinated. In one of his interviews, Kalani also explained that "be a man"

means "stop being a pussy." Although the other participants did not use these words, the

sentiment was consistent—traditional forms of masculinity are expected and favored by society,

and anything less-than is undesirable.

If ideas of masculinity and what it means to be a "man" are summarized in similar ways

(athleticism, physicality, strength, courage, and an active social life) by Native Hawaiian males

who have a more balanced and fluid personal gender identity, it may be safe to assume that their

peers, who identify as more masculine and less fluid, subscribe to the same ideals that put them

at an advantage. This is hegemony, where the structures of social power are upheld even by those

most subjugated by it.

Hegemonic masculinity, along with other factors and forces, may push the more

masculine Native Hawaiian males towards a career in the trades and away from pursuing

professional careers that require a college degree, while simultaneously doing the opposite for

Native Hawaiian males with more fluid gender identities. Native Hawaiian males with more fluid

gender identities may have a perspective of education that allows them to be more engaged, to

connect more, to perform "muscular intellect" (Archer et al., 2016; Mac an Ghaill, 1994) or "translocational masculinity" (Archer et al., 2016), and become better prepared for college. Archer et al. (2016) define "translocational masculinity" as "masculine identity performances that try to move beyond narrow hegemonic performances of masculinity and which highlight points of connection across ethnicity and class within performances of 'doing boy'" (p. 448).

Hegemony may also play a part in the forces that encourage Native Hawaiian males with more fluid gender identities to pursue a professional career rather than a career in the trades because of the increased chance of success. Perhaps these four young Native Hawaiian males realized the potential challenges that they would have in traditional working-class male career pathways, where their current gender identities would put them at a disadvantage in the male-dominated arenas that prioritize traditional forms of masculinity, and reward those that perform them with skill and prowess, further solidifying hegemonic ideals, values, and behaviors.

Perhaps these young Native Hawaiian males believe that pathways to success not usually taken by their peers, such as academics and professional careers, seems more viable than working-class pathways and the masculinity required to gain acceptance and achieve success in those careers. Ness (2012) writes that it is in the 'tough' work of construction that male workers' masculine identity is defined in relation to their 'tough' job, which is often dirty, requires taking safety risks, and working long hours in primitive working conditions. Ness (2012) explains the hierarchy of masculinity within the building trades where the "rougher" and "dirtier" trades (i.e., steelworkers, laborers, bricklayers) are considered more masculine than the more "refined" and "intellectual" trades (electricians). In the building industry, the masculinity hierarchy is the inverse to the status hierarchy. This perspective by those in the industry says that levels of masculinity are directly related to the work one does, stating the harder and dirtier the work, the

more masculine, could be one of the motivating factors for the young men in this study to pursue career pathways other than the skilled trades.

Each participant was adamant about their ability to do physical and laborious work but chose not to pursue those industries. Their resolve around this topic suggested influence by Western ideas of gender and the privileges that are associated with certain masculinities (Connell, 2005), while simultaneously challenging it. Kalama shared,

> If I had to choose to do what my...dad and my brothers do, then I think I'd be at
> 100 (referencing the gender identity continuum), but, I don't want to be there. I
> don't want to get dirty every day. I don't want to have to come home late every
> day. And, I don't know, I like being a guy...it's just some of the shit they do, I
> don't like doing...if I have to, I will, but, if I don't have to, then I'm not going to.

For these four young Native Hawaiian males, the pressure to conform to traditional performances of masculinities was limited and or ineffective, allowing them to be themselves, to engage with academics and co-curricular activities at levels perhaps uncommon for the majority of males in their community, and the courage and confidence to choose a non-traditional (amongst their peers) career pathway that included higher education attainment.

Perhaps the limited impact of the nature of western binaries of gender on these participants is due to a continuity of traditional Hawaiian culture and ideas that has transcended time and place. Jolly (2008) describes Oceania masculinities as fluid and moving across time and place. Jolly (2008) asserts, "Oceanic masculinities are best studied relationally and historically, between pasts, presents, and futures" (p. 3).

In traditional Hawaiian society, and many other traditional Polynesian societies, third-gendered, bisexual, and homosexual individuals were not stigmatized as it is in today's society

(Kamakau, 1961; Kameʻeleihiwa, 1999a, Malo, 1951). There were established and respected cultural roles that māhū and ʻaikāne fulfilled, including ritual functions (Chun, 2006). Non-binary gender identities were also practiced and valued in other Polynesian societies including the laelae in Rarotonga, the faʻafafine in Samoa, and the fakaleiti in Tonga (Jolly, 2008). Referencing traditional ideas of gender and sexuality and the balance of the masculine and the feminine, Tengan (2008a) explains that "the Hawaiian community as a whole has always recognized and celebrated the diversity of being that is manifested in the kinolau (body forms) of the gods, people, and land" (p. 161).

You can see the continuity of certain ideas and beliefs that carry over from traditional times. This connection between "pasts, presents, and futures" is evident in each participant's gender identity, their confidence, and perspectives on education and community.

The goal of this study was to learn more about the influencing factors that led Native Hawaiian males to pursue higher education. The hope is to use the findings of this study to do more research, so stakeholders are more informed about effective ways to support more of our Native Hawaiian males and other minority males with their career aspirations and educational pursuits.

Implications

Implications for Parents and Families. Parents and family members should continue to support and encourage their male children and family members to engage in their education and to think broadly regarding their career pathways. This support and encouragement should be consistent throughout childhood and up through college. Discussions about both traditional (trades) and nontraditional (professional) careers and pathways for Native Hawaiian males should take place and supported equally with little bias, regardless of the profession of the

parents. The participants in this study were all encouraged by their family members to pursue higher education and professional careers, setting them apart from the male figures in their lives and increasing their chances for a "better life."

Findings suggest that the integration of cultural knowledge and practices into the rearing of Native Hawaiian children could be beneficial. For the participants in this study, a strong Native Hawaiian identity and cultural understanding helped them know who they are, their place in this world, providing a solid foundation to realize their full potential. Cultural understandings of pono (balance), and Kū and Hina (masculine and feminine energies) will also provide the balance that is needed to be successful in most situations (Kameeleihiwa, 1993, 1999; Pukui et al., 2001). Goodyear-Kaʻōpua (2013) explains that restrictive gender roles and stereotypes "stem the balanced flow of mana on societal, interpersonal, and individual levels" (p. 220). Tengan (2002) refers to this balance between Kū and Hina as a potential crux for effective change among Native Hawaiians.

This connection to cultural knowledge and practices for the family need not fall upon the parents alone. Families can familiarize themselves with these understandings and practices through the activities of community organizations. The value of these activities that promote cultural knowledge and a stronger identity is evident in some of the programming associated with scholarships. Families that receive financial aid for preschool through Kamehameha Schools now have an option to complete community service and or participate in cultural activities and practices.

For Native Hawaiian men and boys, the Hale Mua would be a great place for them to acquire the knowledge, skills, and understandings of cultural practices and expectations of the critical role they play in their ʻohana and their communities. Within the last decade, the Office

of Hawaiian Affairs organized Hale Mua in a few Hawaiian communities to address issues of socio-cultural disconnectedness and increased health risks among Native Hawaiian kāne. Through the Hale Mua, "Hawaiian men learned the roles and responsibilities of being a successful father, husband, and warrior, and basic occupations like farming and fishing" ('Aha Kāne, 2016).

Many of these cultural opportunities exist and are offered to the community at no cost. Many participate, but maybe not at the levels that affect the Native Hawaiian community in a statistically significant way.

Implications for Primary and Secondary Institutions. Teachers that serve communities with high percentages of Native Hawaiian students should be better prepared to work with this population. Mandatory trainings and opportunities for professional development around Hawaiian history, culture, and culturally relevant curricula and pedagogy may create the environment primed for Native Hawaiian learners. There are a few culture-based teacher preparation programs currently operating within the University of Hawai'i System. Schools with large numbers of Native Hawaiian students could prioritize graduates of these programs and incentivize their employment.

Participants in this study share how culturally relevant curriculum was an effective way to engage Native Hawaiian learners. Using relevant curriculum will increase interest and receptivity, and academic effort (Kanaiaupuni et al., 2010; Gruenewald 2003; Sobel, 2004). Once the learner is successful with the relevant curriculum, then they may have the confidence and the skills to apply those same concepts to things beyond their immediate world. This early success with culturally relevant curriculum may provide the momentum for continued success,

increased self-efficacy, and higher expectations of oneself needed to succeed academically throughout secondary and postsecondary education.

Secondary institutions can better prepare Native Hawaiian males for college while in high school. More programs need to be developed to assist Native Hawaiian males, and other minority males underrepresented in institutions of higher education, to make the transition to college. These programs could develop a curriculum that explains in detail the long-term benefits, on all metrics--economic and otherwise, for individual and community gain, of a college degree, juxtaposed next to the immediate benefits of entering the workforce directly after high school graduation.

Implications for Postsecondary Institutions. Findings from this study support the need for institutions of higher education to create a college-going culture in Native Hawaiian communities. This may be achieved through coursework, guest speakers and teachers, curriculum, and even community organizations like the Hale Mua.

Universities and colleges may consider specific efforts to increase Native Hawaiian males', and other minority males', connections to the institution. Some of these efforts may include role modeling and mentoring, a welcoming and safe environment, and staff and faculty that make an effort to communicate support for this group and their presence at the university or college.

Fostering First-Generation, Male Native Hawaiian Leadership. Institutions that serve Native Hawaiian students may benefit from programming that builds leadership skills for first-generation Native Hawaiian males. Universities across the US have created programming that explicitly targets male students, especially those from underrepresented groups. At the University of Houston, the L.E.G.A.C.I. program services minority males. At many other

universities including CUNY (City University New York), the University of Illinois, the University of Arkansas there are Black Male Initiatives or Minority Male Initiatives that focus on providing support to African-American and Hispanic/Latino males. Most of these programs provide services that include tutoring, career workshops, conference travel, internships and community service, financial aid guidance, mentoring and leadership development.

While there are some male initiatives that mention Native American males along with African-American and Hispanic/Latino males, there aren't many programs specifically targeting males from native populations. Even here in Hawaiʻi, I have not found a university program that explicitly targets Native Hawaiian males. An Internet search for "Native Hawaiian male initiative" resulted in two Native Hawaiian male initiatives by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, followed by information on prison policy and a youth detention center. I suggest my Internet search indicates that marginalized masculinities, often associated with minority men, results in riskier behavior associated with incarceration.

Integrating Native Hawaiian Ways of Knowing and Being. Universities may also benefit from the integration of native ways of knowing and being. While it is not always apparent in every discipline and program, the University of Hawaiʻi system has recognized its kuleana to the host culture by incorporating Native Hawaiians as one of the foci in its mission and strategic plan. The University of Hawaiʻi system set a goal of becoming a model Indigenous-serving institution and has since begun to move towards that goal.

In 2012, a presidential-appointed work committee, Hawaiʻi Papa o Ke Ao, was "tasked with developing, implementing and assessing strategic actions to make the University of Hawaiʻi a leader in indigenous education" (University of Hawaiʻi, 2018, para. 1).

Recommendations by the work committee to create an Indigenous-serving institution can be found in the Hawaiʻi Papa o Ke Ao document (University of Hawaiʻi, 2012) and include increasing Native Hawaiian enrollment to levels consistent with the state population, success rates at parity with non-Hawaiians, increasing tenured Hawaiian faculty, including Native Hawaiian values in institutional decision making and practices, increasing Native Hawaiians in leadership position in administration, responsive to the needs of the Hawaiian community through programs and initiatives, and fosters and promotes Hawaiian culture and language at all its campuses (University of Hawaiʻi, 2012). The three goals of Hawaiʻi Papa o Ke Ao include (1) Leadership Development; (2) Community Engagement; and (3) Hawaiian Language and Cultural Parity. The findings of this study affirm the intentions of Hawaiʻi Papa o Ke Ao and its goals.

Similar to the recommendation for K-12, higher education institutions that serve communities with high percentages of Native Hawaiian populations can better prepare their instructors and professors to work with this population. Opportunities for professional development around Hawaiian history and culture, relevant curriculum and pedagogy, may provide more effective environments for Hawaiian learners. Although some work has been done in supporting Native Hawaiians, my study suggests that the hegemonic structures of the University institution need to change in order to challenge assumptions about masculinity and academic success.

Building Institutional Structures of Native Hawaiian Men. There is a need for more Native Hawaiian males in direct services roles in higher education, including teaching, counseling, and advising, as well as leadership roles. There is definitely some truth to the saying, "You can only be what you can see." We need Native Hawaiian men, from similar backgrounds, to show them that this is possible. This visibility can be achieved not only through college

faculty and staff, but also community members who are college graduates that participate in the cultural activities.

The Hale Mua could teach and mentor Native Hawaiian males on the critical role that they play in the health of the family and community. The staff of the Hale Mua could overlap and serve in both the high school and postsecondary institutions to provide continuity and more successful transitions to college.

Culturally Responsive Social and Emotional Support of Native Hawaiian Men. A cultural mentorship program that bridges the community and the college or university may also provide the needed support for the wellbeing of Native Hawaiian males. This may resemble the traditional Hale Mua, or men's house, where teaching, learning, mentoring, and rites of passage took place through cultural activities, practices, and protocols. A strong Hale Mua bridging the community and the university would have a tremendous impact on how higher education institutions are viewed by Native Hawaiian males. Here is a description from the 'Aha Kāne website of the Hale Mua Initiative:

> The Hale Mua was the socio-cultural institution for religious services, political
>
> matters concerning the community, and perpetuation of traditional cultural
>
> practices and beliefs. This included customary rituals associated with boys
>
> growing into productive, contributing men in society. It implies teaching gender
>
> roles and responsibilities, customs, life skills, proper behavior and conduct, and
>
> guidance and support of spiritual growth. (para. 1)

> The Hale Mua was the institution where Hawaiian men learned the roles and
>
> responsibilities of being a successful father, husband, and warrior, and basic

occupations like farming and fishing. Elders and master practitioners served as

educators. This emphasized moral character development and adherence to kapu

(taboos) governing forbidden or inappropriate behavior. The education received in

the Hale Mua also encouraged the preservation and maintenance of mana (power).

By sustaining one's mana, each kāne fulfilled his kuleana (responsibilities) by

honoring his kūpuna (elders). (para. 2)

This project aims to proactively reestablish intergenerational traditions in

contemporary Hawaiian communities so today's kāne prepare ʻōpio (young men)

for roles as contributing members of society. (para. 3)

The ʻAha Kāne's Hale Mua Initiative created three Hale Mua in Hawaiian communities,

including Waiʻanae. The Hale Mua ʻO Māui A Akalana on the Waiʻanae Coast, has been

operating since about 2013. The University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu could collaborate with the

Hale Mua ʻO Māui A Akalana to provide cultural education and support to the Native Hawaiian

males in the educational pipeline on the Waiʻanae Coast.

In addition to a mentor program for Native Hawaiian male students by Native Hawaiian

faculty, staff, and community members, the students themselves can also serve as peer mentors

to their classmates. This can be achieved through a program similar to ʻImi Hoʻōla at the John A

Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawaiʻi, a 12-month post-baccalaureate program

that accepts students from disadvantaged backgrounds and provides matriculation access into the

medical program where they serve as alakaʻi to the incoming class. The same concept could be

employed with Native Hawaiian males in the Hale Mua at the high school level that would come

to the college campus during their senior year in high school. They would straddle both Hale

Mua, the high school Hale Mua and the Hale Mua at the college level. Their engagement with the college campus, its staff and faculty, and students would create the familiarity, comfort, and confidence needed to be successful college students. A year later, these Native Hawaiian males would become the alakaʻi for their entire entering class, but especially for other Native Hawaiian males.

Postsecondary institutions that serve Native Hawaiians should begin or continue and expand Native Hawaiian practices and protocols for campus events and activities, where Native Hawaiian students can serve as alakaʻi (leaders) and team members. In addition to carrying out these protocols and practices, these alakaʻi and team members would also teach other students, faculty, and staff their respective kuleana for campus events and activities.

Lastly, culture-based health and wellness services on campuses that serve Native Hawaiian communities and other minority populations may also be extremely effective in the retention of Native Hawaiian males and other minority males.

Study Strengths

The strength of this study is that it gives voice to the stories of nearly half of the Native Hawaiian males currently enrolled at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu that have graduated from Waiʻanae Coast public high schools. There is much to be gleaned from these stories that can extend our understanding of the interplay of gender, class, and race with educational success for males.

My positionality as a Native Hawaiian male from Waiʻanae provided an insider perspective as a strength in this study. Having been born and raised in the Waiʻanae community provided an understanding and closeness with my participants that "outsiders" may have had

trouble trying to find. I suggest that my positionality provided credibility that allowed for the participants to open up and be more honest than if some outsider was to interview them.

Suggestions for Further Research

The findings of this study present areas of interest for further research. These include:

- Expand the study to other Native Hawaiian males in the University of Hawaiʻi system, including all seven community colleges and the other two universities.

- Interview Native Hawaiian males who chose not to pursue and or enroll/attend higher education. These males could provide much-needed insight into the motivating factors that led them to pursue something other than higher education after graduating from high school.

- Expand the study to non-traditional Native Hawaiian males in the University of Hawaiʻi. This expansion will provide insight into how one's post-high school experiences may influence and change previously held ideas and assumptions of higher education. Assumption: may have more diversity regarding gender identity and performance (more NHM who place themselves higher on the gender continuum). Maturity and life experiences may discredit previously held assumptions. These post-high school experiences may also cause their assumptions to become less influential and the need for education for advancement/increased income/etc., more powerful.

Conclusion

As stated at the beginning of this paper, it is common knowledge that college education brings economic and social benefits to the individual and the communities where one lives, works, and plays. On average, college graduates also enjoy other benefits at higher rates than

non-college graduates, including better health, less incarceration, and steadier employment. The low college participation rates of Native Hawaiian males impact local and state economies, and the quality of life of individuals, their families, and their communities.

Native Hawaiians have been underrepresented in institutions of higher education for many years, including here in Hawai'i at our state universities. Since at least 2012, the average percentage of Native Hawaiians that make up the student body at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu, has surpassed the State of Hawai'i Native Hawaiian general population percentages (23%) at 26% and 27% respectively. At the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Native Hawaiians have made up only 15% of the student body on average since 2012.

While this is great and a move in the right direction, there are major gaps between male and female representation with Native Hawaiians enrolled in the University of Hawai'i System. This disparity is exacerbated when we look at the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu, where males only make up only 25.5% of the total Native Hawaiian count. The gap is further expanded when you look at Native Hawaiians who graduate from public schools on the Wai'anae Coast, where the largest concentration of Native Hawaiians in the world reside.

The four participants involved in this study revealed four influencing factors that led to their decision to pursue higher education. Positive encouragement from their family and friends regarding education and college aspirations; engagement in academics and co-curricular activities; a strong Native Hawaiian identity; and a gender identity that is less restrictive and more fluid. If we are to address the low college enrollment numbers for Native Hawaiian males, it may be beneficial to look at how families, communities, and educational institutions can create environments that encourage this population to pursue higher education through positive

messaging, engaging relevant curricula, connection to culture, role modeling, and fluid gender identities.

Final Thoughts

Hegemonic masculinity and Indigenous and Oceanic masculinities were used to analyze the data in this study. Hegemonic theory also pointed out the role of ethnicity and class in how minority men aspire and are successful in college. Other influencing factors were ʻohana, friends, and engagement. However, other significant factors were the way in which the participants resisted hegemonic masculinity through their native practices of a more fluid performance of gender, the knowledge and pride of their kūpuna, and their kuleana to their community. The continuity of traditional ideas and practices, epistemology, ontology, and axiology through time may have been just as impactful as modern hegemony on the young Native Hawaiian males in this study. Hegemony may have provided the social environment that fueled their desire to challenge negative discourses and stereotypes about their ethnic and socioeconomic identities, while simultaneously guiding them to a career pathway that would support their more fluid gender identities. In almost an opposite and competing way, but to the same end, undercurrents of traditional Hawaiian culture may have also influenced these young Native Hawaiian males, especially around ideas of gender and the value of education.

Mid-nineteenth century Native Hawaiian scholars and other Native Hawaiian contributors to Hawaiian language newspapers sometimes referred to Hawaiʻi and themselves as Hawaiʻi ʻImi Loa. In the foreword of the revised edition of *Kepelino's Traditions of Hawaii* (Beckwith, 2007), Arista notes that at the time of her writing, Hawaiʻi ʻImi Loa had sixteen entries in the Ulukau database of Hawaiian language newspapers.

'Imi loa means "to engage in profound inquiry, to seek or search" (Beckwith, 2007, p. xiii). Arista (in Beckwith, 2007) explains that the Native Hawaiian scholar Kepelino conceptualized and differentiated Hawai'i from the West by using the phrase Hawai'i 'Imi Loa in one of his writings about the epistemological differences between the two. Arista (in Beckwith, 2007) continues by contrasting Western and Hawaiian approaches, the former searching for "fixed characteristics" and "finite definitions", and the latter assumes a "multiplicity of meanings". Arista (in Beckwith, 2007) writes, "It is the misapprehension of approaching meaning as a set of answers rather than the fluidity of action or process that sets the two modes of meaning-making apart" (p. xii).

The self-identifying term Hawai'i 'Imi Loa captures the essence of the way that Native Hawaiians of that time viewed themselves, their 'āina (land), their aupuni (kingdom/nation), and what they believed to be of utmost importance -- deep inquiry and lifelong seeking and learning.

In traditional Hawaiian society, the seeking of knowledge was not gendered, nor classed. While the educational curricula and content might vary between individuals, their identities, and kuleana, all sought knowledge and enlightenment regardless of sex, gender, or station. This idea and valued practice, education and lifelong learning, which are ingrained in our DNA and so valued by our kūpuna, should be remembered, restored, reclaimed, and rehearsed by all Native Hawaiians until community, education, and economic health and wellbeing once again becomes the norm and not the exception.

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APPENDIX

A. Interview Questions

B. Consent Form

C. IRB Approval

APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Native Hawaiian Male Perspectives on Masculinity and Higher Education

Demographic Info

1. Please tell me a little about yourself -- your name, ethnicity, where you're from.

2. Share a little about your family and those who raised you.

3. What was your household income growing up?

4. Who and or what influenced your aspirations?

5. How would you describe your identity? What makes you you?

Education and Educational Experience

6. What schools did you attend (primary, middle, secondary, post-secondary)?

7. What was your school experience like?

8. What were you involved in?

9. What kind of grades did you earn?

10. Who were your friends?

11. How would your teacher/friends describe you as a learner?

12. What was the highest level of education attained by those who raised you?

Perspectives of Masculinity

13. How do you describe yourself in terms of your male identity?

    a. Is masculinity a major feature of your identity? Why or why not?

    b. How would others describe you?

14. How do you describe manhood?

    a. Is your description of manhood a major feature of your identity? Why or why not?

    b. How would others describe you?

15. Do these descriptions of manhood and masculinity vary by the circumstance or situation?

16. Who were the male figures in your life growing up?

    a. In what ways, if at all, did they influence you?

17. Think of someone who you believe meets your idea of a "man". Describe the characteristics of this person.

18. What do others in your community consider "being a man" to be? How does this differ from what you think?

Perspectives of Higher Education

19. What do you think of education? Higher education?

20. How do you think your identity as a Native Hawaiian male shaped your education experiences?

21. How do you think your educational experiences shaped your identity as a Native Hawaiian male?

22. How does higher education fit into your identity as a Native Hawaiian male?

Close

23. Is there anything else that you would like to share about your identity as a Native Hawaiian male and a student of higher education?

APPENDIX B. CONSENT FORM

IRB assigned number: 2016-30793
Investigator's name & address: Loea Akiona, 91-1001 Farrington Hwy, Kapolei, Hi 96707
Site(s) where study is to be conducted: University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu
Phone number for subjects to call for questions: 808-689-2676

Introduction and Background Information
You are invited to participate in a research study. The study is being conducted by Loea Akiona, a doctoral candidate in the Doctor of Education program in the College of Education at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa. The study will take place at the University of Hawaiʻi – West Oʻahu. Approximately 6 subjects will be invited to participate.

Purpose
The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors that influence a Native Hawaiian male's decision to pursue higher education and persist.

Procedures
In this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview for 60-90 minutes. Given your consent, the interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. You have the right not to answer any question or to make any statement that makes you feel uncomfortable at any time during all interviewing sessions. Data collected from the interview will be sent to you to confirm accuracy. You may change your mind at any time about what information is included in the study. Should there be a need to follow up, you may be asked to answer a few additional questions. Your total participation in this study will span approximately 4 weeks.

Potential Risks
While there are possible unforeseen risks associated with participating in focus groups and individual interviews, there are no foreseeable risks in participation in this study other than possible discomfort in answering personal questions.

Benefits
The possible benefits of this study include your personal exploration of being Native Hawaiian and male in college. The knowledge gained from this study may enhance what college educators know about the ethnic and masculine identities of Native Hawaiian college men and their ability to assist Native Hawaiian males to matriculate successfully.

Confidentiality
Total privacy cannot be guaranteed. Your privacy will be protected to the extent permitted by law. If the results from this study are published, your name will not be made public. While unlikely, the following may look at the study records: The University of Hawaiʻi Institutional Review Board, Human Subjects Protection Program Office; Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP); or members of the primary researcher's dissertation committee.

The information collected will be protected and secured in a secured area.

Conflict of Interest
There is no conflict of interest and as the primary investigator, I am not being compensated in any way to conduct this study.

Voluntary Participation
Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to be in this study you may stop taking part at any time. If you decide not to be in this study or if you stop taking part at any time, you will not lose any benefits for which you may qualify.

Research Subject's Rights, Questions, Concerns, and Complaints
If you have any concerns or complaints about the study or the study staff, you have three options.

You may contact the principal investigator, Dr. Sarah Twomey, 808-956-5898.

If you have any questions about your rights as a study subject, questions, concerns or complaints, you may call the Office of Research Compliance at orc@hawaii.edu or The Human Studies Program 808-956-5007 or uhirb@hawaii.edu. You may discuss any questions about your rights as a subject, in secret, with a member of the Office of Research Compliance (ORC) or the Human Studies Program (HSP)/Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, staff of the institutions, as well as lay members of the community not connected with these institutions. The IRB has reviewed this study.

This paper tells you what will happen during the study if you choose to take part. Your signature means that this study has been discussed with you, that your questions have been answered, and that you will take part in the study. This informed consent document is not a contract. You are not giving up any legal rights by signing this informed consent document. You will be given a signed copy of this paper to keep for your records.

_____   _____
Signature of Subject/Legal Representative   Date Signed

_____   _____
Signature of Person Explaining the Consent Form   Date Signed
        (if other than the Investigator)

_____   _____
Signature of Investigator   Date Signed

APPENDIX C. IRB APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY of HAWAI'I SYSTEM

Office of Research Compliance
Human Studies Program

TO:	Twomey, Sarah, PhD, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Curriculum Studies
	Akiona, Loea, University of Hawaii at Manoa, College of Education
FROM:	Lin-deshetler, Denise, Dir, Hum Stds Prog, Social&Behav Exempt
PROTOCOL TITLE:	Native Hawaiian Masculinity and Higher Education
FUNDING SOURCE:	NONE
PROTOCOL NUMBER:	2016-30793

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

This letter is your record of the Human Studies Program approval of this study as exempt.

On November 01, 2016, the University of Hawai'i (UH) Human Studies Program approved this study as exempt from federal regulations pertaining to the protection of human research participants. The authority for the exemption applicable to your study is documented in the Code of Federal Regulations at 45 CFR 46.101(b) 2.

Exempt studies are subject to the ethical principles articulated in The Belmont Report, found at the OHRP Website www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html.

Exempt studies do not require regular continuing review by the Human Studies Program. However, if you propose to modify your study, you must receive approval from the Human Studies Program prior to implementing any changes. You can submit your proposed changes via email at uhirb@hawaii.edu. (The subject line should read: Exempt Study Modification.) The Human Studies Program may review the exempt status at that time and request an application for approval as non-exempt research.

In order to protect the confidentiality of research participants, we encourage you to destroy private information which can be linked to the identities of individuals as soon as it is reasonable to do so. Signed consent forms, as applicable to your study, should be maintained for at least the duration of your project.

This approval does not expire. However, please notify the Human Studies Program when your study is complete. Upon notification, we will close our files pertaining to your study.

If you have any questions relating to the protection of human research participants, please contact the Human Studies Program by phone at 956-5007 or email uhirb@hawaii.edu. We wish you success in carrying out your research project.

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