

GROWING LEADERSHIP AT HO‘OULU ‘ĀINA: MATCHING UP GIFTS AND KULEANA
IN ORDER TO HEAL LAND, PEOPLE, AND COMMUNITY

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Eréndira Neri Aldana

Dissertation Committee:

Charlene Baker, Chairperson
Dharm P.S. Bhawuk
Candace Fujikane
Ashley Maynard
Hannah-Hanh D. Nguyen

Dedication

Para mi hermanita,
Adriana,
who taught me to be brave.

Abstract

Early literature on leadership focused on the traits of a single individual, usually male, who manages employees within a clearly defined hierarchy for a U.S.-based company. The last several decades have seen the concept of leadership expand to include followers, peers, supervisors, the public and the non-profit sectors, and culture across a diverse sample of populations globally. Indigenous leadership contributes to this discussion by including a social, historical, and political context that acknowledges connection to land. However, leadership theories have yet to address the topic of reconciliation and overall community wellbeing. To address this gap, this paper explored what leadership looks like in a more holistic community context where a community program that includes food production, native reforestation, cultural education revitalization, and healing are all meaningful components of leadership development and community transformation. The following questions were explored: 1) What does leadership look like when one seeks to provide people of a community the freedom and space to build meaningful relationships with land, each other, and themselves? and 2) How can we help leaders flourish in our communities to work towards this and other types of reconciliation? Using phenomenology as a method of inquiry, interviews and participant observations were used to capture the stories of staff and volunteers as part of program connected to a comprehensive health center in Kalihi. Leadership in this program is understood as the matching of gifts to kuleana. This leadership model recognizes the potential for all members of the community to fulfill meaningful leadership roles. The synergistic process of offering a gift, and having it valued is healing for both an individual and a community. Being in a safe and welcoming space offers an environment where people are free to explore what their gift and kuleana may be. Parallels between shared leadership, multicultural leadership, and Indigenous leadership are

presented. This model of leadership contributes to the literature by grounding leadership in reconciliation and healing for all. This model and how leaders are developed within it are discussed.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Early literature on leadership focused on the traits of a single individual, usually male, who manages employees within a clearly defined hierarchy for a U.S.-based company (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). Much of this literature comes from the business world and its application mostly exists in the private sector. Even within this narrow scope of conceptualizing and applying the concepts of leadership, the term is difficult to define. In a comprehensive review of the early history of research on leadership, Yukl (1989) found leadership to be defined in terms of individual traits, leader behavior, influence over others, influence on task goals, influence on organizational culture, interaction patterns, role relationships, and follower perceptions. These varying terms to define leadership generated a wide range of phenomena to investigate but also differences in the interpretation of results. After decades of research into these phenomena, the result was a coalescing around four main approaches: power-influence approach, behavior approach, trait approach, and the situational approach.

The power-influence approach understands leadership by the type and amount of power possessed by a leader that can be exercised over others. The traits of a particular leader or the development of a leader are ignored. The behavior approach to leadership focuses on the specific behaviors that leaders use on the job and the relationship of this behavior to effective management. This line of research, however, rarely considered the traits of leaders or an analysis of power, even though both of these aspects influence leadership because a leader's traits influence behavior and this behavior will be used to exercise and strengthen power.

The trait approach to research on leadership is concentrated on the personal attributes of the leaders themselves. Using a variety of research methods, early leadership theories attributed the success of leaders to traits like tireless energy, charming and persuasive powers, initiative,

emotional maturity, and stress tolerance (Yukl, 1989). Finally, the situational approach to understanding leadership emphasizes the importance of contextual factors. This approach offers no shortage of theories for explaining what aspects of a situation influence leader behavior, and led to the development of the field of transformational and charismatic leadership, which offered a more positive and holistic approach to the field.

Twenty years later an updated comprehensive review of the leadership research by Avolio, Reichard, Hannah, Walumbwa, & Chan (2009) has shown the concept of leadership to have expanded to include followers, peers, supervisors, the public and the non-profit sectors, and culture across a diverse sample of populations globally. At the end of this review the authors point to a future of leadership research that is more holistic in nature, including understanding the process of leadership development. Effective leadership is viewed as less of a top-down, leader centric process, as the field originally started, and more of a group and follower-centered process (Wang, Waldman, & Zang, 2014).

By reconceptualizing leadership to mean that leaders now work with subordinates to recognize a need for change, and have influence in working to create change (as is the case with transformational leadership), as well as considering ways of enhancing motivation and morale (including tapping into collective identity), the landscape of leadership research changed. These changes have allowed for a plethora of different approaches to the study of leadership, which continue today (Avolio et al., 2009).

While this greatly expanded understanding of leadership is beneficial, there are still gaps in how leadership is conceptualized. Many widely recognized leadership theories still reverberate Western values of hierarchy and Western understandings of relationships with very clear boundaries about who or what is considered relevant for these discussions, along with much

shorter time frames as points of reference. For example, leadership trainings and management development focus on seeing immediate short-term outcomes and changes made within months instead of years.

However, there are other leadership models that are less recognized or understood by the Western canon. As a contrasting example, timeframes for intervention, development, and training in an Indigenous context span generations. In these communities, leaders work in the present day knowing that the impact of the work will not be seen for several generations. Therefore, it is important to expand existing leadership theories and practices to include an understanding of a simultaneous, ongoing, and mutual process (e.g., shared leadership) compared to those that only involve a delineated upward or downward influence by a selected individual (Wang, Waldman, Zhang, 2014). In addition to expanding on shared leadership theories, it is important to explore others that are gaining prominence, such as multicultural leadership, which explicitly allows for a diversity of values, practices, and peoples for the benefit of all involved (Webb, Darling, & Alvey, 2014), and Indigenous leadership, which contributes to the discussion of leadership by including a land-based context (Stewart & Warn, 2017).

To help fill these gaps, this paper aims to define and understand leadership in yet a different way that is dictated by community needs and context. Specifically, I explored what leadership looks like in a more holistic community context where community programs such as food production, community reforestation, cultural education, and healing are all meaningful components of community transformation. In other words, what does leadership look like when one seeks to provide people of a community the freedom and space to build meaningful relationships with the land, each other, and themselves?

To answer these questions, I collaborated with Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, located in a community that lies on the outskirts of urban Honolulu. Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is a program of Kokūa Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family services, which serves the most dense and diverse community in the state (Mahi, 2013). The name of this valley community is Kalihi, meaning “the edge” in Hawaiian. This sacred place was the ancestral home of Papa and Wākea, who lived high in the Ko‘olau mountains on the ridge named Kilohana, which separates the valley of Kalihi from the windward side of the island. According to the 2011 census, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Asians make up 93% of valley residents, and 37% of Kalihi Valley residents were foreign-born compared to 18% statewide and 13% nationwide (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011a; U.S. Census Bureau, 2011b). The staff at the community health center that services this community speaks approximately 25 different languages on a regular basis (www.kkv.net), and nearly three-fourths of public school students in this valley qualify for free or reduced lunch, with one school reporting a rate of 96% (Mahi, 2013).

These statistics only begin to hint at stories of displacement and diaspora. The free or reduced lunch statistic, specifically, is a proxy for understanding poverty, since national guidelines determine eligibility for the lunch program based on a families’ annual income (USDA, 2008). Leadership theories and models have yet to address a context like this. Additionally, many of the leadership models and theories from the first 80 years of the academic field were created within a culture, seemingly unaffected by poverty, forced displacement, multiculturalism, and colonization. However, the concepts of shared leadership, multicultural leadership, and Indigenous leadership can begin to offer insight into the work and vision of building leaders for the community of Kalihi and beyond the valley. Work at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is always done with the goal of reverberating beyond the valley, and understanding how it impacts

neighbors in other valleys, on other sides of the island, and across the state and ocean. Therefore, findings from this study will be disseminated using methods that are consistent with the values of the community and the site where the research was conducted.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The History of Leadership

Early Research on Leadership

Leadership has been studied for over 100 years. Before discussing some of this literature, it is important to clarify the difference between leadership and management, and to note that much of the early work on leadership might be more aptly characterized as management, as its focus has been on managing people and tasks to reach an outcome. As the field progressed, discussions of values began to be clearly articulated and the transactional input=output nature of the field began to shift. For example, leadership is now understood to be transformational for both the leader and the follower, whereas management is understood to be supervisory authority over followers for the purposes of completing tasks. These differences, which have significant implications for Indigenous communities, will become clear as the eras of research on this topic are presented.

The early research on leadership set the foundation for the plethora of literature that exists today. A comprehensive historical review by Yukl in the 1980s found that roughly the first fifty years of the leadership literature can be categorized into four main approaches: power-influence approach, behavior approach, trait approach, and the situational approach (1989). Publication on these four major approaches spans a variety of disciplines including management, psychology, sociology, public administration, and education. Across each of these disciplines, researchers have defined leadership based on their own perspective, field of study, and phenomenon of interest. While this created a thriving field of research, it also led to important, and, at times, seemingly contradictory differences. At the time of Yukl's review the number of papers and books on the subject, referred to as managerial leadership, already numbered in the

several thousands. In this early era of research, leadership definitions included a focus on individual traits, leader behavior, interaction patterns, role relationships, follower perceptions, influence over others, influence on task goals, and influence on organizational culture. This range in definitions varies in three major ways: (1) differences in who exerts influence, (2) the purpose of influence attempts, and (3) the way in which the influence is exercised.

The power-influence approach seeks to explain leadership by the amount of power possessed by the leader, the type of power, and how the power is exercised. In this literature, power is sometimes defined as influence over attitudes and behavior, and other times is defined by influence over events. Where the power comes from that influences each of these two categories is seen as either stemming from the attributes of the person, or from attributes of the position. By the time Yukl's review was published in 1989, the field seemed to reach an understanding that an interaction model of power and position was more useful than the dichotomy of power versus position or power plus position for explaining differences across leaders. In other words, characteristics of a person and their position interact to determine power.

In the power-influence approach, researchers also looked to understand how this power is obtained and lost. Social Exchange Theory (Hollander, 1978) attributes greater status and power to those that show competence in problem solving and are seen as loyal to the group. Conversely, leaders lose power if they fail at solving a problem and this failure is seen as a result of their poor judgment, irresponsibility, or prioritizing their self-interests over the group's interests. Personal attributes interacting with positional power can explain obtaining or losing power because an individual leader's success (or failure) in demonstrating competence and solving problems is related to how important the problem is for the overall operations and success of an organization.

Furthermore, obtaining and maintaining power also depends on how unique a leader's skill set and resources are. Those that are easily replaced are more susceptible to losing power.

The amount of power a leader should have depends on the position, tasks, and nature of the organization. But the literature does seem to agree that it is not good to have too little or too much power. Leaders who lack power will have a hard time maintaining an efficient and high performing organization. Too much power may mean that leaders rely too heavily on the structure of hierarchy, and while subordinates may comply, they may be indifferent to this compliance, or worse, they may do so reluctantly, leading to resentment or insubordination. The abuse of power has also been well studied and it is partially attributed to an individual having too much position power (Zaleznik, 1970). Experimental research settings suggest that leaders with more power (defined by the ability to reward or punish followers): (1) devalued the worth of their followers, (2) maintained greater social distance, and (3) explained the success of subordinates to be a result of the leader's work (Kipnis, 1972).

The behavioral approach focuses on the actions of leaders on the job and to the effectiveness of their behaviors. At first, these behaviors fell into two categories: task-oriented behavior or relationship-oriented behavior. Task-oriented behavior focused on ensuring that people, equipment, and resources were being used in efficient ways. The potential downfall of focusing on task oriented behavior is that these high standards of efficiency can create productive work environments, but at the expense of employee morale and creativity (Helmich & Erzen, 1975). By contrast, relationship-oriented behavior was concerned with the social relationships of leaders and subordinates. More successful leaders are able to recognize relationships and engage multiple parties to address issues and opportunities (McCall & Kaplan, 1985). By the mid-1980s

we see evidence consistently indicating that a combination of task-oriented and relationship-oriented behavior is necessary for effective leadership (Misumi, 1985).

From the relationship-oriented behavior research arose a subfield that emphasized the importance of subordinate input: referred to as participative leadership. Experimental and correlational studies during this time reached little consensus on the relationship between participative leadership and higher satisfaction and performance of subordinates (Cotton, Vollrath, Froggatt, Lengneck, Hall & Jennings, 1988). However, studies that were more qualitative in nature found participation and empowerment of subordinates to be an integral part of effective leadership (Bradford & Cohen, 1984). This same relationship was found with groups that were less hierarchical in nature and self-managed by the collective (Manz & Sims, 1987).

Next, the trait approach was dominant in the 1930s and 1940s. Hundreds of studies were conducted to determine the personal traits of leaders that could explain successful leadership. Several traits were found to be useful, including, high self-esteem, energy, initiative, emotional maturity, stress tolerance, and belief in internal locus of control. Later research in the 1980s confirmed these earlier findings (McCall & Lombardo, 1983). Along with a focus on traits, this approach also prompted research about motivation and specific skill sets used by effective leaders. During this time, it was considered that managerial motivation was one of the most promising predictors of effective leadership; however, the components that defined motivation were culturally defined by Western values: desire for power, desire to compete with others, and a positive attitude to compete with others (Berman & Miner, 1985). As an example, in large hierarchical organizations, research with leaders on their motivations showed that they had a stronger need for power, need for personal achievement, and a weaker need for affiliation.

Regarding skills, studies have shown an association between effective leadership and technical skills, conceptual skills, and personal skills such as analytical ability, persuasiveness, speaking ability, memory for details, empathy, tact, and charm (Bass, 1981; Yukl, 1989). How these skills interact as a set with motivation and personal traits depends on the demands of the context and the actors involved, but the research suggests overall that balance and adaptability of all three are conducive for successful leadership (Boyatzis, 1982).

Finally, the situational approach tended to focus theory and research on contextual factors. Leadership behavior was understood as either a dependent variable or within a more complex relationship where context served as a moderator between leadership behavior and effectiveness. In other words, the situational approach understands leadership behavior to be either the outcome of another variable, or in more complex situations the leadership behavior influences the strength of the relationship between two other variables. By the time Yukl's review was published in the late 1980s there still were no prominent theories that could successfully explain leadership when context was understood as a moderator. Conversely, leadership seen as a dependent variable had allowed for the emergence of a multitude of theories. For example, Role Theory stated that leaders adapt their behavior to the situation, and that their behavior is based on the expectations of superiors, peers, subordinates, and outsiders (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, & Snoelk, 1964). Demands - Constraints - Choices Theory by Stewart (1976) identified key aspects of the situation that created demands and constraints on leaders. A theory that emphasized the macro-level situational determinants is the Multiple Influence Model. This model considered factors such as level of authority, size and function of the work unit, technology, centralization of authority, lateral independence, and forces in the external environment (Hunt & Osborn, 1982).

Even with all of these theories that sought to explain situational contexts, leadership effectiveness also partially depends on how well leaders understand the demands and constraints particular to their situations. This is to say that it is still up to leaders to decide what aspects of a job to emphasize, how to allocate time, and with whom they should interact (Kotter, 1982). Those that are more effective are better able to reconcile seemingly conflicting roles and expectations and see role ambiguity as an opportunity to use their discretion to adapt to contextual circumstances. They do so by expanding their range of choices, and utilizing opportunities to their fullest advantage (Yukl, 1989). The research also suggests that over the long run, effective leaders are able to modify situations to increase the use of their discretion (Kahn, et.al, 1964).

The Second Era of Leadership Research

The increasing use of qualitative methods and an explosion of situational theories in leadership marks a second era of the field. Researchers began looking beyond the technicalities of increasing efficiency and optimizing profit. They were now interested in revitalizing their companies and organizations with charismatic and transformational leadership. As such, American companies had to rethink how to adapt and make major changes if they were to compete with the growing global economy (Yukl, 1989).

That said, although definitions of leadership seemed to be transforming, it was still the case that most research during this time dealt with only a very narrow facet of leadership and ignored most other aspects. The particular aspects would vary depending on how one theorized leadership, but were still limited. A main controversy of the time was answering the questions: (1) is leadership a distinct phenomenon? (2) Or is it no different than group social influence processes that include us all? The first would understand leadership to be individualistic while in

the second conceptualization, leadership is understood as a collective. The first view dominated the literature in the early decades of research and can be seen in the first three approaches: power-influence, behavior, and a trait approach. The second view, understanding the phenomenon as a collective, is more prevalent in the situational approach to leadership research, and has led the way to theories of shared leadership in more recent decades.

The development of new-genre leadership theories (Bryman,1992), such as transformational and charismatic leadership, was the first step to reconciling these two opposing views since they integrated the once independent approaches of power, behavior, leader traits, and situational variables. For example, one of the first theories of charismatic leadership by House (1977) argued that the charismatic leader could come to be seen as a role model by his/her followers because of a leader's charismatic appeal and the emotional interactions that occur between leader and followers. House offered an integrated theoretical framework to explain the behavior and success of charismatic leaders.

In 1978, Burns defined leadership as “inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and motivations – the wants and needs, the aspirations, and expectations – of both leaders and followers” (p. 19), thus articulating a theoretical shift of understanding leadership from the individual to the collective. This shift, along with the idea of transforming followers instead of managing them, also required the field to more clearly articulate a set of values. This definition of leadership from 40 years ago clearly articulated a difference between leadership and management, with the former being transformational and the latter being more of a transactional approach. In a paper about transformational leadership within the context of political science, Bass (1985) describes transactional leadership as based on “economic cost-benefit assumptions” of exchange, while transformational leadership requires a set of values,

ethics, motivation, and morality. Using this distinction, transformational leadership has been shown to have a greater effect on followers and collectives compared to transactional leadership (Burns, 1978).

From a cultural psychology perspective, it is not that transactional leadership is void of values but rather that these values are so ingrained within a Western context that they simply are not articulated. More importantly, an analysis of power provided by political science allows for an intentional articulation of values in transformational leadership. These values are explicit when Burns and Bass concur that Hitler was pseudo-transformational because at the core of authentic transformational leadership are “good” values (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

Articulating “good” values is especially relevant to the work of the non-profit sector. The charismatic leadership of the 1980s and 1990s that was a mechanism for ultimately expanding profit in an increasingly global competitive market is still very different from transformational leadership that requires an articulation of values as a basic tenet of functioning. Thus, transformational leadership may better align with the structure of a non-profit organization whose goal is not to increase profit but to work for a cause (Riggio, Bass, & Orr, 2004). These causes, however, are typically complex in nature and are often addressed with limited resources. What then are non-profits to do? What does leadership look like within this context?

Shared Leadership – An Example of Leadership in Non-Profit Organizations

Alongside the transformational leadership literature, organizational transformation theories were heading towards the concept of shared leadership (Perry, Allison, & Misra, 2014). In the decades of the 1980s and 1990s experiments on “self-managing” leadership teams and the concept of learning organizations pioneered the concept that continuous capacity building was necessary (Senge, 1990). This type of leadership is defined by mutual influence and shared

responsibility among team members, where they lead each other towards goal achievement (Wang et. al., 2014). Shared leadership further pushes the collective, compared to transformational leadership, by not only considering mutual influence of both leaders and followers but by changing the power of the relationship. Leading each other to goal achievement repositions the power from a top down approach to a conceptualization of leadership that can take on different shapes, linear or not.

The impacts of shared leadership are immensely useful for non-profit work. At the height of the housing/financial crisis (between 2008-2010) a capacity building initiative was led by Perry, Allison, and Misra (2014) to work with the executive directors of 27 civic participation groups to increase the awareness, knowledge, and ability of directors to develop staff as leaders at all levels of the organization. A follow-up evaluation revealed that executive directors stated that not only did shared leadership decrease their stresses, but also it allowed the non-profit to do more effective work with less funds (Perry et al., 2014).

Even though shared leadership allows for a theoretical shift from top-down decision making and power, one of the major challenges of being successful at curating shared leadership is shifting from a real or assumed hierarchical structure. For shared leadership to be a reality, then, there are particular behaviors and characteristics necessary to foster this shift in application. Specifically, Perry et al. (2014) found that it was important to: (1) recognize when particular expressions of leadership are appropriate but be able to shift this expression based on the context; (2) expand the problem solving capacity by inviting staff to assume greater responsibility and influence; and (3) create a culture of trust by aligning values, clarifying accountability, explicitly supporting experimentation, and consistently working towards clear communication. In this way, shared leadership theory and practice offers an organizational shift

to our understanding of leadership. However, the success of this type of leadership within the non-profit realm is likely contingent on Perry et al.'s (2014) third point, being able to create a culture of trust within the organization.

The use of the word culture in this context most likely refers to environment, and one of the ways in which a trusting environment is created is by articulating values. The articulation of values reveals another important distinction between the concepts of leadership and management. Whereas leadership, viewed as transformational, would require creating a culture of trust, management, viewed as transactional, would not necessarily have this requirement. Articulating values also has other benefits: (1) the process of mutual influencing, which is necessary in leadership, can be greatly facilitated or inhibited by the extent to which there is a shared framework of values and culture, and (2) certain leadership positions, by their very nature, depend on values and moral authority to be influential (Hochschild, 2010). Hochschild notes that in high pressure and high stakes contexts, as is the case for the United Nations (UN), it is the moral authority of the organization, rather than being linked to power or resources, that gives this entity authority and leverage in politically charged and potentially dangerous circumstances (2010).

Thus far, if values have been explicitly articulated in the leadership literature they are understood as good, bad, ethical, or they are specific to the cause of a particular non-profits' work. When values have not been articulated, as seen in the first era of leadership research, they have been implied. For example, some of the ways in which values have been implicitly portrayed in the understanding and study of leadership are by elevating individualism over collectivism, emphasizing rationality rather than ascetics or religion, focusing on individual incentives rather than group incentives, stressing follower responsibilities vs. their rights,

assuming that motivation is driven by hedonism rather than being driven by altruism, and underscoring the centrality of work and democratic value orientation (Javidan, & House, 2001). This bias can partially be explained by the fact that most leadership literature originates from Western Europe, the United States, and Canada (Hochschild, 2010). Nonetheless, as the area of leadership research has progressed there has been an increasingly accepted understanding that Western leadership theory and practice do not adequately represent or expand the abundance of leadership philosophy and ability (Webb, Darling, & Alvey, 2014).

Unfortunately, although there were early arguments in the leadership literature that stressed the importance of context, any meaningful representations of context were limited at the time (Yukl, 1989). As the field progressed, those studying leadership came to see that context does matter as not only do leaders represent and live in particular cultures themselves, they also interact with other cultures in varying contexts. This wealth of diversity shapes our definitions and expectations of who leaders are, what they do, how they behave, and what they can be (Webb et.al., 2014). For example, in a 2004 study on leadership, termed the GLOBE project, 65 leader traits were examined. Of these, 35 personal attributes of leaders were understood by some countries as contributing to good leadership and in other countries these same attributes were seen as inhibiting good leadership (Grove, 2007). Thus, context is important because it determines the amount of space there is for leadership to happen and the type of leadership that is necessary (Hochschild, 2010).

Diversity in Leadership

Although the early phases of the leadership literature did not clearly articulate a set of values or culture, these theories were not totally void of them. As mentioned previously, the issue is that investigation and development in the field mostly occurred in the United States,

Canada, and Western Europe (Yukl, 2010). Therefore, early on, it was assumed that the theories generated were universal, when in reality they were quite ethnocentric (Chin & Trimble, 2014), and unintentionally reaffirmed privilege and marginalization by only conceptualizing leadership to mirror the qualities of non-diverse leadership of the time. This is to say that the “universal” traits that were thought to characterize leadership in the first era of the field such as intelligence, integrity, sociability (Yukl, 1989) did not account for the different semantic meanings, cultural equivalency or lack thereof, and how using only these limited understandings of leadership traits could actually exclude others with potential, but currently not in positions of leadership (Chin & Trimble, 2014). For example, although assertiveness may be considered a desirable trait for one culture and gender, e.g., white males, it may not be viewed as positively for another, e.g., Mexican women. Thus, a Mexican woman may be excluded from positions of leadership because she is seen to lack an integral trait to be a successful leader, yet the quality of assertiveness may not be understood by her as necessary to be in a leadership position, and in fact, may be a direct contradiction to what is considered appropriate leadership behavior in her community.

In the second era of research, a novel focus on the context in which leadership occurs enabled a more complex understanding of leadership to develop. The field now recognizes that leaders, and all of those who engage with them, carry a multitude of values and lived experiences that will impact their interactions. Therefore, increasing our understanding of these relationships (as the example above shows with regard to differences between desirable traits attributed to white males vs. Mexican women) will lead to a better understanding of leadership in different contexts. In particular, two important contextual factors have risen to the forefront of the leadership literature: culture and gender.

A relatively new direction in the leadership literature fundamentally addresses the role that culture and context play in understanding and creating leadership: multicultural leadership. Multicultural leadership is understood to be an inclusive approach and philosophy that incorporates influences, practices, and values of diverse cultures in a respectful and productive manner (Bordas, 2007). Since then, the understanding of multicultural leadership has expanded to include the organization's tendency to value and support different leadership styles (Webb et al., 2014). As described by Atiku and Fields (2017) in a chapter on multicultural orientations for global leadership, the benefits of multicultural leadership in organizations include: improving creative ability and strategy through shared perspective and decision making; enhancing cooperation and joint consultation; reducing fear of uncertainty, mistakes, and misunderstandings; and promoting equity.

In a report on leadership in the United Nations (UN), Fabrizio Hochschild (2010) provided a more nuanced understanding of what multicultural leadership means and differentiated it from other discussions of leadership, culture, and diversity. When mentioned elsewhere in the literature, multicultural leadership is touted as advantageous for its “competitive advantage and business strategy” (Webb et al., 2014, p. 4), but Hochschild writes: “some of the research undertaken by leadership experts is perceived as simplistic in its approach to cultural peculiarities by other academic disciplines” (2010, p. 36). Unfortunately, working in diverse environments is sometimes conflated with understanding how to engage with, understand, and respect diversity. In the context of global management and leadership, the argument is made that increased cultural diversity is an advantage because it promotes intellectual diversity. However, this can only be true in environments created to both nurture and encourage cultural diversity, thus, expanding multicultural leadership theory to include a description of the organization's

value and support of diversity is integral. Multicultural leadership not only includes the variety of cultures that each individual brings with them, but it also recognizes values at the organizational level that support the individuals that make up the group.

In addition to cultural identity, leadership is also influenced by other social identities, including class, race, and gender, and in some contexts affirming one's identity is an important leadership strategy (Chin, 2013). For example, Fassinger, Shullman, and Stevenson (2010) found that given the marginalization of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) community it was important for leaders in this movement to strongly affirm their identity. Importantly, research on leadership in terms of race/ethnicity/gender in the continental United States frames each of these identities as "minority status". Although the concept of minority status may not be as relevant in the context of Hawai'i, the research shows support for the intersectionality of these identities. Chin (2013) surveyed a diverse group of leaders from five racial/ethnic groups within the U.S. to understand how these social identities influenced the exercise of leadership. The author found that female leaders of color strongly embraced their ethnic and gender identities compared to the white male subgroup, and even the white female subgroup. Furthermore, they felt that these identities, along with their lived experiences as "minority status", influenced their expressions of leadership. Women leaders were more likely to feel challenged as to their effectiveness because of their gender, and more likely to feel that they were expected to behave according to gender roles.

In other gender leadership literature, experimental methods have been used, and have also found gender differences (Eagly & Carli, 2004). For example, studies suggest that women leaders are less hierarchical, more democratic and participative, while men are considered to be more directive and task oriented (Hochschild, 2010). Other research generally reiterates what one

would expect from gender stereotypes: women leaders are more sensitive to the needs of others, more intuitive, and flexible than men (Hochschild, 2010). These conclusions have been met with some criticism as the nature of experimental methods, by default, tends to lack ecological validity. In addition, some authors (Ibarra & Obodaru, 2009) argue that when factors, such as role and salary are held constant, similarities in leadership style greatly outweigh the differences attributed to gender. These contradictory findings suggest the need to further explore concepts of gender and leadership, in a more holistic way that recognizes context.

Indigenous Leadership

Clearly, there have been great strides in the leadership literature in the past two decades with writings on shared leadership and multicultural leadership, both of which have been extremely important in understanding leadership in non-profit organizations. Another type of leadership, Indigenous leadership, moves the field even further by deeply grounding theory in the context of a particular community. This context will include important historical, social, and political conditions. For the purposes of this section, I will use the term Indigenous as it has been defined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous people:

Indigenous peoples are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. They have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Despite their cultural differences, indigenous peoples from around the world share common problems related to the protection of their rights as distinct peoples. Indigenous peoples have sought recognition of their identities, way of life and their right to traditional lands, territories and natural resources for years, yet throughout history, their rights have always been violated (2007).

The use of the term Indigenous, however, is not always clearly defined, and is often perceived and interpreted through a Western lens. With the exception of political science, research from the social sciences that uses the term Indigenous leadership places a strong

emphasis on context, although the term itself is used differently. For example, Chinese managers in China are presented as an example of an “indigenous” management tradition (Chen, Yu, & Son, 2014; Zhang, Fu, Xi, Li, Xu, Cao, Li, & Jing, 2012). This is an example of one understanding of the word indigenous, with a lowercase “i”, which is used similar to common English where we typically use the word endemic--referring to something from a very specific place. There is also a subset of the literature that uses the term “Indigenous leadership” to refer to the communities of “developing countries” that interface with American military forces in combat (Long, 2017). This use of the word indigenous primarily distinguishes tribal cultures in developing countries from the American military. In each of these examples there is no mention of the cultural practitioners or the relationship of these groups to “dominant” societies that have displaced them, as implied by the United Nations definition. Therefore, one aim of this dissertation is to be clear about my use of the word Indigenous since the literature below will illustrate that the aspect of practicing culture and displacement has important implications for developing leaders in these communities.

Albeit limited in scope, the research that focuses on Indigenous leadership, however it has been defined, helps the field of psychology and business move beyond previous literature by recognizing and incorporating the context of Indigenous communities. Although Indigenous leadership literature is fairly new, within Indigenous communities, wisdom, theory, and practice have been passed down by many generations to the present day. In these communities, a framework such as shared leadership did/does not need articulating because their Indigenous worldview is predicated on interconnectedness, and therefore mutual influence, where leadership is generally *always* shared. Previously in this paper, shared leadership was presented within the context of the non-profit world where these organizations found that they could be more efficient

in serving community needs when leadership responsibilities were shared among the members of the organization. Within an Indigenous worldview, this sharing of responsibility is usually a common tenet of community interaction, and therefore, rarely needs to be articulated. In contrast, Western academic literature has only recently begun to coin and discuss shared leadership as a term and concept.

Although the need to understand leadership in the range of contexts described above is valuable, it is the context in which my community site (Ho‘oulu ‘Āina) exists that I will focus on. The context of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is more in line with what Indigenous peoples of North America, Australia, and Aotearoa describe as a result of the impact over time by dispossession of an invading culture and people (Stewart & Warn, 2017).

Indigenous scholars from fields like Political Science, Ethnic Studies, American Studies, and Indigenous studies have written about Indigenous resistance of keeping an enduring connection to land in spite of structures of removal, dispossession, and colonization that aim to eliminate that relationship. In Hawai‘i specifically, the nature and structure of colonization has been referred to as settler colonialism (Trask, 1999). Although the nuances and theory of settler colonialism are beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to note that this term refers to a structure of colonization where Asian and White settlers believe in ideologies and reinforce practices that support the broader structure of the U.S. dispossession of Native Hawaiians from their land (Okamura & Fujikane, 2008). The work of scholars like Tai Alfred, Noelani Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, and Lianne Simpson frames Indigenous people’s connections to their land and culture as inherently radical and political acts. These scholars provide examples of how continuing oral traditions (Alfred, 2005) and the resurgence of Native Hawaiian cultural practices (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013) can lay a foundation for resistance and radical change in

Indigenous communities. The research presented in this paper exemplifies what these scholars describe as Indigenous resistance. With its focus on healing people's relationship to land and culture, Ho'oulu 'Āina is an example of Indigenous resistance, a radical political act, and Native Hawaiian Resurgence.

Additional examples of "research of resistance" exist specifically within the context of leadership development as defined by other Indigenous communities of North America, Australia and Aotearoa (New Zealand), who have begun to publish the meanings of leadership for themselves (Katene, 2010). In this body of research, each Indigenous community defines leadership slightly differently, but all are holistic in nature, characterized by strong spiritual orientations, and are reflective of, and often include, traditional protocol and practices (Stewart & Warn, 2017). In contrast to almost all Western leadership theories, with the exception of a few in political science, Indigenous leadership is defined by a strong radical tradition (Stewart & Warn, 2017). What is radical and how it is radical will vary based on context.

Given that dispossession and colonization are a defining background for Indigenous communities, leaders in these communities may need to juggle multiple roles. For example, on one level is the issue of self-governance while, potentially in conflict, another level is the successful interactions between the Indigenous community and the imposing government structure. And, as Stewart and Warn (2017) recognize, this must all be done while keeping in mind the power differentials at almost every point of interface. For this reason, several Indigenous communities have embarked on exploring what it takes to develop leadership that best serves their communities, addresses the dualities of their existence, and is informed by ancestral knowledge.

Leadership Development in Indigenous Communities

In the early 2000s, literature focused on the question of whether or not a leader can be developed. In other words, what evidence existed in past decades to support the idea that leaders could be created or trained to lead with all of the qualities and in the manner theorized about in the literature? Within an Indigenous leadership context, Indigenous people face devastating external factors, for example being displaced from ancestral lands while fighting to re-connect to land and heal their communities. How do these factors, which are unique to Indigenous peoples, disrupt their leadership potential, processes, and success? Some research has been done to answer these questions in a variety of settings to address leadership development in Indigenous communities.

The Healthy Native Communities Fellowship was an evidence- and place-based mentorship and leadership program designed to improve the health status of Indigenous communities by developing young fellows' skills and capacity to build community in Indian Country (Rae, Jones, Handal, Bluehorse-Anderson, Frazier, Maltrud, & Wallerstein, 2016). This fellowship included an evaluation component to support the continuous improvement of the leadership program. From this evaluation component, qualitative interviews with both community elders and the young developing leaders elicited five Indigenous leadership principles:

1. To build community connectedness and care for each other in strong and healthy relationships.
2. To regenerate and heal the community by cultivating cultural and spiritual resources.
3. To nurture talents and leadership that enhance the quality of community life.
4. To develop effective strategies to tackle problems that threaten the community.
5. To cultivate and create opportunities to heal negative family and community conditions.

These core principles help to define and differentiate Indigenous leadership from all other leadership literature. The mechanisms of social participation (principle 1), cultural connectedness (principle 2), and advocacy work (principle 4) as the core of this fellowship is an example of how Indigenous leadership is conceptualized more holistically. Prior leadership literature does not address the larger institutional or societal context, such as colonization, in which leadership occurs in a systematic way. When complex societal contexts have been mentioned previously in the leadership literature, it has only been in passing. For example, when previous literature makes reference to an increasingly global economy, it is only mentioned enough to make the argument that diversity is now necessary to be successful. This reference to a large social context is a seemingly minor detail. The Indigenous leadership literature builds on previous models by shifting a minor detail to the forefront, thereby making the larger social context of colonization and dispossession as a foundational part of this work. Indigenous leadership development cannot be understood without community development and vice versa that looks beyond organizations and individual people.

The Present Study

Because leadership has been studied for so many years there is a strong foundation to inform what leadership can look like as contexts become increasingly multifaceted, whether because of a more competitive global economy or because diasporic communities resettle in novel places with complex social histories and circumstances. As the leadership literature has evolved, it has become more diverse in terms of the subjects studied, the variety of methods employed, and the contexts in which this phenomenon is understood. From the development of the field we know that one of the benefits of increased diversity in leadership is the ability to recognize and adapt to contexts. The nature of constant change and adaptation is understood by

many Indigenous peoples around the world (Smith, 1999; Webb et. al, 2014), and although there is now an ample amount of literature that emphasizes that context is important, the values and protocols that inform and are used in Indigenous communities are less well understood. Of equal importance is the need to further the academic literature, which has mostly been written about from a Western lens, to capture the knowledge and best practices of non-Western communities.

While recent work in the field of leadership is less Western-centric, there is a need to explicitly develop Indigenous-centric work by and for Indigenous peoples. My collaboration with Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, a program that has been serving the diverse community of Kalihi since 2006, will not only add to understandings of Indigenous leadership, but it will also further understandings of what it means to do community work in Kalihi.

Specifically, I explored: (a) what does leadership look like when one seeks to provide a mixed diasporic and Indigenous community the freedom and space to build meaningful relationships with the land, each other, and themselves?; (b) how can we help leaders flourish in our communities to work towards this and other types of reconciliation?; and (c) how do the aforementioned subfields of leadership (shared, multicultural, and Indigenous) compare to the leadership model that has been developed and implemented at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina?

My Community (The Research Site)

Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is located in the uplands of Kalihi Valley, see Figure 1 below, and includes 99 acres of forest dedicated to the health and wellbeing of the community. This place is stewarded by Kōkua Kalihi Valley (KKV) Comprehensive Family Services, a federally qualified community health center founded in 1972. KKV was started by Kalihi community members who coalesced around a lack of affordable and culturally appropriate healthcare services for the valley’s residents. With the motto “neighbors being neighborly to neighbors,” the executive

Many of KKV's programs are unique and would not usually be included as part of a "health" facility. However, due to KKV's close connection to the community and holistic focus, these wraparound programs are able to demonstrate that an approach of careful listening and partnership can lead to successful if not unexpected innovation. These innovative programs include Ho'oulu 'Āina, the community partner for my research.

As a part of KKV, Ho'oulu 'Āina is an entire department that contributes to KKV's rich community offerings. It uniquely addresses the health and spiritual needs of Kalihi Valley residents and beyond by strengthening the connections between people and land. Inspired by the ho'oulu 'ai (agricultural) designation of an ancient heiau or temple in Kalihi Valley, the name Ho'oulu 'Āina means "to grow land and to grow because of the land." This name reinforces and perpetuates the value that the health of the land and the health of the people are one.

In accordance with Hawaiian epistemology, Ho'oulu 'Āina's location is immersed in cultural, spiritual, and religious significance. Within the island of O'ahu, KKV and Ho'oulu 'Āina sit within the ahupua'a, or ancient land division of Kalihi that stretches from mountain to ocean. Looking deeper, Ho'oulu 'Āina is further situated within two smaller 'ili or land divisions named 'Ouaua (tough, thick skin, or an abundance of rain) and Māluawai (pit of water, two springs). The famous story of Kalihi's ko'ilipilipi rains mentions two forbidden lovers who escape to the uplands to hide. Falling into a deep slumber, they awaken to discover they have slept so long that their heads are flattened as if chiseled by an adze. This story is just one indication that this place is home to its own ancient community and stories.

In the story or mo'olelo "Ka Moolelo o ko Wakea ma Noho ana ma Kalihi", Kalihi was home to the gods Wākea (Sky father) and Papahānaumoku (Earth mother), who resided at the mountain peak Kilohana (Poepoe, 1906). Traditionally Kalihi 'ohana (families) made

pilgrimages to these sites and honored them with ho‘okupu (offerings) made from special stones. In Hawaiian epistemology, every mountain, rock, and plant has mana (spiritual power), and is a part of this community. Kilohana is within easy view at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, and provides a window and reminder of ancient history, spiritual practices and sacred, abundant land.

In the modern day, the properties that make up the 99-acre nature preserve, (see Figure 2 below), were passed down through family lines until they were sold in the early 1970’s to prominent Hawai‘i land developer Herbert Horita. Kalihi Valley residents fought Horita and advocated against plans to build a gated subdivision development, inspired by a sense of community stewardship and desire to maintain access to upland hunting and recreational trails. In response to these concerns, the City and County of Honolulu purchased the 99 acres for a park in 1980. After years of inaction by the City, the land was conveyed to the State in a land exchange that concluded in 1997. The State Parks Division currently has jurisdiction over the site. Unable to secure funding to develop a nature preserve, State Parks sought the involvement of private organizations to make Ho‘oulu ‘Āina a reality. In 2004, Kōkua Kalihi Valley began discussions with the State Parks department to seek a long-term lease of the site for the Nature Preserve, with the purpose of finally bringing Ho‘oulu ‘Āina to life. In December, 2004, the Board of Land and Natural Resources approved a 20-year lease over the 99-acre land to KKV. KKV initiated a community-based planning effort to design Ho‘oulu ‘Āina in keeping with the expressed interest of Kalihi residents and parameters established by the state. Funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s national Active Living By Design initiative provided the first seed funding for what would become Ho‘oulu ‘Āina.

learning for Kalihi Valley residents, specifically Native Hawaiians, Filipinos, Chuukese, Samoans and other Pacific Islanders. They also serve the larger O‘ahu community which includes people of all cultures. Its mission sits within KKV’s own mission, which seeks to foster “...healing and reconciliation and the alleviation of suffering in Kalihi Valley, by serving communities, families, and individuals through strong relationships that honor culture and foster health and harmony.” As the backdrop of this program, the work at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina contributes to the praxis of a larger social political movement in the Hawaiian community. Increasing connection to land and the resurgence of Native Hawaiian language and cultural practices is an important premise of this work. Indigenous scholars recognize how connecting back to land is a form of decolonization that also restores original relationships of Indigenous people to land, health, and relationships.

The work done at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is made up of four interwoven program areas: Koa ‘Āina (native reforestation), Lohe ‘Āina (restoring ancient sites and cultural knowledge), Mahi ‘Āina (community gardening and food production), and Hoa ‘Āina (community access). Koa ‘Āina is an ongoing forest stewardship effort to restore health and balance to Kalihi’s watershed and native upland forests, and was the first program of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. Through Mahi ‘Āina, community members participate in growing, preparing, and sharing healthy food, thereby, witnessing the connection between land and nourishment. Hoa ‘Āina invites a wide diversity of people to Ho‘oulu ‘Āina for experiential learning, recreation and work projects. Lohe ‘Āina provides a space for cultural practices from the diverse Pacific community to thrive. Kūpuna (elders) share stories of the land, traditional medicine practices are perpetuated and artists engage the community, giving the next generation a sense of the history of the ahupua‘a and of the people who sustained themselves on this land over thousands of years. Each of these programs

are available for a diverse range of people who attend Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. Over 100 participants a week participate in programming, ranging from “school groups learning about Hawaiian culture and ecology, non-profit groups interested in community service, families looking for bonding activities, ...and elders in need of medicinal herbs and healthy food” (Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, 2014). Just as the land transforms through malama ‘āina (caring for the land), many participants report transformational experiences.

The concepts of shared leadership, multicultural leadership, and Indigenous leadership can begin to offer insight into the work and vision of building leaders at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. Indigenous leadership principles, in particular, match the values of the programs there. As an illustration, the first principle of Indigenous leadership as presented by Rae and colleagues (2016) states: “to build community connectedness and care for each other in strong and healthy relationships.” Similarly the first principle listed on Ho‘oulu ‘Āina’s website reads: “Ho‘oulu ‘Āina seeks to provide peoples of our ahupua‘a, and abroad, the freedom to make connections and build meaningful relationships with the ‘āina, each other, and ourselves.” This, coupled with other principles designed to “work with the ahupua‘a as our model for sustainability...,” “work in the spirit of reciprocity...,” “...create an ahu (gathering, altar, collection) of shared connection and responsibility,” and significantly to “...work as an ‘and’ culture, not as an ‘or’ culture” lay the groundwork for their leadership practice, and allow guests to become family in this “...welcoming place of refuge...,” as stated in their mission. (for more information see Ho‘oulu ‘Āina’s website: www.hoouluaaina.com/our-intentions/).

My Positionality

I first came to interact with Ho‘oulu ‘Āina through an Indigenous Politics course on Sovereignty (POLS 720) during the Fall of 2013. Our workdays always began with a welcome,

followed by an Aloha Circle introduction and safety briefing, which included pule (prayer), oli (chant), or another protocol affirming the intentionality of both our work and our presence on the land. For this Aloha Circle introduction, everyone stands in a circle, sometimes holding hands, as one by one we each share our name, the name of a place we call home, and the name of a loved one we are thinking about. I would share my name, Eréndira, my home, Mexico City, and my sister's name or the name of a grandparent, in my native language and also in English.

For the month of October our seminar met up at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina instead of a classroom at the University of Hawai‘i. We explored food sovereignty and food systems as sites for the development and praxis of Indigenous politics. After four weeks of working on the land and assisting with native reforestation, an educational video was produced by students in the graduate seminar and gifted to Ho‘oulu ‘Āina describing what we learned about working on the land and how this work related to issues of sovereignty. For our entire group the experience was incredibly transformative. Towards the end of the semester it became known that in the Spring of 2014, an Indigenous Politics course would be held in its entirety up at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. That spring, the Decolonial Futures course (POLS 777) was followed by the opportunity to fulfill my practicum requirement for my degree program at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina in the Fall of 2015. Of note, the graduate seminars (POLS 270 and POLS 777) were held at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina because the work being done in this program is a prime example of sovereignty, Native Hawaiian resurgence, and Indigenous resistance. Connecting to land is an inherently political act and, furthermore, learning to grow food, specifically culturally meaningful food, is an act of sovereignty.

Since my first visit in Fall, 2013, I have spent an average of eight hours a week at the site. After several years of volunteering, I asked if a research paper could be helpful to support the work of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. I shared my nervousness in asking the program director if Ho‘oulu

‘Āina could be my research site. She laughed, told me that I was family, and said that my gift would be much appreciated. I tell this story to highlight the unique position I am in to do this work. My consistent and increasing participation with the people of this place over an extended period of time allowed me to attain what Wegner and Lave (2001) term as “legitimate peripheral participation.” This is to say, as a participant that started off as not being part of this community but by learning via engagement, I slowly came to be considered part of the family. Thus, the knowledge and skills I acquired through my participation at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina created a relationship where my identity would evolve to include the place, people, and practices of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina.

However, as a person that has no ancestral connection to Hawai‘i, I fall under the label of “settler.” From the very first introduction in an Aloha Circle, I clearly identified as Mexican, an outsider. A welcomed outsider to this place, but a settler nonetheless. Therefore, I feel a concept that more accurately captures my role as a participant observer is “settler aloha ‘āina”--a term coined by Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua (2013). The author explains: A “settler aloha ‘āina can take responsibility for and develop attachment to lands upon which they reside when actively supporting Kānaka Maoli (Hawaiians) who have been alienated from ancestral lands to reestablish those connections and also helping to rebuild Indigenous structures that allow for the transformation of settler-colonial relations” (p. 154).

Chapter 3: Methods

Study Design

At my research site I worked with two key community stakeholders to conduct a phenomenological study following the guidelines established by Patton (2002), Creswell (2007), and Corbin & Strauss (2008), to understand the experiences of individuals who have participated in the Ho‘oulu ‘Āina program, and furthermore, to understand how these experiences inform the leadership development theories specific to this program and place.

A conscious decision to privilege Indigenous forms of inquiry and protocol informed the methodology and procedures for this project. As suggested by Indigenous scholar and theorist Linda Tuhiwai Smith, I “shared the theories and analyses, which inform the way knowledge and information are constructed and represented” ... to “demystify, to decolonize” this research process (1999, p. 16) with my two key community stakeholders. Phenomenology was selected as a method after a discussion with these partners and is fitting for this study because of the philosophical perspectives of this particular method. Creswell (2007) articulates these perspectives thus: phenomenology specifically requires the researcher to “suspend all judgments until they can be founded on more certain basis”, to honor “the intentionality of consciousness” and thus, “recognize that the reality of anything, objects or otherwise, is inextricably linked to one’s consciousness of it, and what’s more that this intentionality of consciousness prevents a subject-object dichotomy because reality of an object cannot be understood without the perceived meaning of the experience of an individual” (p. 59). The intentionality of consciousness is most relevant to the discussion of spirituality and sources of knowledge in the results section below.

Participants

Ten participants were recruited to participate in this study. The sample included eight females and two males whose ages ranged from approximately 24 to 60 years of age. Interviews across all participants explored both volunteer and full-time staff experiences. Participants who were staff, on average, had been at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina 6.77 years, ranging from 4 to 10 years. Participants who were volunteers, on average, had been there 2 years, ranging from 6 months to 6 years. Some participants were able to describe experiences both as volunteer and staff resulting in eight of the interviews capturing data from a staff member’s perspective and nine of the interviews capturing data from a volunteer’s perspective.

Recruitment of participants started with the program director, who suggested approximately a dozen other names for potential interview subjects, including both staff and volunteers. This snowball sampling method proved useful; however, participants were ultimately selected based on availability and willingness to participate.

Measures

Throughout the planning for the study, I met with the two key community stakeholders to discuss the types of questions to be used in the research project, and to offer an invitation to expand the areas to be discussed in the interviews. These conversations led to two important changes to my interview questions: (1) to ask specifically about leadership genealogy, and (2) to inquire about the role of women’s leadership in this place. It is important to note that the request to understand the second point was less about gender and more about feminine energy, *mana wahine*. This distinction will be written about in the results section.

The interview questions for staff covered three main areas: work activities, the context of this work and why it is meaningful, and their development as staff at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. For

example, staff participants were asked to describe an example of both a good and bad volunteer day to understand their decision making processes, their roles in their program, and the nature of their responsibilities. Probing questions were intended to connect the work of the program to the five core principles of Indigenous leadership development in Indian Country presented by Rae and colleagues (2017) and therefore, to understand how the work connects to their families, the larger goals and intentions of the non-profit, and the community that is being served. Finally, when relevant, staff were asked to describe their history being at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina and transitioning from a volunteer to a staff member. The interview questions for staff members can be seen in Appendix A.

To provide greater context to staff work experiences, information about logistical and administrative aspects of this work were collected from the program director of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina and the consultant that has been working with Ho‘oulu ‘Āina specifically on staff leadership development. The questions for these interviews can be found in Appendix B. Unlike questions that were asked of general staff members, these questions asked the program director and consultant how the foundation was created to foster the current work environment for staff. Information from questions on staff development was also supplemented by the curriculum that is used to help train new staff and dedicated volunteers deemed ready to take on an additional level of responsibility.

Interviews with dedicated volunteers asked about their experiences at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina and how they understand their role in the program. Staff members who were previously dedicated volunteers before their official hiring were also asked to answer the volunteer questions found in Appendix C. A specific focus of these questions was to understand the markers that indicated when a volunteer was ready to take on more of a leadership role.

Additionally, participant observations and accompanying field notes were collected over a variety of community volunteer days to observe staff and volunteer interactions from February-August 2018. Of particular interest was observing how staff members provided guidance and direction to volunteers, how they explained the nature of the work to be completed, and how they adapted these conversations based on the type of group and the activity at hand. Some of these participant observation volunteer days were also discussed in interviews with a number of participants.

Procedures

Data were collected for this study from February to August 2018. The primary sources of data were semi-structured interviews and participant observations. Participant observations were collected throughout this time and interviews were conducted from June to August. As mentioned previously, the first interview with the program director allowed for a snowball sampling method for the rest of the interview participants. In total, 12 individuals were asked to participate, with 10 agreeing to be interviewed. Two additional individuals were asked to participate but were ultimately unavailable, resulting in a response rate of 81.8%. In addition to individual interviews, two participants later participated together in a focus group interview.

A total of 11 individual interviews (as the program director was interviewed two separate times) and one focus group (two people) were recorded on an Olympus DS-40 digital voice recorder. Participants dictated the length of the interviews. Individual interviews lasted approximately one hour and the focus group interview lasted approximately two hours. Most of the interviews, including the focus group (11) were conducted in person, and one individual interview was conducted over the phone.

After the interview data were collected, individual and focus group recordings were transcribed into separate Microsoft Word documents. A process of open and axial coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) of all twelve interviews was used to organize data into emergent themes to develop an initial codebook. This codebook also included three *a priori* codes that were identified in the Indigenous leadership principles discussed previously: areas of transformative change, areas of community change, and specifics of leadership training (Rae et al., 2016; Stewart, & Warn, 2017), and one *a priori* code related to *mana wahine*. A full list of these codes can be found in Appendix D.

After the codebook was developed, it was used by the researcher and an undergraduate research assistant to complete the initial round of coding. Both coders went through each interview independently and then discussed all codes until consensus was reached. Discussion leading to agreement, consensus coding, is a standard practice in qualitative work (Klave & Brinkmann, 2015; Saldaña, 2013). Interviews were then uploaded into qualitative coding software NVivo12.

The second phase of coding consisted of compiling all of the relevant interview excerpts for each theme and ensuring the theme appropriately reflected the excerpts. These excerpts were used to finalize or restructure and rename themes to more appropriately capture the content of the interviews (see Table 1, which shows how the specific codes from the codebook in Appendix D map onto the major themes for the current study).

Table 1. Mapping Major Study Themes to the Codebook

Theme: Leadership as Matching Gifts to Kuleana			
Alaka'i/ Leadership	Gifts	Kuleana	Circles

Theme: Developing Leadership by Connecting to Land						
Extraction vs Abundance	Time	Bridging Space	What HA does for Community	Areas of Transformative Change	Specifics of Leadership Training	A'o aku, a'o mai

Theme: Healing to Find our Gifts				
Gifts	Holding Space	Bridging Space	Areas of Transformative Change	How HA staff make decisions

Theme: Expanding Pools of Leadership					
How HA staff make decisions	A'o aku, a'o mai	Gifts	Kuleana	Areas of Transformative Change	Specifics of Leadership Training

Excerpts are presented in the results section to understand how: 1) leadership can be thought of as connecting gifts to kuleana; 2) leadership development is fostered by connecting to land; 3) these connections to land and other people help heal relationships with ourselves and to each other; 4) which can then facilitate connections to the larger community, thus expanding pools of leadership. Furthermore, excerpts on how this place informs our understandings of *mana wahine* leadership will be presented. Finally, the unique model of leadership at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina will be compared to select tenets from the previous literature on shared, multicultural, and Indigenous leadership.

Validity

To check my interpretations of the data, I used two validation measures described by Creswell (2007): member checking to include community stakeholders in this process and triangulation of data sources. First, member checking with the two key community stakeholders was completed after the eleven interviews and one focus group were initially coded and consensus was reached by the principal investigator and research assistant. This member checking meeting was used to present the codes from the initial codebooks as well as to explain the data analysis plan. The response was overwhelmingly positive, and any concerns I had about my interpretation of the results at that point and my use of the Hawaiian language were countered. Second, in addition to these data, additional observational data were collected. These two sets of data were triangulated in order to provide a more complete picture of staff and volunteer experiences at the site. The two sets of data also provided opportunities to examine both confirming and disconfirming evidence to the research findings.

Chapter 4: Results

For this dissertation, I sought to answer the following questions: 1) What does leadership look like when one seeks to provide a mixed diasporic and Indigenous community the freedom and space to build meaningful relationships with the land, each other, and themselves? and 2) How can we help leaders flourish in our communities to work towards this and other types of reconciliation? The four major themes (outlined in Table 1) help to answer these questions, along with the participants' discussion of the importance of *Mana Wahine* in leadership development.

In addition, the final question: 3) How do shared, multicultural, and Indigenous leadership compare to the leadership model that has been developed and implemented at Hoʻoulu ʻĀina? will be answered. The three subfields provide pieces of a framework to understand Hoʻoulu ʻĀina's unique leadership model, and tenets from these subfields will be presented, along with specific codes that emerged from the data, in order to illustrate how the model was developed and how leaders are grown at Hoʻoulu ʻĀina. Although the results will be presented in a linear fashion, they are all interconnected. As will be demonstrated by the end of this paper, leadership and its development at Hoʻoulu ʻĀina has and continues to be anything but a linear process.

To start, the following excerpt from an experience in the very early years of Hoʻoulu ʻĀina's development shows how the seed was planted for growing the leadership model that we see there today:

¹“We had a group come, and it was a long time ago, so at that time, we weren't really taking a lot of little children, or school groups, the food production was maybe just a few patches. Most of our work was in the forest with chainsaws and removing logs, kind of very heavy back breaking infrastructure type work. This

¹ Excerpts are direct quotes from participant interviews. Other results are based on observational data collected at Hoʻoulu ʻĀina during the study period or field notes from my own personal experiences as a volunteer.

group wanted to come and it was funny cause we were like, what in the world would they do? I don't mean like--you know, we are so busy and so tired, but we are loving and we are ready to stop our work to be able to host this group. There was only maybe, out of twelve people maybe, there were two who could use the shovel. So one of the people who was using the shovel was trying to move mulch and could move maybe five to ten pieces in the shovel at a time--not slow motion, but slow motion underwater! Very, very slow, very challenged, very physically challenged, and so for us who were 'āina children, ready to kick ass with our chainsaw and machete, we had to slow it down and we watched. The cheering that the rest of the group gave to the one shovel load at a time was so inspiring, I realized--we all realized at the time, and I say all, but there were only the three of us, but um, we realized at that time that it's worth it to slow down and what we learned in that moment was about the gift of joy and connection and love and human-ness. That will last much longer than the natives we plant in the invasive forest, you know, which [was] our mindset [at the time]. That was a really big shifting point as far as appreciating gifts.”

What followed from this experience was the idea that gifts were important to accept because they could foster love and connection. As the years have passed, the development and nurturing of leaders in this gift-based model is most recently a result of a collaboration between the program director and a leadership practitioner. As leaders in their own right they recognized:

“This is really important that this kind of work continues, and if our role as leaders...is to help sustain that and we can't sustain ourselves...there is something just broken with that system and I have just experienced that pain and I just felt like there is another way. So...I felt like there was some shared purpose in figuring out how do we restore, how do we find joy in our work, how do we sustain this beyond ourselves?”

Finding a shared purpose in figuring out how to sustain important work through leadership development was valuable for both parties:

“...it was such unique and rare opportunity to be where Ho‘oulu ‘Āina was my really first place that is a Hawaiian place that I could explore the theories and concepts of leadership. I have been practicing it in very traditional organizations, you know, so this was one that was, um, a beautiful terrain of just being able to be present and learn.”

For the program director it was also a wonderful opportunity:

“You were saying...you haven’t applied it in community, and for me, I was all application and no study, and you know, my own experience of leadership is often, like you know, at a table with white men, patriarchy style leadership...so, I felt kind of bound.”

This led to a meaningful partnership for refining the model of leadership from this place:

“We focused on the shape of leadership here, and I have similar barriers...in my own perception of our, our leadership. I felt really, like, I had all of these amazing gifts and human and resources that were super super rich, but didn’t really know how to uplift and communicate and model and explore the shape of leadership that I thought was going to be the work here.”

Leadership as Matching One’s Gifts to Kuleana

The story above is an important example that illustrates how stepping back to create a space where all gifts are appreciated allows for meaningful love and connection. This is an important foundation for the leadership model of this place. As one participant explained, leadership is the “weaving of gifts and strengths and purpose”. All staff were able to share a variety of examples about how part of their responsibilities included creating space for people to find their gifts. One participant shared:

“I thought having more knowledge, um, makes you an alaka’i [leader] but it’s also knowing that you are fitting people to their gifts.”

Staff and volunteers all recognized that all people have gifts to offer. Importantly, the process of finding this gift, and then connecting this gift to a kuleana can be healing for an individual and can strengthen a community. The program director explains:

“The application of one’s gift into a community context, where that gift then becomes their kuleana [responsibility], that feeds the Mana [divine power] of a person and that’s how leaders are born. That’s how leaders come to do a really good job, come to be effective, come to feel good about themselves, you know, to

understand how they can make effects, and come to think strategically, generationally, and generatively.”

Understanding leadership in this way, then, honors the gift of love and human connection. Since anyone and everyone is deserving and able to love and connect, understanding these concepts as key to leadership provides a more inclusive consideration of who can be a leader, while also allowing leadership to be practiced in culturally appropriate ways.

Even volunteers, never having participated in staff leadership development, understood the relationship of gifts and kuleana. This understanding of leadership often creates a synergistic interaction where individuals and their gifts expand to better serve each other and a greater purpose--an example of abundance. One volunteer shared the following experience:

“With the leadership it’s like you have to see who’s naturally good at things and then let them shine...I was hanging out with this one kid, who I think was like 13 or 14, and he just really liked using the lighters, so I was like, ‘oh you can be the person who seals off the ends of the ropes, and you know, we were just talking and chatting it up and then after we were done, the boy’s mom came up to me and she was so moved, and I didn’t really understand why and then what I realized was it was because he was special ed, and I didn’t realize it that kid was cool. He was a superior flame wheeler, and I saw that. He was into it. He did a good job.”

This is an example of how a volunteer with an awareness of their own gift, to talk story, recognized the gift of another person and was able to direct this gift to serve a greater purpose--to fulfill a kuleana and, thus, actualizing the gifts of these two people. The harmonious pairing of both of their gifts helped accomplish the greater task at hand and moved the boy’s mother.

While I was collecting data for my dissertation, there was another adult patient population that began to volunteer at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. After several months of hosting this group, one staff participant reflected on these experiences:

“It’s like a heaviness when they come and we have to slow down. It’s not another group that we can just move, boom, boom, boom, and like get stuff out planted

and get stuff weeded. It's definitely like a preschool class, where it's exploratory, you have to take them to a place where they are not going to rip anything special that's been planted for years out. It's definitely a group that needs more attention and it needs people that have lots of love, so not everyone on staff as leaders are fit to lead that group. There's been maybe five people that have chosen to let themselves lead that group. I let myself get a little frustrated because we were having a lot of rainy days in a row and when it's a sunny day, I want to move. I want to jam, I need to get stuff out. I, kind of, vented and just shared that I need training, and I need to learn how to handle this group so I don't trigger anything. When you trigger one, you trigger the rest."

This staff member had not been around to witness the lesson that the adult care group, many years before, imparted on Ho'oulu 'Āina staff. The program director gently attempted to offer some advice to the staff members who had been leading this new adult care group. She recognized their frustration, along with the gift that this group was going to be able to give her staff if they would be open to learning it:

"And slow by slow, each one of our, we have three different young staff in their early twenties, who have come to me individually to let me know that this group is not effective, and I was like, you know, they are pretty effective in training you. [Laugh]. Trainer need to slow down, the trainer need to open your heart, you know the trainer need to be compassionate, and then, the trainer need to figure out what are the gifts that are in the circle, at the table, in the field that can only be taught in this moment and how do I make space for those gifts to shine and flourish?"

Several weeks after the adult care group first volunteered, I arrived late to Community Wednesday (a Wednesday morning program focused on sharing and learning about Pacific Island traditions in agroforestry), and found groups already working on the land. I walked up to the young staff member that was hosting the adult care group, and they immediately directed me towards the general community work day instead. I smiled and responded that I indeed wanted to work with the adult group. A person from the group immediately recognized me and welcomed me with arms wide open. We sat on the ground and proceeded to sing while we pulled weeds to

clear an area around an ‘ulu tree. When our work was finished, we closed our work with a customary Mahalo Circle, and I said goodbye to my new friends.

While wandering around Ho‘oulu ‘Āina to look for a particular staff member, another friendly face appeared instead--a different member of the staff. He approached me with a big smile and exclaimed: “Wow! Thank you for your gifts! I heard about what happened today.” I did not know what he was referring to and asked him to explain. I was surprised to learn that the young staff member that morning had recounted that I had actually *chosen* to work with the adult care group! I laughed and said that working with the adult care group always filled my heart. The adult patients were always delighted to see me. I explained to this friendly face that my mother, a special education teacher, had wisely taught me that adults with severe cognitive disabilities have the purest hearts. I had seen it in her work. So, I continued to explain, I would always want to choose to be around that group. In our interview, the facilitator of that group, who had previously expressed frustration, reflected on the experience we shared:

“I learned a lot from you, especially when we sat down that one day with the [adult care group]. We saw the way that one of them [the adult care professionals] handled [one of the adults], by grabbing the back of his neck and I think that was very unprofessional. That was when I was like ‘these people don’t even know how to handle this, why are they bringing them to another place where we have to handle them?’ Um, yeah, so since then, since you helped me realize their pure souls and their intentions are never negative that they are really just beings of human behavior that they are not, you know, they are not trying to do anything to hurt anybody that I really appreciated your viewpoint and I hold that with me every time I work with them because it has really helped me to focus my energy. It has really helped me, just that few words and just to know that your mom dedicated her life to it. It just makes me feel like I need more patience and love. I really appreciated that, I super think of it all the time, like whenever they mess up, whenever they step on something I planted five years ago, like, let it go. They didn’t intend to do that, that’s not what--and that’s why you are mad because you think that they intended to do that--so um, definitely the experiences with them has helped me to come to the point and with you have come to the point

where I can handle them. On the first day, I felt like it was a liability to take them, because if any of them gets hurt, it's our fault and I didn't know how to prevent that, so I have definitely come a long way by just winging it and holding love."

Unbeknownst to the staff member, but well understood by the program director, the adult care group had been offering a valuable lesson all along. My actions that day, and my close relationship with this staff member, made it so I too could contribute my gift to help them learn this lesson (also unbeknownst to me at the time). This staff member was not the only one to learn this lesson. The program director shared how other staff members had also discovered one of the group's gifts:

"One staff member after a month of complaining comes back and he's like--oh my god, they could have planted seeds!"

The adult care group shared gifts with the program, staff, and other volunteers. The young staff member understood how important it was for this group to be able to have their gifts accepted and appreciated. The staff member explained:

"They have also experienced not being--Not feeling that they are different, that the leaders have shared that they feel as a part of the community and they really appreciate coming here because they feel 'not different'. They don't get looked at funny, they don't get treated funny or laughed at or pointed at, where if they went to the mall or if they went to somewhere where it's more public, then they would get those feelings. The adults would feel bad, and um, then they [the care professionals] have to do a little more to pick them [the adult patients] up, you know, and take them back home with a positive attitude. It's a lot more hard to do that."

I immediately recognized this as an important and beautiful gift that Ho'oulu 'Āina and this specific staff member offered to the adult care group. The staff member continued:

"Thanks, through you! Thank you. Before that I would just get frustrated, and um, and pretend to have love, and that's not good."

These stories are important because they show how understanding leadership as matching gifts to kuleana is based in love and basing this work in love allows people to learn and heal. It also invites people to participate in meaningful ways that allow them to be considered leaders. The adult day care group did a great job pulling weeds and planting seeds. This work is done lovingly and helps care for the land that Ho‘oulu ‘Āina stewards. The seeds they planted will grow and will be shared to help feed volunteers, friends, and families in Kalihi Valley. Using land to help develop leaders is an integral part of the leadership model at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina in that it both helps people actualize their gifts for a greater purpose, and it helps those that come to this place heal their relationship to the land, with themselves, and with others.

Developing Leadership by Connecting to Land

As the United Nations Declarations of Indigenous Peoples (2010) states, Indigenous communities are inheritors and practitioners of cultures that are deeply connected to land and work towards preserving their social, cultural, economic, and political characteristics despite attempts from the dominant society that seeks to displace and eliminate them. Participants shared time and time again how important land is to this work and provided examples of connecting to land being important to the variety of diverse communities that are served in Kalihi. At the organizational level, one of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina’s guiding principles states:

“As we work, we listen to the land, and let it guide us.”

One participant articulated this connection as a really important reason for why she kept volunteering up at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina:

“There was a truth there, a different kind of truth, an understanding of nature and a collaboration with nature... here I feel like there are people who are actually in communication with nature, and following, but it was beyond, because it was also connected to such ancient knowledge.”

This quote demonstrates how connecting to land was important and sought out. This particular participant is very well versed in food production and land restoration, but notes the connection between this information to a larger cultural revitalization effort as a defining factor in being drawn to the work at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. As an example of this connection, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina embodies regeneration and healing of community by cultivating cultural and spiritual resources through two key program components: Hoa ‘Āina--community access, and Lohe ‘Āina--cultural restoration and perpetuation. Lohe ‘Āina and Hoa ‘Āina, create space for Indigenous communities and others to connect to land and cultivate cultural (re)sources. In this way, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina honors the fact that connecting to land is very important for Indigenous peoples.

The program curriculum explains:

“Lohe ‘Āina are Listeners of the Land, those who listen to the land and stories of the land to protect, revitalize and perpetuate the wahi pana (sacred spaces) and mo’olelo (cultural histories).”

One staff member shared how Lohe ‘Āina transcends any one particular culture or language:

“Listening to the land, uh, that could be the stories, that could be what the land tells you. It could be what, uh, has happened in the past. It could be what’s gonna happen in the future. And it’s hard--the thing is when people hear “listen”, they think, “listening”, but the land doesn’t speak English, or in Filipino, or in Spanish, or in French, and so how do we listen? It does have energy, and so just be open to that. And it could be something small. How come my plant is brown? Cause we need nitrogen. Maybe the root is damaged. Maybe it needs drainage, yeah? Just listening--listening to the plant. And that doesn’t need to be only ear. It could be eyes, feeling, energy.”

The staff member continues on to explain how Lohe ‘Āina connects to healing and how this healing is part of the responsibility of staff members at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina:

“Our job is to feel the land using the community, teaching the community, and healing the community at the same time. By empowering them to feel the land.”

Several participants shared a variety of examples that presented Ho‘oulu ‘Āina as one of the few places some cultural groups could connect to land and incorporate their practices and cultures in a respectful and productive way. One participant shared an experience she witnessed at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina:

“So after [community] Wednesday started, bringing the Chuukese women up there to learn--but then also to have a place where they could practice their culture. Their deep culture in terms of being on the land and being free. There’s these groups of Chuukese grandmothers who are treated like shit. In their community, they’re elders, and they’re treated so well but people [here on O‘ahu] don’t treat them well. These grandmas have to work. They’re taking care of family members. They’re responsible for all this stuff. They’re trying to keep it together, and they’re not an expert in their lives. They don’t speak English very well, and they had to get crazy jobs. Like one of the Aunties got a job at tax time wearing the stupid statue of liberty costume and waving the sign for taxes, and she pays taxes and can’t receive any of the benefits. It was, like, so fucking ironic...But life doesn’t allow her to be an expert living in Hawai‘i. One day, they came to Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, and, um, we had a bunch of coconuts. We were gonna make food...and the Aunties were like cracking the coconuts so pro. They’re like masters of the whole domain, and they just--they just like owned it. Created all the coconut. Made this beautiful coconut milk and then all these coconut foods...and one of the grandmas brought her grandson, and he was like this little boy--like two, he was like less than two years old. He was just looking at her, and she’s like doing all of these cool things...and I’m like, ‘Look at this little boy. He gets to see his grandma, and she’s a fucking expert. She’s--she can do this.’ And when they’re in their apartment at KPT [Kuhio Park Terrace], or wherever they live, does she get to be an expert in that way? She doesn’t get to do that, you know what I mean? But here on the land when she has access to land and like these cultural resources and these physical resources, then she can be an expert – and she can demonstrate that to him in a way that she can’t do that in different parts of life.”

At Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, this Chuukese grandmother is recognized as a leader, for other staff and volunteers who learned how to open coconuts and prepare cultural foods that day and for her grandson who saw her be an expert of their Chuukese cultural practices. All kinds of people, the cultures they represent, and their traditions have a role to play at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina.

Another staff member, who calls Kalihi home, recognizes the significance of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina programming within the larger social context:

“If you just go down to you know, Honolulu, and you look around, um, there is no shortage of concrete and buildings that are only continuing to go up then, um, there is a lot, there is a lot. Why it’s meaningful? There is many, many reasons. I guess thinking about our own community, directly of Kalihi, in which we are supposed to be helping or trying to help, um, it’s a very densely populated valley, our valley is very very very very densely populated. What we have here at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is definitely closer to home to them than where they are currently are living or the situation in life that they are in.”

These excerpts help illustrate how Ho‘oulu ‘Āina provides an important space to build and strengthen community by giving them access to land where people can learn, practice, and share the important cultural knowledge that connects them. More than that, there are some cultural practices, such as opening fresh coconuts, that can’t be exercised *without* meaningful access to land. For people living in a dense urban community and facing poverty, meaningful access cannot be underestimated.

One of the ways that Ho‘oulu ‘Āina fosters a connection to land is by beginning every work day with a practice of an Aloha circle that affirms people’s intentionality about their work and presence on the land. Volunteers are first welcomed, and then asked to participate in an Aloha Circle introduction, which includes a pule (prayer), oli (chant). For this Aloha Circle introduction, everyone stands in a circle, sometimes holding hands, as one by one we introduce ourselves by sharing our name, the name of a place we call home, and the name of a loved one we are thinking about. When the leader of the circle introduces this protocol, he or she also models what is expected from the rest of us in the circle. But more importantly, the leader introduces the land first. The names of the ahupua‘a and the smaller ‘ili or land divisions are shared and then the rest of the group can introduce themselves in the Aloha Circle. Introducing

the land first creates an atmosphere where land, too, is considered an important part of the circle, of the work done at this place, and ultimately, of leadership. In fact, several participants described looking to the land for guidance, and learning from the land itself.

For example, as a practicum student in 2015, I was participating in the Mahi ‘Āina food production program. I would spend long hours delicately planting seeds into small trays similar to egg cartons. Depending on the plant, it would take a couple of weeks to see if the seed had sprouted. After our trays had sprouted we would select the strongest looking seedlings and reuse the soil with unsprouted seeds to start the cycle all over again. Several weeks later it was time to plant seeds again and the farm leader and his employee went to reuse the soil from the previous session, only to find that a bunch of the seeds that were originally thought to have been useless had sprouted! Upon seeing the sprouts, the employee looked to the boss and said “See? Just like these seeds, you can’t discard people because they don’t sprout immediately. We need to be patient.” I was not present when this took place and found out a few days later from the farm leader. He proudly shared the story with me. The leader had clearly been impacted by the employee’s statement and had embraced the lesson that the seeds and the employee had taught him. This was significant, because at the time there was tension between these two people. The program was short-staffed and the boss felt that the employee was not learning fast enough in order to do all the work that was needed. Since this time, both of these employees have left Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. Nonetheless, participants repeatedly shared in their interviews with me how the land taught them important lessons. One participant explained how learning from the land actually helps him as a staff member to lead volunteers more effectively:

“Yeah, I would say definitely working with the ‘āina, um, trying to be a Mahi ‘ai farmer, you need to pay attention to everything, you know, how your plants are reacting, what’s the weather doing, what is it going to be the next month or next

week, so on and so forth. I definitely would say having to observe ‘āina, work with ‘āina, definitely would help with observing humans.”

One participant offered a helpful metaphor for the leadership development model at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina; a model that understands the connection between humans, land, healing, and potential:

“The definition of a weed is a plant that is unwanted, right? But if we take that, we pull them by the root and put that plant on the side when it breaks down to soil, it’s now full of good energy again. Not that it wasn’t full of good energy in the beginning. It was just something nobody wanted, but if we put it on the side it will be good energy. We can grow what we want. Yeah? And so the same way with people. If we could take out the weed, unwanted part, set them on the side and let them turn back to good energy. Who knows what could grow over there?”

Healing to Find Our Gifts and Kuleana

Often, identifying one’s gifts and how these relate to kuleana is a process, and cannot occur unless there is a safe space. As described above, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina offers a space for this to occur by connecting people to the land. Therefore, we see that one of most important things that Ho‘oulu ‘Āina does is to hold space for others to feel like part of a community, to be experts in their own lives, and to cultivate their cultural and spiritual resources. For many communities, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is one of the only places where people are able to do these things. Aside from field notes and participants recalling the experiences of others they had witnessed, they also shared important personal examples of what Ho‘oulu ‘Āina does to connect people to community:

“So that’s another thing about Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is that, my cousins that are sick ... like really bad sclerosis and like a host of other health problems, I know I can take him there and there would be a job for him to do like everyone else, and he could be with everyone else and just be...a part of the community. Yea, and that’s why, you know, I call Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, like, my forest church because that’s what church is supposed to be. It’s supposed to be a place where everyone is saved, that you can take people and you know everyone is going to be kind to them.”

In this way, feeling valued and connected to community is healing. The program director understands that creating and maintaining this environment requires healing for her staff as well so that they can be in a position to support a welcoming environment so that others may heal -- similar to a drop falling into a body of water that ripples out to expanding concentric circles. The program director explains that for both staff and volunteers:

“We are doing a lot of trauma informed care, which is important work, and it’s always the language of self-care.”

Staff need to be able to create and maintain a place that welcomes all and allows people the opportunity to eventually develop their own leadership by matching their gift to kuleana. In the stories above, we see staff further develop these skills, and with the example of the adult care groups, we see that working on the land, slowing down, exploring, and being open to learning, helped the gifts of the group come through. The potential of leadership already existed within the group but it was able to sprout and grow because the environment was fertile. But, it takes work to get to that point. The program director explains:

“Many of our staff are naturally leaders but because they come from an educational lens that is colonized and hierarchical, and prefers a ‘set way’ of knowing and functioning that they do not...believe in, some of our staff do not naturally see themselves as leaders. So, there is a lot of healing that has to happen there. I think those are the areas that I play a more active role in. The birthing of that healing, because you got to let go of some of the things that were painful. So people who didn’t do good in school, didn’t like school, didn’t feel smart, sometimes they are holding the most important data to be able to strategically move forward as a community. But because they don’t perceive themselves as ‘smart’, because of their school experience, or they don’t see themselves as a leader because of their school experience, (they were not the dominant one), it’s really hard for them to set the table for connective and collaborative strategies, without making them feel triggered again by their own negative school experience. Or helping them to feel confident enough to know that the information and the stories that they hold directly from the land and the plants and the people that they love and serve every day, and hold space with

that information, those stories are what we all need to understand and know in order to move forward. There is a lot of holding space for fear to be set down. Once that happens though, then you know, that's when really nice leadership is born.”

This quote shows how there are some contexts where people feel like they do not fit within the paradigm of what is valued, and that inhibits the development of leadership. This example describes previous interactions within a school setting that have limited potential leadership development for her staff. In the example of the adult care group there are even fewer spaces where their potential can be cultivated, seeing as they are often ridiculed and alienated in public places. So, leadership development, and the actualization of gifts that can be applied to kuleana needs to happen in a safe space so that valuable sources of knowledge are not buried, but rather, given the opportunity to grow. This healing needs to happen first at the staff level so that they, in turn, can hold safe space for other members of the community who are served by their programming. Accordingly, the curriculum states the following important guiding values at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina to help nurture healing:

“We work with love to heal and promote health.”

and

“We work as an ‘and’ culture not an ‘or’ culture.”

One of the ways that Ho‘oulu ‘Āina creates space for healing is by creating a welcoming environment where all peoples, cultures, values, and practices are valued. One of the mechanisms that Ho‘oulu ‘Āina uses to create this atmosphere is with the use of circles. Aloha Circles (as described in detail above) are an important mechanism used to eliminate hierarchy and create an atmosphere of mutual respect that nurtures engagement and learning. They also bring the value of diversity to the forefront because in the Aloha Circle each participant has the

opportunity to share what culture or community they bring with them when they participate in the work day. The training curriculum at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina explains the importance of this practice.

“Making a circle removes power from one place or another, from one person or another, and reconstructs that power for all of us to share. Making a circle allows us to remove all titles, to give the same respect and time to the president of a bank, the chief of an island, and the child who lives down the street.”

The breaking down of hierarchy, which a circle does, creates an environment where all participants can share and learn from one another. One staff member explains:

“It’s been a really nice exchange of information and I really love setting up the circle to feel that everyone is the teacher, everyone is the learner and we are all equal. I don’t want anyone to feel like I know more than you.”

This structure is important to follow because that is how community, at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina and beyond, is strengthened. A staff member explains:

“It’s not one [employee or volunteer] is higher than the other, we are all the same, no matter what age we are...but, this formula of leadership is way more harder than listen to one, everybody follows. It’s way more draining, it’s way more emotionally draining...because it’s easier if one person calls the shots and everybody follows, you will get the job done quicker... *and that’s what makes the community to build. It’s to like build that person up to the level you are at, so you might get frustrated at that one person that’s taking forever to grow so that’s one of the drama...but, it’s definitely worth it when you see them, um, you see how we start working together and shifting-- like how we work at the farm, when you take that to other places.*” [emphasis added by the researcher]

We see from the excerpts how connecting to land is an important part of leadership development at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina; however, participants also articulated that, in addition to this connection, something more is needed. Some described that a key aspect that differentiates Ho‘oulu ‘Āina from other land-based educational programming is the value of working as an “and” culture and not as an “or” culture. One participant explained:

“I feel like there are so many malama ‘āina groups, they are doing such awesome work, and I feel like that’s really the distinct differences that maybe we have, from the others, is just that whole feeling of welcoming. The whole, the difference between the other ‘āina groups, and I am not saying, I mean they are doing awesome work. But I feel like this is part of our guiding principles, which is we are an ‘and’ culture, not an ‘or’ culture, and so being in a welcoming place of refuge. There is a place for everyone to feel welcome, to feel like they belong. You know, I feel like, you don’t always feel that.”

This participant goes on to explain how the Aloha Circle, that reinforces this value, is crucial:

“The circle, we are going back to the circle. To me, the circles are the way to bring everyone together to you know, tell a little bit about the history of this place, but also to let people know that we are not the only story, you--you are coming to this space here, like you are also bring[ing] your own story, and I feel like that’s really powerful. But, so they are telling their stories, and then we can share our story, and then there is this connection and then there is this bridge and the relationship. We can start making this connection and find out...We are all related, we are all connected and I feel that’s a really powerful tool.”

This participant continues to explain:

“Because the circle sets the tone for the day, right, it gets everybody in the right frame of mind and often times when we have had different groups of people coming together, for meeting, sometimes we just launch into the meetings without the circle then it’s, you can tell, people are not agreeing on [those] days. Everybody is kind of in different spaces, but by being [in] the circle, having the circle, [it] bring[s] people together. Everybody starts on the same page...”

One staff participant shared that learning from a regular volunteer was important because she not only learned *from* him but she also saw his sharing as an indication that he was comfortable in the group, as he was willing to take on more of a leadership role by teaching a workshop for staff and other volunteers.

“...putting our volunteers in the space where they feel like they can share too, is like my goal because I am not the only teacher. I think it’s really nice when people can bring--he brought his culture that he is Chinese, that this is what his mother did for pregnant women. So, in their family, when somebody gave birth, his mother made...black vinegar pig feet, and it was because of the nutrients and the cartilage and all the nutrients that’s in the pig feet, and then the black vinegar is good for just--We know vinegar to be really good for our bodies. Yeah, and so he is deep in his connection with us and his trust with us that I feel like when you are in that

kind of setting like in the DOE [Hawai‘i State Department of Education], you don’t like bring your culture to the table, you don’t bring your family to the table, you barely bring yourself.”

The last part of this quote further highlights the one key aspect that is different between Ho‘olulu ‘Āina and other places, in this example, the Department of Education. At Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, you are able and encouraged to bring your culture and family to the table. The staff member assumes, and perhaps rightly, that the Department of Education does not articulate bringing of culture or family with you to their setting. The fact that Ho‘oulu ‘Āina articulates and wholeheartedly practices this is illustrated in the story above. Furthermore, the relationship between this volunteer and Ho‘oulu ‘Āina was strengthened after he led this workshop. The staff member explained:

“When I asked him to do a workshop for us, he did like a banging job. He like got printed beautiful color pictures, and all these details and passed it all out and had a thing already pre-made while he was teaching us how to make pig feet in black vinegar. Ever since then, he stays to eat lunch with us when he used to never stay for lunch.”

This is just one example that illustrates how Ho‘oulu ‘Āina provides an important space for people to bring their culture and share it, thereby strengthening their own cultural resources and their relationships with others. One staff member, who was raised in Kalihi explains the importance of providing such a space within the valley. Kids and families are dealing with all different kinds of hardship. One of the powerful ways that Ho‘oulu ‘Āina can help heal a variety of negative conditions is by showing everyone love. The staff member explains:

“I mean we have 27 different language interpreters [as part of our clinic]. We have like 80, maybe more people that can speak more than one language, but we have 27 different languages in Kalihi. How do you--I mean Kalihi Valley is big and small. So what is the--what is the common? What is common? Love. Love because they’re transient, um they’re uprooted from their homes. They’re uprooted from their language. They need to learn a new language, a new culture, a

new system, and so they're already behind the wall. Parents gotta work. Maybe they gotta work twice as hard. And maybe parents can't handle the stress, and so they deal with the stress their way. I mean even if it's a lovely family. Mom and dad working two jobs each. The kid is still at home looking for love, and he'll find it from the kid that sits under the bridge or wherever, you know? 'Oh, I can't wait till you move on. Oh, eighteen, you gotta go, or you know'. Pushing—we're pushing—we're becoming more and more single minded, but the main thing is love. Everything grows better with love, and love is not pushing away. Love is bringing towards you. And so if we can make you comfortable and feel love then it's easier for you to share love. Uh, the only time love hurts is when the other guy is not bringing towards you either, and so you gotta push them away cause you love them. Um, drugs whatever, you know. You gotta push them, but the fact that the person doesn't see the importance of sharing the love, uh, you know doing drugs...mom and dad, brother and sister, depending on the drug, do it once, and now you love that drug more."

This excerpt shows that staff play an important role in helping heal members of the community. Some staff members are known for their gift of radiating love. This love speaks to a followship/leadership relationship unique to this place. One person is known as a leader because they share so much love that members of the community seek this person out and want to follow them. Their coworker described them as a good example of perpetuating love to heal:

“ ____ is good example of that, and that's—that's what we all train for—that's what we try for the—it's just spread love to heal.”

Their gift is to share love and this sharing of love helps better serve communities in the valley, which is an example of leadership.

Expanding Pools of Leadership

Just as healing and safe space is necessary for one person to grow as a leader, these conditions allow for this effect to radiate outward like the analogy described above where a drop of water causes expanding concentric circles around it. One participant explains:

“If we can make you comfortable and feel love then it's easier for you to share love.”

With the gifts of staff members, like the one described above, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina creates a ripple effect where a larger, collective community is strengthened. By applying her gift to help fulfill her kuleana to serve the community, the staff member above, in turn, helps other community members heal to a point where they can find their own gifts and a synergistic growth happens. The more people within a community who find their gift and are able to apply it to support the wellbeing of the larger group, the stronger the community. Growing leaders and strengthening community happens by helping heal the relationships and conditions that negatively impact it, by creating new relationships based on love and respect, and by creating a space where people feel safe to explore what their own gifts may be and what kuleana calls them to support the greater good.

The dynamic at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is a small microcosm of what the staff hopes will reverberate and expand to the greater community. The program director explained:

“I feel like the staff is at the leadership level where they are giving strategic input not just for their own developments as leaders, but their responsibilities to have cross training and collaborative leadership development and a leadership development in the community. So part of your engagement in like the art programming and stuff with [a specific staff member] and things. That is [them] is expanding [their] leadership, so we see that on--not just around [the individual staff member], but around these pools of leadership development and expansion, which is beautiful.”

These pools of leadership that grow are still very interconnected and necessary. Each leader within these pools of leadership contributes in their own particular ways. One staff member, in describing his role in relation the rest of the staff explained:

“We have all these different tools, all in our tool box, and whatever the day calls for, that’s the tool we pull out.”

This quote suggests that not every tool, person, or leader, can lead in all circumstances. Leaders that can offer the appropriate gift will offer that gift and have a role in supporting community, but this is not independent action. Leaders with their gifts will work together to serve a greater collective purpose. The curriculum confirms this:

“We work together, inspired by our diversity, creating an ahu of shared connection and responsibility.”

Beyond building and strengthening relationships at the individual level, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, also works to connect to other programs within the larger health clinic of KKV by sharing gifts from the land. One staff member recounted:

“In the early days, we would get a small harvest. I’d make it a point to take whatever we could. Get like maybe a garbage bag, or a few shopping bags full of stuff and go share it with different parts of KKV, so I would kind of rotate between different locations because I wanted like folks to have that connection.”

Ho‘oulu ‘Āina also provides an important space for a variety of community service providers to come together and strengthen relationships across organizations--expanding leadership pools at the organizational level. One participant described how this coming together began and how it had an important impact on the work of the entire group.

“Kalihi’s like, you know, it’s a really important area for service providers to work. And KKV didn’t work with anybody really. And those service providers didn’t work with other people either, and, so we started holding these monthly lunches. I would set the table, and make it look really pretty—and I would make a bouquet of whatever I could find on the land like heliconias and flowers, and I would make the food myself and [we would] invite all these people to come and just like talk stories...And, um, our very first meeting, we had like a mix of like community leaders, community service providers, statewide advocacy for folks who did early childhood stuff, and everybody was at the table.”

At one of these community service provider gatherings, one local pastor told a story about his grandfather and his magic, and the pastor explained that, in Micronesia, natural

disasters are not seen as disasters, they are seen as an opportunity to build community. My participant described the importance of this story at this meeting:

“So that like blew our minds open because at the time, there was this huge influx of Micronesians coming...and it’s like, um, everybody needed to learn a lot about them. And, so what uncle shared, just kind of like blew everybody’s minds open of like, ‘Oh there’s something we don’t know, and we don’t know that we don’t know it’ and, so we started building these relationships as people, and it kind of became like a--like provider therapy and several things came out of that that I think are still going. We were able to like open up Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, um, to like a whole other world of folks—like the service providers, and to get people to really start to think about Kalihi in a different way.”

As my participant described, long lasting community partnerships were able to grow out of these sessions that were hosted by Ho‘oulu ‘Āina and KKV. The one pastor, sharing a gift of story from his community, was able to be a teacher to the large group of service providers that was working in Kalihi at the time. This gift, and others, helped those that attended these meetings learn important lessons about one cultural community within Kalihi. Some of these lasting partnerships are with the Hawai‘i State Department of Education, thereby expanding relationships beyond the valley of Kalihi and getting others to start seeing the potential of the people and communities that live in the valley—rather than just seeing an area filled with public housing, warehouses, and homeless people.

Mana Wahine

In the previous sections, gender did not play an important role (according to the data that were collected) in understanding gifts to kuleana, connection to land, or healing. However, it became very clear that *mana wahine* was an important *a priori* code. It should be noted that in the interviews *mana wahine* was not viewed as simply women’s leadership.

“I would say that Wahine and *mana wahine* leadership um, is present here at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina in both the man and the woman...and I think [male staff member’s]

honoring of woman, the way he speaks of and about woman, and around woman, I think is, that is [*mana wahine*].”

Quotes like the one above from the program director suggest that *mana wahine* is not a question of gender, it is more of a leadership style that honors women and understands birthing and nurturing to be important parts of leadership and leadership development. The program director and community partner with leadership expertise explained how *mana wahine* leadership is deeply connected to this place:

“That’s how Ho‘oulu ‘Āina [the program] got its name, so Ho‘oulu ‘Āina [the phrase] we always talk about how that means ‘to grow the land to grow because of the land’ but the original way that we came to that name was because there is a heiau [a pre-christian place of worship] in this valley...originally it was not just an agricultural heiau it was a heiau for Haumea, so it was a woman female, so like a female deity. It was a very important heiau for our grandmother earth, an ancestral deity. To me it’s a kind of feminine leadership that is really really missing in the world. So, it’s this feeling of female, male relationship. It’s the healing of male, female gender roles in leadership, and in spirituality that is a part of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina leadership development and style.”

One participant shared that it was being in this place that taught her about *mana wahine*:

“*Mana Wahine*, didn’t know what that was when I came up here... when I came here really gave me a different perspective.”

The program director and leadership consultant recognize how *Mana Wahine* contributes to understandings of leadership at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina:

“That doesn’t necessary fit in or, there is not--There is not a way to talk about that in American articulation[s] of woman leadership. I think [*mana wahine*] is a thing that is unique to this place, to the cosmology of this place.”

The collaborative nature of this project made it so a concept like *mana wahine* could be explored. Both male and female staff members were able to share examples of men and women embracing *mana wahine*. The story of the uncle that led a workshop above, showcases an

example of *mana wahine* because he chose to share a recipe that had been passed down his family's matrilineal line that would be prepared after a woman had given birth. Staff members also repeatedly used language like “birthing” and “nurturing like a mother” when discussing how to support community and staff leadership development. One participant explained birthing in the context of leadership and leadership development:

“I always have heard people talking about the ‘space between’. There is writing and theory and art even about it, but for me, always the space between talked about a woman’s space, so specifically, the birth space. Not even woman’s gender, but woman as Wahine as a feminine energy, so this sense of birthing, what is birthed from the mind, what is birthed from relationships, that is the space in between. That navigating of that space between is a feminine kuleana.”

Leaders being born, then, can be seen as a feminine kuleana, not specific to women’s gender but coming from *mana wahine*, which both men and women are capable of.

How Leadership at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina Compares to Shared, Multicultural, and Indigenous Leadership

In examining the leadership model for Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, its emphasis on matching gifts to kuleana, connection to land, and the potential radiating impacts of these experiences, it is helpful to compare this model to those described in the previous literature. Ho‘oulu ‘Āina practices shared, multicultural, and Indigenous leadership tenets, in a way that is unique to this place. Selected tenets of these models of leadership and comparisons to Ho‘oulu ‘Āina’s model will be described where the data permit.

Shared leadership. Shared leadership is defined by mutual influence and shared responsibility among team members, where they lead each other towards goal achievement (Wang et. al., 2014). At Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, staff members frequently acknowledged working collaboratively. In the initial open coding for the development of the codebook, it became clear

that working collectively was an important, and appreciated part of this job. Interview excerpts captured different examples of how staff shared leadership to best engage volunteers, create safe working environments, and accomplish necessary tasks for environmental management and food production. This is not surprising given that the program has made the explicit decision to always work collaboratively in their guiding principles: “We work as an ‘and’ culture and not an ‘or’ culture” and “We work together, inspired by our diversity, creating an ahu of shared connection and responsibility.” Many of the excerpts above showed how the practice of beginning the day with an Aloha Circle helps create an environment that nurtures sharing responsibility by removing hierarchy and setting up a space where everyone is an important part of the circle. Leadership among staff and volunteers is so closely intertwined that the program director shared how new interns are frequently confused as to who is “the leader”:

“New interns are definitely confused where there are volunteers that are more engaged than just the three to four hour engagement and the volunteers start to become part of the rhythm, part of the fabric of this place and culture and community. There’s a little bit of confusion like, wait, now who’s in charge?”

We see this engagement in the following excerpt, which shows the volunteer’s sense of commitment to ensuring that Ho‘oulu ‘Āina can continue in the future:

“ I consider myself a leader in training, you know, and--and you know Ho‘oulu ‘Āina has inspired my career path, where I do want to be in a position in the future where I can keep this place alive, like, you know, thirty years, twenty years land lease...so I want to be in a position where--where I can really do something to help...and...that’s a beautiful thing, it’s like [the program director] has fostered all these leaders.”

This excerpt also shows how volunteers see themselves as part of the leadership of this place since they express feeling a personal kuleana for helping ensure the long-term success of this program.

The shared leadership literature also posits the importance of creating a culture of trust so that shared leadership can be successful by: (1) aligning values among the group, (2) explicitly supporting experimentation, and (3) consistently working towards clear communication (Perry et al., 2014). In terms of aligning values, the values that guide Ho‘oulu ‘Āina are an important part of an established curriculum used to help train all new staff and dedicated volunteers deemed ready to take on an additional level of responsibility. The daily practices help reinforce these values and a set of guiding principles among staff members and volunteers to support the culture of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina.

Next, the guiding principles serve as directives for the work of the program and are practiced against a backdrop of experimentation. The curriculum clearly states:

“Creativity, experimentation, artistic expression and ho'omanawanui are integral to each of our guiding principles.”

We see that at the organizational level Ho‘oulu ‘Āina supports experimentation and creativity in all the work that they do. From my years of being a participant in this program, I can attest to this commitment to creativity, ranging from actual art programming to exploring novel ways to make healthy food accessible to the community.

With regard to communication, interview participants discussed communication specifically within the context of shared leadership and creating an environment at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina where all voices are valued. They recognized the potential difficulty of this model:

“Yeah, I mean to do something by yourself. It’s easy. Uh, if the task is too big, and you’d want help, but working with others is not always easy. But you work by yourself, you don’t need communicate. If you gonna work with one other person there’s two communications. If you’re working with three, there’s three communications. And so...the art of communication is key, and one good way to have people communicate or want to communicate [is] by making them feel love. Then it’s safe...”

This same participant also noted that communication, in a community that speaks over 20 languages, needs to be based on love, as that is a common language, to create the ripple effect of shared leadership.

With these excerpts we see how the theories of shared leadership are practiced at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, even within their own unique model of leadership. Importantly, understanding leadership as matching one’s gifts to kuleana builds upon the shared leadership literature by giving strengths a purpose to support the wellbeing of the community. In other words, the goal is to expand shared leadership far enough out that real community change can happen. Finding your gift and the kuleana that calls can only happen in safe environment, where exploration and creativity is valued, so people are free to explore what these gifts and their purpose may be. Ho‘oulu ‘Āina’s leadership model allows for this to happen, and is mindful of creating a space for these radiating effects to occur. In this way, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina’s model frames shared leadership as an intentional outcome versus simply a state of organizational structure.

Multicultural leadership. In the literature, multicultural leadership is presented as an inclusive approach to leadership that incorporates the values of diverse cultures and practices in respectful ways (Bordas, 2007). One the benefits of cultural diversity is to promote intellectual diversity. Ho‘oulu ‘Āina’s guiding principle: “We work as an ‘and’ culture and not an ‘or’ culture” solidifies the importance of diversity at the organizational level. This value is brought to the forefront in the first action of the day--the Aloha Circle. Previously it was argued that the Aloha Circle is important because it helps remove hierarchy, but this practice also gives participants the opportunity to share what culture they bring with them as they work that day.

In the excerpt of the Chuukese grandmother, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is one of the few places where her cultural practices can be valued. Ho‘oulu ‘Āina gives her a safe environment where

she can be an expert in her own life and share her cultural knowledge with her grandson and the rest of the program participants that were present that day. The story of the uncle who led a workshop on making pigs feet in black vinegar is also an example of a volunteer who was able to share his culture in a meaningful way which, in turn, strengthened his relationship to Ho‘oulu ‘Āina.

As previously mentioned, being able to bring your culture with you in the Aloha Circle is an important distinction between Ho‘oulu ‘Āina and other land-based educational programs. This suggests that connection to land, in and of itself, isn’t the only thing that heals people and leads them to have transformative experiences. People need to be able to bring their culture when they connect to land to have a meaningful experience.

These examples demonstrate that at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina sharing of culture is a healing experience, but it is also an important mechanism for strengthening people’s relationship to their community. For example, one volunteer shared:

“Beyond my family and, like, my close friends, I wouldn’t say that I felt like I was a part of the Native Hawaiian community despite being Native Hawaiian...and I was honest, like I don’t know how to be a Hawaiian person, like, I really don’t know. I need places like this, and people to show me.”

Thus, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina’s meaningful inclusion of diverse cultures (how this place practices multicultural leadership) not only strengthens individuals within the community and their connection to community, but it also the increases the diversity of tools that a community can have access to in their tool box (intellectual diversity), which will ultimately strengthen the community as a whole. The program director explains:

“Sometimes they [the people who have been excluded from positions of leadership] are holding the most important data to be able to strategically move forward as a community...the information and the stories that they hold directly from the land and the plants and the people that they love and serve every

day...those stories are what we all need to understand and know in order to move forward.”

This excerpt shows how intellectual diversity is understood and valued at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. All forms and sources of knowledge are valued and cultivated for the benefit of the community.

Indigenous leadership. Models of Indigenous leadership are deeply grounded in community. Some key principles for developing Indigenous leadership include: 1) nurturing talents and leadership that enhance the quality of community life; 2) regenerating and healing community by cultivating cultural and spiritual connectedness; and 3) strengthening community connectedness and care for each other (Rae et. al, 2016). These principles were originally presented in the literature in the inverse order, but they will be presented here in the progression that we see their development at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina.

According to the leadership development model at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, leadership is born when people’s strengths serve a greater purpose for the community. A model that connects gifts to kuleana is built on the premise of nurturing talents that not only enhance quality of community life, but also strengthen it. The program director explains how leadership development drives important programming decisions to help cultivate the gifts of staff and, ultimately, the community:

“A coordinator or director might look at the gifts that are on the table of the community and staff. And you know gifts are not exclusive to paid staff. Many of our core volunteers, our core community, are seen as important components of our leadership too. So we look at what there is and then we cultivate it. Programming and resource development is based on that so that we could uplift the gifts of our [larger] community.”

As was demonstrated previously in the results section, leadership development is intended to eventually extend out far beyond the two ‘ili. Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, as a program, helps strengthen community by: a) developing staff leaders that serve the community, that b) in turn,

help maintain an environment where individuals from the larger community feel safe enough to start exploring what their strengths may be, and eventually cultivate their potential strengths in order to benefit community well-being.

As part of a community health clinic, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina believes that the breath of the land is the life of the people. By teaching people how to heal the land through their programming, people themselves can find healing, which can eventually create a ground fertile enough for leadership to grow. The website explains:

“As a health center we are committed to growing and cultivating a strong community. Through time spent on the land, students begin to understand that community includes all; self, ka mauna [the mountains], invasive species and the bugs. When students put their hands into the lepo [mud] they learn the values of aloha, laulima [collaboration], mālama [care] and leadership.”

Ho‘oulu ‘Āina works towards regenerating and healing community through their four areas of programming. Koa ‘Āina, an ongoing forest stewardship effort to restore health and balance to Kalihi’s watershed and native upland forests, was the first program of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. Through Mahi ‘Āina, community members participate in growing, preparing, and sharing healthy food, and witnessing the connection between land and nourishment. Hoa ‘Āina invites a wide diversity of people to Ho‘oulu ‘Āina for experiential learning, recreation, and work projects. And, Lohe ‘Āina provides a space for cultural practices from the diverse Pacific community to thrive. The original story about the adult care group years ago is an embodiment of Koa and Hoa ‘Āina programs interweaving. The more recent adult care group was able to share their gifts by planting seeds for the Mahi ‘Āina program. The story of Chuukese grandmother demonstrates how Lohe ‘Āina and Hoa ‘Āina work together to support cultural connectedness. These four program areas are all grounded in community wellbeing and are mechanisms to regenerate, heal, and cultivate cultural and spiritual resources. Sharing of food,

and accepting food, is important for bringing people together; in fact, throughout my years, the program staff have always encouraged volunteers to share knowledge, seeds, and food with neighbors and family. The seeds that the adult day care group planted will eventually grow and be used to help feed volunteers, staff, and the community. Each of the adult care volunteer experiences were important for both staff and participants, and exemplify how a leadership model that matches gifts to kuleana is open and inclusive enough for all.

A model of leadership that connects gifts to kuleana also is healing for individuals. The program director explains how healing of individuals strengthens community :

“Healing happens when someone is able to, at an individual level recognize their gifts, apply that to their kuleana for the community [and therefore] increase the stability of the social structure, the social network. So that we are accountable to one another in ways that do not perpetuate victimizing.”

The explicit practices that Ho‘oulu ‘Āina uses to create a welcoming place of refuge increases community connections and care for one another by fostering an environment for mutual and respectful engagement. This, along with healing individuals to increase the stability of the social structure of the community is how Ho‘oulu ‘Āina increases connectedness and supports the overall wellbeing of the community. Ultimately, we see that at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina the three principles of: nurturing talents and leadership that enhance the quality of community life; regenerating and healing community by cultivating cultural and spiritual connectedness; and strengthening community connectedness and care for each other are very cyclical in nature. Each building off of the other and radiating out after each round.

Stewart and Warn (2017) also note how Indigenous leadership is characterized by strong spiritual orientations, and often include traditional protocol and practices. At Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, this is apparent in the use of Aloha Circles which are closed with a pule (prayer), oli (chant), or

another protocol affirming the intentionality of both our work and our presence on the land. One participant shares:

“Holding circles...helps people bring their past, present, future into the circle.”

Bringing each of these to the circle honors that many Indigenous people are the followers of ancestral pathways. In fact, staff members, repeatedly, shared genealogies of their leadership development - an ode to a pathway set by their teachers and sometimes ancestors. Skills, values, and important lessons that were relevant to their work were framed as having been passed down to them. Leaders in the present day talked about the importance of sharing knowledge so it could be perpetuated to continue the pathway:

“Who is invited to this workshop? Well, this is important knowledge. Okay, this is who wants to come, and this is who will perpetuate this knowledge [is put] into a Venn diagram. So in this building, who has the capacity to teach, who is here every day but didn't teach anybody else, who is developing the capacity for holding space for someone else to get to where they are at.”

The program director goes on to explain how perpetuating knowledge is important to kuleana:

“You want to invest in the one who is perpetuating. That flow is clear, do you want to invest in that. What we have to invest is more kuleana. The reward is that I trust you.”

These excerpts, then, suggest that genealogies are important for accountability and recognizing kuleana. Skills and lessons are taught for the purpose of perpetuating knowledge. For some people, that have had the responsibility of sharing knowledge that was passed down to them, part of their kuleana is clear: to continue the pathway, perpetuate the knowledge, and continue that ancestral connection.

Indigenous leadership theory helps offer an important distinction from the multicultural leadership. Multicultural leadership identifies diversity to be beneficial, but Indigenous leadership suggests that the benefit should be to strengthen community connectedness and care.

This is important because achieving diversity is sometimes conflated with understanding how to engage with, understand, and respect diversity. The program director recognized:

“I think that would be helpful to be able to understand how multicultural leadership in a community that is already multicultural, that maybe [has had] multicultural leadership for a long time, [how] there can still be the marginalization of a specific value set. It doesn’t matter that we look like the united colors of Pacific, if we are still acting like Trump.”

This is important because the previous Indigenous leadership literature recognized the need for Indigenous leaders to navigate two very distinct spaces. Therefore, it can be assumed that these community contexts are relatively segregated. This frames discussions of community healing to refer to a mostly segregated community, for example Indian spaces within an urban context or reservations within a rural context. In contrast, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina frames discussions of community healing to be inclusive to all. First, it is because Kalihi is already an incredibly diverse place, the most dense and diverse community in the state. Second, it is because Ho‘oulu ‘Āina as a program has adapted to their unique context of serving a mixed Indigenous, diasporic immigrant, and settler community. They choose to heal the Indigenous that have been displaced *and* the settlers that have displaced them. The program director explains:

“A lot of times when we are talking about the Indigenous mindset we are deficit-minded and deficit functioning because of the colonization of the land. So a response to that is to make guarded space and ‘indigenous way of being’ [is] language that intentionally pushes others out so that others do not have the power that I have. They didn’t earn it, they are not entitled to it, and they already demonstrated that they are thieves and extractors. That’s how Indigeneity is mostly navigated. This [at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina] is completely different because this is an invitation to contemplate another way of being. That’s why it’s a circle. It’s reconciliation on both sides. On both sides. It’s not just I am going heal the haole, so that they are better for the world, but I am also healing my own hurt because there was the violation of my own values, of my land, and of my people. Healing that hurt by being welcoming, that’s what my people would have done. That’s how the world is going to get better, but it takes courage. It takes courage.”

Chapter 5: Discussion

Discussions of leadership in the academic literature began over 100 years ago. Early on, this work reflected a particular set of values in accordance with the traits of a single individual, usually a white male. The context of these discussions, and the applications of these theories and research, were mostly for the benefit of the private sector. As time passed, more and more discussions about collaboration, and explicit articulations of values emerged, opening up the field to academically consider leadership beyond an input for capitalistic output. Theories that have addressed larger societal contexts as the backdrop for leadership and leadership development offer important advances to discussions of leadership for community well-being, but the field is still young and there are many contexts to which these theories have yet to be applied. For example, the question of what leadership looks like when one seeks to provide a mixed diasporic, settler, and Indigenous community the freedom and space to build meaningful relationships with the land, each other, and themselves has yet to be addressed in the literature. It is an important question to answer, particularly in the most dense and diverse community in Honolulu: Kalihi.

To provide a context for the findings of this study, the first week I ever visited Ho‘oulu ‘Āina my class participated in a range of activities. On the first day, a young staff member taught our class a very important lesson. He shared that when they host small children’s groups they teach the kids that weeds are not bad, weeds are a plant out of place whose magic has not been discovered yet. On the second day, another staff member guided us up a trail and we stopped under a large koa tree. The first thing we learned was plant identification. Our class was surrounded by two kinds of trees that looked exactly the same to us: koa, a native, and albizia, an

invasive. We continued up the path, weeded a large area, and followed our guide down the same path back down. We stopped again under the same koa tree.

Years ago, when the majority of the work being done at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina was clearing land, a Kalihi high school football team came up to Ho‘oulu ‘Āina to volunteer. The forest was so dense and overgrown that this group of young energetic men swung machetes for days to clear all of the invasive albizia trees. Albizia trees grow at a rapid rate and grow much taller than any native species. They grow so tall and wide that they come to block out all the sun and create a mono-canopy environment where the range of native species that used to exist in that ecosystem can no longer grow. The young men would partake in backbreaking work of cutting and clearing the forest. As they moved deeper and deeper into the forest, they were surprised to find a koa tree, and cleared the area around it.

This one koa tree was smaller than most of the albizia surrounding it and its height indicated that it was also much older than the other trees. Despite having been overtaken by albizia trees that blocked most of the sun and drew most of the rain water, this koa tree stood firm. As time passed, staff and volunteers continued to care for the area surrounding the tree and eventually small koa seedlings sprouted everywhere around this mother tree. The seedbank was in the soil and had survived harsh conditions. When the weeds were removed, the land could heal and the seedlings were able to sprout. When these seedlings grow they will be able to play an important role in the larger ecosystem, allowing enough sunlight to pass through their branches for other species to grow. As native plants, they will take only what water they need to survive, sharing the valuable resource with others.

This story is one of many that I have heard over the years at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. The land in Kalihi valley, and the people caring for it, carry important knowledge. Working collaboratively

with two key community stakeholders, I conducted qualitative interviews to capture and honor the stories of this place to understand the phenomenology of leadership and leadership development at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina.

The story of mama koa is one way to understand how leaders can flourish and work towards reconciliation and healing that benefits and supports others. It helps us frame what leadership development looks like in communities that work towards creating space where people from the community have the freedom and space to building meaningful relationships with themselves, each other, and the land. The gifts that people have, and their potential for leadership, are like the seedbank in this story. They are waiting to emerge. Sometimes there are circumstances, like poverty, or displacement and migration, that make it hard for the seedbank to sprout and come to the surface. It takes a community (mixed of diasporic, Indigenous, and settler) to help clear the weeds so that seedlings have space to grow. These weeds can, in turn, be composted back into the earth to help heal the land (and people) and promote the growth of new plants. It takes care and resources (cultural, spiritual, and love) to help create a fertile ground so the seedlings can grow and mature. As they grow, they play a necessary and important part of a larger ecosystem that supports the growth of others. A healthy ecosystem, like a healthy community, is made up of a variety of plants. It is not just one plant that overtakes that rest. Not all plants serve the same purpose, just like not all leaders can lead in all circumstances. Different communities, different areas will have different ecosystems and plants specific to that place. And just like plants, leaders grow at different rates, and need unique combinations of nutrients, water, and sunlight to grow and propagate.

Understanding leadership as matching gifts to kuleana recognizes the inherent potential of every being to become a leader. Although the koa tree in the story above is important, it is not

the only being in the ecosystem. More importantly it cannot survive without the other parts of the ecosystem. Gift actualization is similar. A person also offers a gift for the wellbeing of a community. This gift is important and it may be necessary to fulfill a kuleana, but it is not the only gift of value, and one gift from one person may not be enough to fulfill the kuleana.

Matching gifts to kuleana is a very interconnected and holistic approach to understanding leadership. Importantly, it is a model of leadership built on a foundation of abundance; it is about transformation and love, as opposed to extraction and a transactional exchange, which has been how leadership has been conceptualized in previous literature. A model based on values of abundance and inclusion more similarly aligns with Indigenous values, and Native Hawaiian values specifically. Participants regularly expressed stories of abundance and sharing as important. When conflict and turmoil came up in interviews, it was within a context of explaining some of the challenges in their work that were the result of behaviors and values that were extractive or transactional in nature. Meaningful community change is not only a 9 to 5 job. Community wellbeing is not an outcome that can be attributed to a salary, or a job, or the inputs of one organization. This is to say that this type of work is not transactional and it is not simple. Leadership theories that have underlying assumptions about transactional exchanges are not the best fit for efforts that seek to promote holistic community wellness. They inherently exclude many members of the community from playing a meaningful leadership role. In contrast, understanding leadership as matching gifts to kuleana is an interconnected process that acknowledges both ancestors and land.

Many Indigenous communities have important relationships with their ancestral homelands. For many, caring for the land is an important kuleana. Although not everyone recognizes their kuleana as caring for the land, there are important lessons to be learned from its

stewardship. It is common to see some first-time volunteers with an aversion to mud or mosquitos, for example. Staff members recounted witnessing these same people covered in mud by the end of the day and having learned some lesson. The land is a fertile environment for learning and engagement. Developing leadership by connecting to land is fruitful for everyone, whether you understand land to be your kuleana or not.

Land, when cared for, is very forgiving. Many trees, and plants, in the back of Kalihi grow beautifully because the sun and rain are abundant in this place. The plants will continue to grow whether we show up or not. A few years ago, my schedule changed and my regular Thursday morning participation became Wednesday morning participation. My very first Wednesday I was part of a large group and having been there for several years, I happily told stories of the land I had learned to the new participants. In Pasifika (refer to Figure 2), we were weeding around mountain apple trees. There was a plant under the mountain apple tree that I did not recognize, having volunteered in mahi 'āina food production in the years prior. I pulled this plant out. To my horror, I had pulled out a native uki uki plant that had been growing for a long time. It was not a weed. I was embarrassed and upset that I had hurt others and undone their efforts. The staff member leading the program that morning reacted to me with love and kindness. She used the moment to teach me about uki uki plant identification and taught me how to replant what I had pulled out. Today, uki uki plants grow abundantly in Pasifika. I do not claim this accomplishment, but I see that my mistake did not thwart anything. I had always heard that the land was forgiving, but it was not until I sought forgiveness, for my own feelings of guilt, that I truly learned this lesson. Thus, Ho'oulu 'Āina provides a space where it is safe to make mistakes. In this place, we are free to explore, engage, and learn.

The fact that land is forgiving also allows for experimentation to occur. For example, there is not only one perfect set of conditions or steps necessary to grow bananas. Continuously being on the land, sharing stories with other communities about bananas, and trying different methods all help us learn important lessons about bananas and each other. It teaches us to be patient and receptive to the subtle changes in our efforts, the impact we have on the land, and maybe within ourselves.

Healing of land and people is a common occurrence at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. Many that continue to be avid volunteers have been transformed by this place. Volunteers have referred to participating in Ho‘oulu ‘Āina programming as nature therapy or ‘forest church’. In an environment where you are accepted, mistakes are met with compassion and love, and your culture and values are welcomed at the table, and so it is no surprise that people remark on the healing abilities of this place. In fact, research in the field of ecotherapy suggests that participating in the stewardship of green spaces is beneficial for both mental and physical health, and can have the added benefit of increasing social capital for participants (Burls, 2007). At the very least, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina provides an environment where normal stressors of daily life are absent. In the example of the Chuukese grandmother, we see that the absence of these stressors at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina and access to land allows her to be an expert in her own life when outside of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina she does not get to be. In the example of the recent adult care group, we know that in other public places they are stigmatized and at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina that is not the case. At Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, the emphasis on creativity and exploration makes it so there are no wrong answers. This context allows people to process circumstances that may be preventing them from finding a purpose that is meaningful to them, and a gift to support that purpose.

Creating such an environment for the community is a result of having to create a smaller microcosm of a space like this for the employees of the program. Staff, as leaders themselves, go through the process of awareness, self-reflection, and healing to get to a point where they radiate compassion and love. Leadership and leadership development at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina begins first with the staff. These staff members then play an important role in maintaining a space where members of the community can also cultivate their own leadership. Leadership development, as a part of the model of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, is designed to continuously expand out to the community. Being able to give a gift to help the community is healing. Having a gift accepted and valued is as well. This synergistic healing as a result of combining strengths and purpose for a greater good helps nurture community. Healing an individual helps strengthen the social network. The program director recognizes that all kinds of people hold important knowledge about how to best move forward as community. Knowledge can come from being on the land, engaging with others, or from a long line of ancestors and teachers. If we can create environments where the weeds are pulled back enough for potential, or this knowledge can sprout, we help heal both people and community. Furthermore, this ability to be in charge of our own healing, our own resources, is a form of sovereignty. To reconnect to land and to our cultures is a political and radical act.

One of the ways that staff at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina are able to be effective in their work is by leading with *mana wahine*. In Hofstede’s masculinity/femininity scale, higher masculinity leans towards assertiveness and higher femininity leans towards caring. In countries that score higher in femininity, we see that both men and women are caring at similar rates, but in “masculine” countries, it is taboo to be caring (Hofstede, 2011). However, at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, men and women engage in teaching and leading that is based on welcoming, kindness, and nurturing, all from a

feminine energy, which may make it so that volunteers are more open to engagement. Caring behavior in this space (even for men) is not a taboo, it is a strength.

Contributions of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina’s Leadership Model to the Field

In the beginning of the 1980s and 1990’s the concept of shared leadership presented an advancement in the field: that leadership structure did not have to continue as one leader and his/her followers. Moving beyond this hierarchical structure allowed for a change to the balance of power in the relationship, and for the conceptualization of leadership to expand. However, far before the late 20th century, Hawaiian language had already encapsulated a different, and shared, structure with the use of *kākou*, meaning all of us.

Language is an important carrier of culture as the following example of *kēia*, *kēna*, and *kēlā* will demonstrate, in Figure 3 below. English speakers divide space around them into two areas and the space within our individual reach is referred to as “this” while everything outside of our reach is referred to as “that” (Hopkins, 1992).

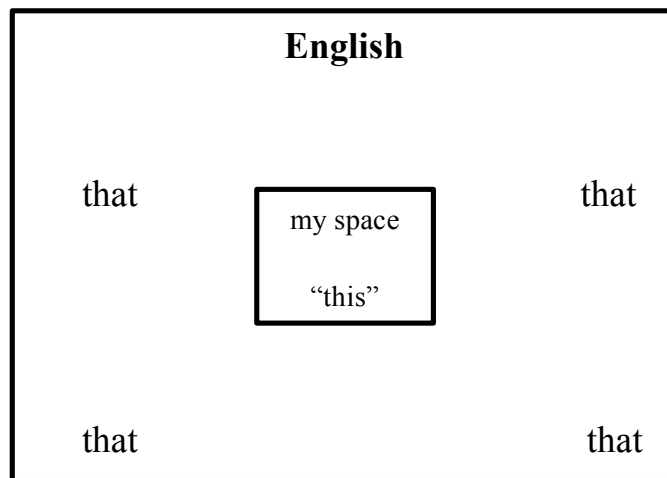


Figure 3. How the English language divides space.

Hawaiian language, however, acknowledges that the person we are speaking to also has a space within his/her reach, as seen in Figure 4 below. The space within your reach is referred to as

“kēna”, the space within my reach is “kēia”, and the space beyond the reach of the both of us is referred to as “kēlā”.

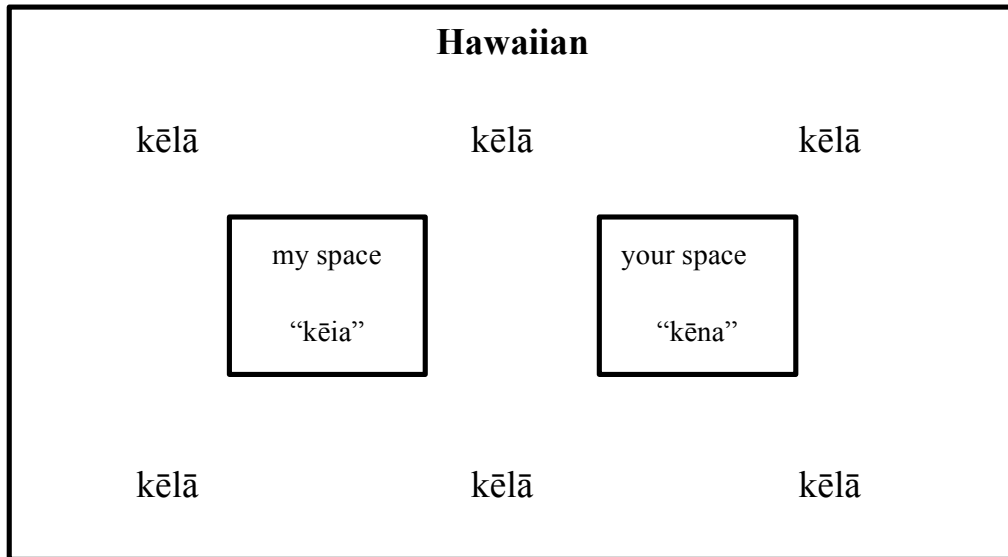


Figure 4. How the Hawaiian language divides space.

In Hawaiian epistemology, the individual is not the main point of reference for engaging in the world. The perspective, or reference point, of those that we engage with is equally as important, and Hawaiian language reflects that cultural value. In a similar vein, English speakers only have one conceptualization of the plural “we” and “them” but the Hawaiian language offers four different forms of “we” that are based on inclusiveness/exclusiveness and the size of the group. In Hawaiian, the speaker lets the listener know if he or she is included when we say “we” or if we are referring to ourselves and some other group that does not include the listener. When we are talking to the listener and including them, we would use a term like *kākou*, meaning all of us. If we are talking to the speaker and not including them, we would use a term like *mākou*, meaning me and those guys, but not you. Hawaiian language provides an inclusive “we” and which offers a mechanism to intentionally and thoughtfully include others as a part of our group. This is important because it opens up the possibility for expanding the pool of who can be

considered teachers, learners, community, and leaders, and it creates a space for having a larger and more inclusive “we”.

“Kākou is a big idea.
It includes and embraces more than you and me,
her and him, she and us guys. We. The two-legged;
It includes so many more than us,
it includes the many-legged,
beings that crawl on their bellies,
the furry, scaly, scary and odd.
The sky, the ocean, the wai,
see that tree, that weed, flower and bee,
all are part of kākou, of us, of we
So when we think of who are the citizens on Hawai‘I Nei,
how do we include all of us,
how do we hear and see and include what they know and need?
Let us give thanks to the people, our ancestors,
who understood and embraced the fundamental idea of kākou.
Mahalo.”
Puanani Burgess

This understanding of a larger and inclusive “we” has important implications, for it explicitly expands the pool in which shared leadership can occur: beyond staff members to include volunteers, land, and ancestors. Land becomes an important part of shared leadership because we can learn lessons from the land to inform our understandings of leadership and leadership development.

Ho‘oulu ‘Āina not only practices shared leadership, as illustrated above, but it also broadens previous understandings of shared leadership by expanding the collective that can participate in leading beyond a small core group to include volunteers, land, and other beings. The participant quotes in the results section show that learning from land, sky, clouds, plants, and ancestors are examples of a broader inclusive “we” than has ever been considered in the literature. The prior Indigenous leadership literature comes close, since some of foundational characteristics of this field include being holistic, having strong spiritual orientations, and often

include traditional protocol and practices (Stewart & Warn, 2017), but such a clear articulation of how land, ancestors, and other beings can lead at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina adds to the literature in this field.

Additionally, discussions of culture and diversity in the literature have been found in the realm multicultural leadership. The work at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina forces us to think about why being inclusive of diversity and other practices and other cultures is so important. In other words, it provides us with a real world application of the theory and values articulated within multicultural leadership, and therefore, adds to the multicultural leadership literature by expanding our understanding of how this theory is practiced in the community, and the implications for doing so. But, diversity at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is not only limited to culture. The adult care group stories demonstrate how a range of cognitive and physical abilities are also valued and have played an integral role in planting the seed for the leadership model that has developed in this place.

Further, the Indigenous leadership literature moved beyond discussions of values and diversity from the theories before it by addressing the phenomenon within a specific social and political place as a result of historical circumstances. This literature discusses the need to develop the ability of Indigenous leaders to navigate two very different spaces: first within their own Indigenous community, and second, with the community that interfaces with a system that continues their colonization. Although the authors do not explicitly articulate that these two environments are segregated, the need to be able to “code switch” (Molinsky, 2007) between the two suggests that they are relatively separate. In Indian country, this makes sense given the reality that reservations tend to be very native spaces that are isolated. In contrast, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina exists within a geographic, social, and political context where Indigenous, settler, and diasporic communities are closely intertwined. Although it may be argued that the communities

in Kalihi are still interfacing with an overarching social and political structure that continues their colonization in Hawai‘i, the perpetrators that reinforce their continued colonization are not in the majority white. Here, it is mostly Asian settlers that reinforce the structures of colonialism. This reality is very different from what has been described in the literature. Within this reality, programming at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina supports leadership development and reconciliation for *everyone* within the same space. Although seemingly contradictory, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is able to integrate and include both victims and perpetrators of colonization. Many Indigenous cultures are able to transcend these contradictory relationships and produce symbiotic relationships among the contradictions (Bhawuk, 2008). For example, Alibizia, the invasive tree that has overtaken land where Koa was once abundant, is now repurposed for building the traditional wa‘a (canoe). This is an important contribution to the literature for both discussions of Indigenous leadership and leadership in minority communities.

Beyond all of these theories, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina expands our understandings of leadership by considering multiple layers of social structure, power, healing, and time. The Koa ‘Āina program was the first program offered at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. It was as a part of this program that the first adult care group volunteered all of those years ago and planted the first seed of conceptualizing leadership as gifts. In that moment, staff learned to appreciate that gifts, joy, and human connection “will last much longer than the natives we plant in the invasive forest.” This statement is profound because the goal of the Koa ‘Āina program, native reforestation to restore Kalihi’s watershed and native upland forests, is an effort that will take at least a generation. But, growing leaders for a community, with love, joy, and human connection is seen as having a much larger, and longer lasting impact.

Years later, as I collected field notes for this dissertation, another adult care group began volunteering regularly and was able to offer the same important lesson to the young staff members – a beautiful example of past, present, and future converging. Past, because the adult care group had planted the seed long ago for the program director. Present, because Ho‘oulu ‘Āina has developed an environment that supports cultivating the gifts of staff (which the young staff member was benefiting from) and was learning the same lesson at the present time. And, future, because it planted a seed for the young staff member to also learn the lesson that gifts and human connection will outlast plants which will, in turn, refine her skills as a leader to find and nurture the talents of other community members. This is one example that demonstrates how, at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, strategic planning is not limited to a year, 20 years, or even a generation. As another example, several years ago, I was witness to a conversation during a staff meeting that explained how program evaluation was about capturing stories of the land and sharing knowledge that would benefit our grandchildren. Thus, we see that Ho‘oulu ‘Āina’s leadership model contributes to our understandings of leadership by operating with a different time scale.

Conceptualizing leadership as a phenomenon that is constantly grounded in the past, present, and future of a community is reinforced by honoring the genealogy of one’s leadership development. When interview participants recount stories of genealogy in the present, they are recognizing the kuleana that has been passed down to them. This honors the past, matches their leadership to a purpose in the present, and it reaffirms their own commitment to the future because part of their kuleana is to preserve the cultural and spiritual knowledge so that the ancestral pathway can continue. The importance of genealogy and its connection to kuleana has also been discussed by Goodyear- Ka‘opua (2013). She writes:

“But the patterns of speaking about education in terms of genealogy and genealogical responsibility were so persistent that I began paying close attention

to the ways that genealogy was more than just contextual information but was still a form of Hawaiian intellectual production. It was when people spoke of their mo‘okū‘auhau that they often became most clear about their own kuleana, their learning objectives, and their visions of potential futures.”

This quote demonstrates how genealogy provides an ancestral path to purpose, but expanding this relationship to include land furthers our understanding of place-based leadership in Hawaiian culture. It is from this notion of genealogy and kuleana that we can frame the work of the program director and the collaborating leadership practitioner. Leadership in the context genealogy and kuleana does not depend on the traits, position, or power of a leader as the first fifty years of the leadership literature suggested. Instead, kuleana and *mana wahine* converged so that these leaders listened to the stories of the land and their communities. This is ultimately the lesson of this work. All communities have their own stories to tell, gifts to offer, kuleana to honor, and leaders to develop but the way in which these things will come to fruition will depend on learning the stories specific to each place. For example, Goodyear-Ka‘opua, in her discussion on genealogy and kuleana, excerpted above, notes kuleana “is oriented toward relational obligations as shaped by genealogy and land”. She points out:

“A person might call a specific volcanic crater, bay, animal, or human relative their kuleana.”

A beautiful example of place-based leadership is described by Fujikane (2018) that discusses the shape of leadership for protectors of Mauna Kea². One woman, who had linked herself to others

² As part of a 50 year struggle to protect Mauna Kea against industrial telescope development, Kanaka Maoli are taking a stand and refusing any further construction of a sacred site situated within seized Hawaiian Kingdom lands. The current proposal is for the 13th and largest telescope complex, known as the Thirty Meter Telescope.

to create a chain of resistance on the mountain to prevent construction crews and proponents of the thirty meter telescope from reaching the peak, delineated:

“When one shark’s tooth falls out, there’s always another to replace it. Not like, watch out, we’re going to bite you. No, what we realized is that there are always many, many rows behind that front, many, many leaders who are coming into their own and are willing to step up to lead us.” (Waia‘u, 2015 as cited in Fujikane, 2018)

Expanding concentric circles, healthy koa forests and shark’s teeth are all examples of shapes of leadership that are connected to land, the last two being Hawaiian land, specifically.

Although the current study has focused on the comparison of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina’s leadership model with that of shared, multicultural, and Indigenous models, others that consider complex systems can also help frame understandings of reconciliation, connection to land, and others as a part of leadership. Specifically, complexity theory, is helpful for framing dynamic interactions which can vary depending on the stories of a particular place (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2002). This theory helps frame leadership on a larger scale not only at the organizational level, such as with non-profits and shared leadership models, but also at the community level.

Complexity theory is built on the premise that systems are dynamic, and when applied to our understanding of leadership, acknowledges how leadership and the contexts in which it occurs can be holistic (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2002). This is to say that the way in which people within the system interact, and how people interact with the larger setting is a complex and changing process, and all of these interactions are all integral for understanding human connections. Like Indigenous leadership, leadership in complex systems acknowledges the conditions of the setting, such as serving the largest public housing communities in the state and serving in a mixed diasporic community that speaks over 20 languages. It suggests that creating an environment for innovative thinking is a more fruitful endeavor than the innovation itself.

Because of this perspective, one leader does not exert influence vertically to a group of followers

(consistent with shared leadership). Rather, leadership in complex systems becomes an open, dynamic process among all of those involved. In this way, similar to Ho‘oulu ‘Āina’s model, there is a recognition of the need for greater diversity and experience among the individuals who are engaged in these collaborative conversations.

Limitations

There are several limitations to the current study. First, I am a novice learner of Hawaiian language, having spent only one semester taking an introductory course. The translations and understandings and concepts presented here are, therefore, limited. Dictionary translations and deriving meaning from the context have been used to the best of my ability, but as an outsider to this place my presentation here is surely limited.

Second, an important part of this leadership model focuses on connecting to land. For certain communities, like my own in the Mojave Desert, the land will not be as abundant and forgiving as it is on watershed land in the back of Kalihi valley. This is an important limitation when thinking about applying this leadership model to other communities, but important and meaningful concepts still remain.

Third, the ability to replicate these findings in other contexts is in question. However, although one could mistake the lack of description about the traits of the specific leaders as contributing to the question of replicability, the stories captured here are an invitation to others to build meaningful relationships within their own communities to capture the stories that inform leadership specific to those places.

Fourth, although part of the results section highlighted how shared, multicultural, and Indigenous leadership principles are applied at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, the data do not permit me to reach a conclusion on the effectiveness, or the ecological validity, of these theories as they are applied

to this place.

Lastly, as much I believe and have witnessed the power of this leadership model, the data and conclusions presented reflect only the experiences of long-term staff and volunteers. Staff members acknowledged that many volunteers engage in programs once and do not return. The reasons for why people do not return may be complex, but it may also suggest that this leadership model does not work for everyone. However, this does not mean that the people that do not return do not have the potential to be great leaders. It may just be that they need a different environment for their leadership to be born.

Future Research and Next Steps in Dissemination

Future work should continue to capture stories from the land and community to support community wellbeing. As the current study shows, this work cannot be done quickly or superficially. The stories captured here and the partnership with this community site is the result of a relationship that has developed over five years and included hundreds of hours working alongside staff and community volunteers. Particularly, since I am not a native speaker, future research should look to better understand leadership development in cultural communities in languages that those communities use. As a settler, I am able to speak about leadership from my perspective, but it is important to honor and best represent these concepts by a community member to best serve the community.

Another important direction in this work will be to explore why it is that some volunteers become highly engaged, whereas others do not. For those that do stay and become part of the ecosystem, understanding the extent to which leadership expands across community members would also be a helpful endeavor.

Additionally, future work on leadership in “mixed” communities should clearly explore and articulate who makes up the community and how their roles interact. Understanding the interactions of mixed communities will be of increasing importance as global migration and displacement grows.

Finally, these data captured stories of expanding pools of leadership. Future research should look to understand the extent to which this work continues outside of Ho‘oulu ‘Āina to strengthen community. For example, does the leadership model at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina result in greater community health and wellbeing?

In terms of dissemination, the understanding of leadership that is grown and practiced at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina has been recognized by other community stakeholders and state entities as valuable. As a program, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina serves as a leader in modeling and training this leadership style for other programs within Kōkua Kalihi Valley. For example, beyond the health clinic setting, state institutions, such as the Department of Education, other community programs, and people such as Kamehameha School educators have made it a point to visit Ho‘oulu ‘Āina to begin to understand how this work might be implemented into their own structures. This model of leadership has also been useful for trainings on trauma-informed care with other community organizations. This dissertation will serve to further support the work that the program director and Ho‘oulu ‘Āina is already doing on a small scale to share and train others more broadly in this leadership model.

Conclusion

This dissertation is the embodiment of my gift to a greater kuleana. On one level, I am able to apply a range of skills from my doctoral training in the community and cultural psychology program to create a document that will help validate and capture stories about the

leadership model at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina. Hopefully, this document can be used to support their work. One another level, Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, Cheryl (the collaborating leadership practitioner), and my committee have given *me* the gift of being able to explore my relationship with this place, that has become one of my homes, for my dissertation. I was interested in understanding how to make sustainable and meaningful community change to take back to my own community. On the very first day I learned that weeds are not bad. Over the years, I have learned to identify a variety of plants (weeds and otherwise) and learned to turn weeds into useful material through the process of natural composting. Those experiences and the ability to reflect on them, through this dissertaion, have given me the gift of realizing that when we were pulling weeds, we were talking about healing communities all along because the breath of the land is the life of the people. One participant similarly recognized:

“I’m so lucky that I got to go to Ho‘oulu ‘Āina because this space there like developed me—and all the transformations that...the volunteers go through...I went through things like that, and...I wouldn’t really be able to do the work that I do now if it wasn’t for my experience at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina because of the things that I learned on the land every day. Staring at the mountains everyday—looking at the clouds every day—obsessing over the peaks every day—the certain peaks and how they look under different light, you know, seeing different volunteers come over time, and how their relationships to the place changed and grew—watching the land transform, and how different it was when I started to how it is now, and how it is continually transforming. I really believe that the breath of the land is the life of the people.”

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Appendix A: Interview Question Template for Staff

A) Leadership Activities

1. What do you do here?
 - What programs do you help with?
2. How do you make decisions about what work will be done?
 - Who or what gives you direction or guidance?
3. What does it look like when you give direction or guidance?
 - What do you think about when you are going to direct someone?
 - Probe: how does this change depending on the age of the volunteer? Or the activity of the day?

B) Leadership Context and Applicability

1. Why is this work meaningful?
2. Who or what is affected by the work done here?
 - Probes: How does it connect to:
 - Ho‘oulu ‘Āina (HA)
 - KKV
 - Kalihi
 - Beyond

C) Leadership Development

1. When was the first time you thought of yourself as leader?
2. When did you see yourself as a leader here at HA?
3. How did you learn to become a leader?
4. Would you consider yourself a leader in other contexts?
5. How can you recognize when someone is ready become a leader?
 - Probe: How can you tell which volunteers you can give more responsibility to?

Appendix B: Interview Question Template for Program Director and Leadership Development Consultant

1. What does leadership look like at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina?
2. Who or what is impacted because of the leadership in this place?
3. How do you create space for leaders to flourish here?
4. How has your understanding of leadership development needs for the Ho‘oulu ‘Āina staff changed over time?

Appendix C: Interview Question Template for Volunteers

1. How did you come to this place? When do you like to volunteer?
2. What kept you coming back?
3. How long have you been volunteering?
4. On a large volunteer day what do you normally do?
 - a. Do you help give guidance to other volunteers?
 - b. Do you enjoy helping others in this way?
 - c. When did you start providing guidance?
 - d. When did you start feeling comfortable giving guidance to others?

*For staff that originally served as volunteers:

1. How did you transition from volunteer to staff?
2. How did you know you were ready to transition from volunteer to staff?

Appendix D. Themes for Data Analysis

Emergent Codes:

- Alaka‘i / Leadership
 - Any mention of this actual term
 - Gifts - any mention of gifts, or gift actualization
 - Kuleana - any mention of responsibility or working towards a purpose
- Program Development
 - Any mention of HA program development, history, or organization history
- How leaders/staff make decisions
 - This code is used for flagging how staff adapt to different volunteer groups/abilities. Any description of how staff make decisions about work to be done at HA.
- How staff interact with each other
 - Any mention of how staff interact with one another
- A‘o aku, a‘o mai
 - The Sharing of knowledge / skills. Where information/skills are learned from. This includes how staff teach volunteers, and vice versa, and how people learn from ‘āina
- Holding Space
 - Any mention of holding space, including as part of the activities done/process at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina, something that HA provides to the community, to other staff members, etc. Includes building trust, love, compassion, and safety within a group (volunteers or staff) up at Ho‘oulu ‘Āina.
 - Circles - any mention a circle including an Aloha circle, Mahalo circle
- Space in Between / Bridging
 - This code will capture how the work done at HA connects to the greater community, like UH, private schools or Hawaiian people as a whole, government entities, institutions or other non-profits. This also describes how HA staff help each other interact with outside entities. This can also refer to how HA holds a space in between for immigrant communities in Kalihi.
- Extraction vs Abundance
 - Taking vs sharing: Includes explicit discussions of social, economic, and/or political systems that function on extractive principles, vs principles of abundance. This code should also be used for examples that demonstrate the difference of these two value sets.
 - Conflict/Stress - any mention of discomfort or conflict in any context: Within a person, at HA, with HA and others, outside of HA, etc.

A Priori Codes:

- Areas of transformative change (Rae et al., 2016)
 - Self-efficacy
 - Self-awareness/self-reflection
 - Participatory behaviors
 - Self-development
 - Emotional changes
 - Critical reflection of social context
- Areas of community change (Rae et al., 2016)
 - Policy Work
 - Community Action
 - Resource Development
 - Increased Partnerships
- Specifics of leadership training (Stewart & Warn, 2017)
 - The importance of the culturally aware leadership training
 - The importance of elders and of family in modeling leadership values
 - The extent to which personal qualities were developed and challenged through leadership
 - The prevalence of backgrounds of family hardship and difficulty
 - The ongoing importance of community in grounding leadership
 - Being patient and letting people have time to get to know you
 - Leading by example
 - Helping people
 - Listening, not going in too strongly
 - Communicating in a straightforward but appropriate manner
 - Acknowledging who you are
 - Being true to one's identity is central
 - Communicating *about* culture could also be a key part of this work
 - Efficacy in the leadership task was not generally related to formal outputs or outcomes
- *Mana Wahine*
 - Any mention of *mana wahine*, or the feminine energy/power of this place, a characteristic in both males and females. This also includes any mention of mothering or birthing.