

MAJORITY TO MINORITY:
THE ADJUSTMENT OF ASIAN AMERICAN HAWAI'I RESIDENTS
AT PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTIONS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT MĀNOA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

EDUCATION

AUGUST 2015

By

Cheri Y.H. Souza

Dissertation Committee:

Joanne Cooper, Chairperson

Lori M. Ideta

Gay Garland Reed

Stacey B. Roberts

Paul R. Brandon

Keywords: Adjustment, Asian American, cultural dissonance, persistence

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS vii

ABSTRACT viii

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE, AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY 1

 Statement of the Problem 5

Ethnic Minority Participation in Higher Education 6

Model Minority Myth 8

Exclusion from Higher Education Research and Practice 10

 Theoretical Framework 12

Intercultural Perspective of Racial and Ethnic Minority College Student Persistence 13

 Purpose of the Study 15

 Research Questions 16

 Significance of the Study 16

 Working definition of Local 18

 Key Concepts and Definitions 18

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW 21

 Introduction 21

 Asian Americans in Higher Education 22

Demographic information 22

Participation in higher education 23

 Asian Americans in Hawai‘i 24

History of Hawai‘i 25

 The beginning of a local culture 29

Hawai‘i as culture of origin 32

The model minority myth 34

 Identity, Adjustment, and Persistence 39

Identity 40

 Racial identity stage models 41

 Racial and ethnic identity stage models 43

 External factor models 44

 Local identity 44

 Asian American identity 45

Intersection of Local and Asian American identities 46

Adjustment 49

 Ethnic minority student adjustment 50

 Asian American Student Adjustment 54

 Minority student adjustment at PWIs 56

 Cultural congruence 58

 Acculturation 59

Persistence 60

 Expectations Versus Reality 62

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

| | |
|---|-----|
| Intercultural Theories..... | 63 |
| <i>Cultural perspective of college student persistence</i> | 63 |
| <i>Intercultural perspective of minority student persistence</i> | 65 |
| <i>Cultural integrity</i> | 66 |
| Summary..... | 67 |
| CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY..... | 68 |
| Characteristics of Qualitative Inquiry..... | 68 |
| The Phenomenological Research Method..... | 70 |
| <i>Sampling techniques</i> | 74 |
| Sampling Issues..... | 76 |
| <i>Sampling Strategy</i> | 79 |
| Participants..... | 81 |
| Site Description..... | 82 |
| Data Collection Procedures..... | 83 |
| Data Analysis Plan..... | 85 |
| Quality Control and Validity..... | 87 |
| Personal Statement..... | 88 |
| Role of the Researcher..... | 90 |
| Limitations..... | 95 |
| Summary..... | 97 |
| CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS..... | 99 |
| Cultural Dissonance..... | 99 |
| <i>Different from mainland culture: Some people will never understand</i> | 100 |
| <i>Layers of culture</i> | 105 |
| <i>Geographical and cultural misunderstandings: Oh my God, you're from Hawai'i?!</i> | 109 |
| <i>Coping mechanisms</i> | 111 |
| Entering the Unknown..... | 112 |
| Challenges to Identity..... | 119 |
| <i>Identity crisis: What?! I'm a minority?</i> | 119 |
| <i>Societal groupings: I'm not like the other Asians</i> | 121 |
| <i>Identity conflict: Even though I'm half white, I don't consider myself Caucasian</i> | 124 |
| Geographic Isolation..... | 125 |
| <i>Cultural isolation: We don't have that luxury</i> | 126 |
| <i>Acclimating: It was a very bad winter</i> | 127 |
| Persistence: I'm a little stubborn, I chose to be here..... | 128 |
| Summary..... | 130 |
| CHAPTER 5. IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION..... | 132 |
| Implications for Theory..... | 150 |
| Implications for Practice..... | 155 |
| Implications for Future Research..... | 159 |
| Summary..... | 162 |

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

REFERENCES 164

APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT EMAIL..... 189

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM 190

APPENDIX C: PREQUALIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE 193

APPENDIX D: IRB APPROVAL LETTER 196

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL..... 198

APPENDIX F: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE..... 200

List of Tables

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 2.1 State Rankings on the U.S. Collectivism Index..... | 55 |
| Table 3.1 Selection Criteria Matrix | 79 |
| Table 3.2 Participant Matrix | 82 |
| Table 3.2 2012 Institutional and Student Characteristics | 83 |

List of Figures

Figure 1.1 Undergraduate Minority Students 6

Figure 2.1 Ethical Issues at Seven Research Stages 88

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There is absolutely no way I could have made this journey alone. At each step throughout this process, there were many people who offered support, guidance, encouragement, and an occasional drink. I realize that many people have contributed to my success and I can only hope that now and in the future, I continue to make you proud.

I would like to send a huge thank you and mahalo to the following people:

Dr. Joanne Cooper, thank you for your unwavering support, encouragement, and guidance. There is absolutely no way that I could have completed this program and dissertation without you. You always knew exactly what to say when I needed a push. You are such an inspiration and I am honored to be one of your last students at UHM. Thank you for believing in me.

Dr. Paul Brandon, Dr. Lori Ideta, Dr. Gay Garland Reed, and Dr. Stacey Roberts. Thank you for your valuable insights, time, and support as I conquered this beast. Your guidance throughout this journey has meant a lot to me.

My interview participants. Thank you for trusting me and sharing your journey with me. You are each so amazing and I know you will do great things in life.

Friends and family. Thank you for pushing me and putting up with me over the years. You kept me sane through this process and I cannot express how grateful I am.

Grandma Saito and Grandma Honda. I love you both so much. Thank you for being the best grandmas ever! Thank you for everything you've done for our family since I was a little girl. You are both so inspiring and hard working. I hope that I have made you proud.

Syn and Brys. You guys rock and you know it. Thank you for being you, for putting up with me, being my partners in crime, and for being the most wonderful aunty and uncle ever!

Mom and Dad. Thank you for instilling in me the value of an education and for believing in me. Thank you for all that you do for our family - there is no way I could be a working mom and student without you. Each day I am so grateful for having you both by my side. I have told you many times, but now it's in writing - We have the best family in the universe and I am so happy to be a part of it. I love you guys!

DAS and CKS. You are my world and I love you both! You have taught me more than you'll ever know. Thank you for your patience and encouragement from day one. The world is ours – it's time to explore!

ABSTRACT

Within the United States, the model minority myth has contributed to empirically unsubstantiated misconceptions about Asian American college students. Although there is considerable research on college student adjustment and its role in persistence, literature focusing on the Asian American experience is lacking. Furthermore, the experience of Asian American Hawai'i residents is nearly nonexistent. This dissertation used qualitative research methods to design and conduct a phenomenological study that examined the adjustment experience of Asian American Hawai'i residents attending predominantly White institutions (PWIs) in the Northeast United States. Through semi-structured interviews, ten students shared their experiences, in particular how their home culture of origin affected their adjustment to their college culture of immersion. This research shares a glimpse into the worlds of ten Asian American Hawai'i residents to help practitioners, institutions, and scholars better understand how they can create and foster supportive networks to facilitate the college adjustment process for students of color.

The Intercultural Perspective of Racial and Ethnic Minority College Student Persistence provided the theoretical framework for this study. Five themes emerged from the findings, representing the essence of the participants' experiences adjusting to PWIs in the Northeastern United States: Cultural Dissonance, Entering the Unknown, Challenges to Identity, Geographic Isolation, and Persistence. These themes underscore the importance of valuing the cultural capital that each student brings to a college campus and provides insights into the intricacies of Asian American Hawai'i residents' college experience as told by the students themselves. Implications include the finding that the majority of participants felt that being from Hawai'i had

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

a greater effect on their adjustment than did being Asian American. The majority of participants asserted that their cultures of origin played a significant role in shaping their college experience, much more so than their ethnic identity or individual racial identities. The findings of this study reinforce the need to create more culturally responsive, inclusive, and diverse postsecondary institutions, programs, and educators. Recommendations for secondary and postsecondary educational institutions, college bound students, and future research are also discussed.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE, AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

During the 2014 academic year, 21.0 million students were expected to attend American colleges and universities. However, nearly half of those who enroll will not graduate in a timely fashion. According to the National Student Clearinghouse, of the 2.7 million first-time degree seeking students who enrolled in postsecondary institutions during the fall of 2008, only 55.3 percent actually completed their bachelor's degree within six years (Shapiro, Dundar, Wakhungu, Yuan, & Harrell, 2015). This high rate of failure is problematic as the negative consequences associated with failing to complete a college degree affect not only the individual, but institutions and society at large. For example in 2013, the unemployment rate for high school graduates without a college degree was 34.4 percent, compared with 17.7 percent for recent college graduates (BLS, 2013). Additionally, the average annual income of high school graduates is only 54 percent of their college graduate counterparts (USCB, 2012a).

As a result of the disconcertingly low rates of degree completion, scholars have studied the importance of student persistence, making it one of the most intensively studied areas of research in higher education (e.g., Astin, 1993; Bean & Metzner, 1985; Braxton, 2000; Braxton, Sullivan & Johnson, 1997; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Porter, 1989; Rendon, Jalomo, & Nora, 2000; Stage & Hossler, 2000; Tierney, 2000; Tinto, 1993). However, despite their efforts, nationwide student persistence and graduation rates have remained fairly constant for more than four decades (Newbaker, 2014). In addition to scholarly and institutional interests, federal and state governments are also paying attention to student persistence as they tie funding directly to student outcomes. Furthermore, budgetary concerns have challenged

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

institutions to do more with fewer resources and pressure from policymakers, the government, and the general public, have pushed them to stabilize revenue streams while increasing student retention.

Higher education researchers have been trying to understand student departure for over eighty years (Braxton, 2000). Early research on student persistence was descriptive in nature and blamed the victims—students, asserting that it was their lack of motivation or preparedness which caused departure and failure (Tinto, 1975). This view began to shift in the 1970s as scholars like Tinto (1975) and Spady (1970/1971) added environmental factors into the puzzle, linking student persistence to explicit connections with institutional agents. Much of this early research was conducted through quantitative studies drawing from residential institutions and students of majority backgrounds, excluding the experiences of minority students and those attending other types of institutions, such as community colleges (Tinto, 2006). However, scholars recently addressed this gap in the literature by drawing connections between institutional factors and agents with the distinct characteristics of individual students. Scholars have also examined sense of belonging (e.g. Askham, 2008; Cheng, 2004; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; McDonald, 2002), the experiences of students of different backgrounds (e.g. Alvarez, Blume, Cervantes, & Thomas, 2009; Gonzales, 2003; Johnson et al., 2007; Kalsner & Pistole, 2003; Museus & Quaye, 2009; Nora & Cabrera, 1996), and how a vast array of cultural, economic, social, and institutional forces can affect student retention and persistence (e.g. Kuh & Love, 2000; Lippincott & German, 2007; Museus, 2008; Rendon et al., 2000; Stage & Hossler, 2000; Tierney, 2000; Wei, Ku, & Liao, 2011).

Research on student persistence addresses some aspects of college adjustment either implicitly or by including some measures that represent college adjustment directly into their

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

models; however few studies focus solely on adjustment (Bennett & Okinaka, 1990; Hurtado, Carter, & Spuler, 1996). Bennett & Okinaka (1990) define adjustment as, “the opposite of transitional trauma,” defined as the “level of alienation a student experiences when unfamiliar with the norms, values, and expectations that predominate in a school community” (p. 39).

This definition is similar to that of Chartrand (1992), who defines adjustment as the absence of psychological distress coupled with feelings of academic well-being and institutional commitment. Adjustment is an imperative piece of the student persistence model as it directly focuses on the factors that could alert institutions when students experience non-academic difficulties that may directly affect continued enrollment.

The transition into higher education is a crucial period for any student as the successes or failures they experience are likely to have an impact on future achievements (Haggis, 2006). This period of growth and change can be filled with stress and anxiety as students transition and integrate into new academic, cultural, and social contexts. Askham (2008) compared this transition experience to entering an “alien environment” as students struggle to adjust and find a balance between their newfound freedom and responsibilities in a new social context.

Kuh and Love’s (2000) cultural perspective of college student departure highlighted these competing contexts through the examination of the role that cultures of origin (i.e. precollege cultures) and cultures of immersion (i.e. campus cultures) play in shaping students’ college experiences, thus affecting their adjustment. Culture of origin shapes ones’ meaning making system and is defined as a students’ precollege environment, which may include immediate family, friends, school, and community. Culture of immersion is defined as a students’ college environment, which may challenge their existing meaning-making system if it is not congruent with their culture of origin (Kuh & Love, 2000).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

While nearly all students experience varying levels of incongruence between their cultures of origin and immersion, ethnic minority students in particular face added difficulties as they navigate the intricacies of new social and academic contexts (Gonzales, 2003; Museus, 2008; Museus & Quaye, 2009). The incongruity between these environments can trigger feelings of marginalization, isolation, and confusion, and even lead to premature departure from an institution (Schlossberg, 1984; Kuh & Love, 2000; Museus & Quaye, 2009).

For some minority students, college may be their first exposure to being a minority in a predominantly White environment (Alvarez et al., 2009). For example, Asian American Hawai'i residents, grow up in a majority-minority state, in which they belong to the majority despite their ethnic minority status. In a majority-minority state, minorities account for greater than 50 percent of the total population; in Hawai'i, minorities comprise 77.1 percent of the population (Bernstein, 2012). Therefore, if Asian American Hawai'i residents leave the state and enter a predominantly White community, this experience may be their first exposure to experiencing life as a minority.

When a student's culture of origin is composed of a majority-minority population, their integration into a predominantly White setting (college culture of immersion) can cause them to question their identity, adding to their stress. As they strive to academically and socially fit in to their new culture of immersion, learning to navigate new White campus and community cultures may add additional levels of uncertainty, stress, and confusion to students' lives (Lippincott & German, 2007; Kuh & Love, 2000; Museus & Quaye, 2009). Evidence also exists surrounding the challenges that the dominant campus cultures of predominantly White institutions (PWIs) pose for minority students (Museus, 2008). PWI is a term used to describe institutions of higher learning in which Whites account for 50 percent or greater of the student enrollment (Brown &

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Dancy, 2010). Hawai‘i’s distinct majority-minority population, along with its geographic remoteness from the rest of the United States, presents a unique set of circumstances for college-bound residents as they attend PWIs and navigate cultural incongruities.

Through a phenomenological qualitative approach, this study explores the experiences of Asian American Hawai‘i residents as they strive to adjust to PWIs in the Northeastern United States. Specifically, this dissertation aims to understand how the differences and similarities between a student’s culture of origin and immersion might affect their college adjustment process.

Statement of the Problem

College campuses represent unique developmental environments. Deciphering the nuances that emerge from new social contexts resulting from the disparities between precollege and college environments can generate unique challenges for minority students. Furthermore, Asian American students face added challenges due to the model minority stereotype (Li & Wang, 2008). To effectively support these students through their college journey and increase student persistence, it is imperative to understand their experiences and how cultural incongruities may affect the college adjustment process.

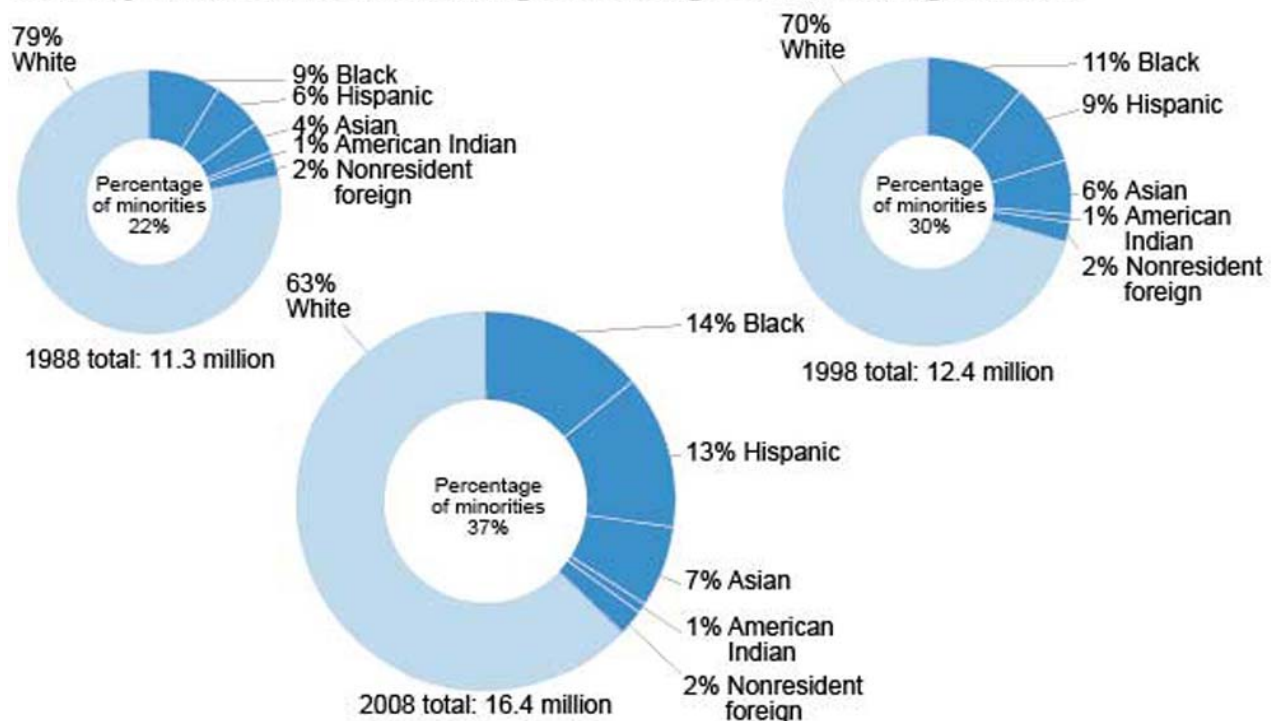
Three issues will be examined in demonstrating the importance of the proposed study: 1) the presence and continuing growth of Asian Americans in the United States, 2) the impact of the model minority myth; and 3) the lack of attention and knowledge regarding Asian American student departure. In addition to the dearth of literature on Asian Americans, there is even less research available focusing on Asian American Hawai‘i residents in higher education; so to further frame this dissertation the historical context of Asian Americans in Hawai‘i will be addressed in Chapter Two.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Ethnic Minority Participation in Higher Education. College campuses will become increasingly more diverse over the next decade. The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) projects that 45 percent of public high school graduates will be non-white by 2020, up from 38 percent in 2009. This changing demographic mirrors that of the greater United States population and is leading policymakers to anticipate more minority students on campuses throughout the nation in the years to come (Prescott & Bransberger, 2012). Figure 1.1 illustrates the growth percentages of all part-time and full-time minority students from 1988 to 2008 (Brainard, 2010).

Figure 1.1 Undergraduate Minority Students

Minority Students Are a Growing Percentage of All Undergraduates



Note: Figures include full- and part-time students. Numbers for American Indians include Native Alaskans. Figures for Asians include Pacific Islanders. Figures for Hispanics include people of that ethnicity, regardless of race. Figures are rounded and so may not add to 100

Source: U.S. Department of Education

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

The trend of increased numbers of minority students in higher education is already evident. Between 1998 and 2008, minority student enrollment rose from 30 percent to 37 percent of overall college enrollment and their baccalaureate degree conferral rate increased by 41 percent over the previous decade (Brainard, 2010; Kim, 2011). Within the minority population, Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students accounted for the largest subpopulation enrolled in college, increasing from 23 percent to 35 percent between 1998 and through 2008. They are expected to continue increasing throughout the next decade (Kim, 2011; Prescott & Bransberger, 2012).

The increased participation of minorities in higher education can also be attributed in part to colleges intensifying their strategies to recruit and enroll minority students in efforts to enhance the diversity of their undergraduate student bodies (Elmers & Pike, 1997; Kim, 2011). In the next decades, if a growing portion of the student population will be of ethnic minority, then postsecondary educators, administrators, and policy makers must deepen their understanding of ethnic minority experiences in order to effectively plan for this demographic and cultural shift.

Although minority students are not a homogenous group, several studies of college persistence have suggested that minority students in general, encounter specific experiences that are different from those of their nonminority counterparts. For example, Terenzini et al. (1994) found that minority students were more likely to be concerned about the academic rigors of college and shared concerns about being academically integrated, whereas nonminority students were primarily concerned about developing friendships and becoming socially integrated into college life. Furthermore, minority students were significantly more likely to convey feelings of isolation and alienation than their nonminority counterparts (Elmers & Pike, 1997). In some

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

cases, minority students expressing high levels of isolation and alienation were more likely to express the intention to withdraw from college (Loo & Rolison, 1986; Lee & Ying, 2001).

Understanding the experiences and needs of students from diverse backgrounds is an extremely important component for cultivating campus environments that maximize student learning and development. Through an understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures, colleges can create interventions to help students persist towards graduation. As college students become more racially and ethnically diverse, practitioners and administrators will be challenged to understand the needs of those populations.

Model Minority Myth. Since 1966, when the term “model minority” was coined by sociologist William Peterson in a *New York Times* article, “Success Story: Japanese American Style,” Asian Americans have been portrayed as academically and economically superior in the United States, surpassing other minority groups in addition to White Americans (Suzuki, 1989/2002; Li & Wang, 2008). In the article the term model minority was used to explain the achievements of a group who despite past oppression and discrimination were able to achieve financial and social successes (Bascara, 2008; Li & Wang, 2008). The term continued to gain momentum in the 80s and 90s as popular media branded Asian American students as whiz kids and news agencies such as *Newsweek*, *New York Times*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *Time*, and *Fortune* perpetuated the stereotype. This term has continued to persist into the 21st century; wrongfully assuming that Asian Americans are universally academically and economically successful; therefore adversely affecting Asian American students’ mental health, educational experiences, and relationships with other groups (Li & Wang, 2008; Suyemoto, Kim, Tanabe, Tawa, & Day, 2009).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Despite Asian Americans' significant participation in postsecondary education, they continue to represent an understudied group, a phenomenon scholars attribute to the model minority myth. Many scholars contest the model minority stereotype by drawing attention to the diversity between Asian subgroups and the negative ramifications of its impact on the lives of under- and overachieving students (Li & Wang, 2008). Scholars also believe that the myth is associated with a narrow focus on academic achievement that is measured by grades and degree attainment, but gives a lack of attention to other measures of success, such as successful functioning in life (Museus & Kiang, 2009; Suyemoto et al., 2009). Additionally, although aggregated data may fuel this myth by indicating that as a whole Asian Americans attain degrees at higher rates and have greater participation in higher education than other racial populations, disaggregated census data dispels the model minority myth as the successes of some Asian American ethnic groups overshadow the struggles of other groups (CARE, 2008; Kim, 2011; Li & Wang, 2008; Museus, 2009; Museus & Maramba, 2011; Suyemoto et al., 2009). For example, some Southeast Asian Americans such as Filipino American and Hmong Americans complete degrees at a much lower rate than Japanese American and Chinese Americans (Museus, 2009).

Recent studies have attempted to demystify the stereotype and have indicated that Asian American adolescents experience significant distress in pursuing academic achievements, face numerous culturally based challenges, and have higher rates of mental illnesses than previously suspected (Lee & Ying, 2001; Museus, 2009; United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2001; Ying et al., 2001; Yoo, Burrola, & Steger, 2010). Scholars have also argued that the stereotype has detracted attention from social and psychological needs of this group by measuring success by grades and degree completion (Lee & Ying, 2001; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Suyemoto et al., 2009; Ying et al., 2001).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Asian American students are more likely than White students to persist and graduate from college, but they are also more likely to go on medical leave in college, experience mental health issues, and express feelings of college dissatisfaction (Kam, 2013; Museus, 2008). These findings are concerning as studies have indicated that Asian Americans, compared with their non-Asian counterparts, also tend to have higher levels of depressive symptoms, underutilize mental health services, and have less positive attitudes toward seeking psychological help (Carrasco & Weiss, 2005; Miller, Yang, Hui, Choi, & Lim, 2011). Asian American college students have also been reported as having the highest suicide rate out of all racial and ethnic groups in the country (Carrasco & Weiss, 2005). Furthermore, the 2005 National Survey of Student Engagement indicated that Asian American students expressed that they are among the least satisfied with their overall college experience when compared to other racial groups. The model minority myth is also problematic as it implies that all Asian Americans identify with the Asian American community in the same way, categorizing and treating them as a single homogeneous racial group (Museus & Kiang, 2009).

Exclusion from Higher Education Research and Practice. Scholars have argued that the exclusion of AAPIs from higher education literature is in part due to the pervasive influence of the model minority myth (Museus, 2009; Museus & Maramba, 2011; Suyemoto et al., 2009; Ying, 2001). This lack of inclusion in scholarly publications is problematic as it perpetuates the stereotype by concealing actual needs and prohibiting practitioners, policymakers, and administrators from understanding the intricacies of this population (Museus, 2009; Museus & Kian, 2009; Suyemoto et al., 2009).

The growing number of culturally diverse students has challenged institutions to rethink existing policies and practices. Historically, colleges and universities were established to educate

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

elite White males and the research in the field mirrored this population. Since its inception, American higher education has grown to include students coming from extremely diverse cultural backgrounds; however researchers have been slower to respond to the increase in minority populations (Rendon et al., 2000).

Due to higher education's historical beginnings educating elite White males, the knowledge of White middle class values is embraced over other knowledge, leading scholars to argue that the education system is socially and culturally biased (Pearce, Down, & Moore, 2008; Museus & Kiang, 2009). People of color are often thought to have access to the same options and privileges of White, middle-class Americans; however in reality this is not the case (Rendon et al., 2000). For example, Asian American students frequently report experiences of racial prejudice and discrimination, pressure to conform to stereotypes, and difficulties posed by the cultures of PWIs and as a consequence, find that effectively managing conflicting values and working towards degree completion can be a challenge and a source of stress.

Asian Americans are often marginalized as they face pressure to conform to the dominant culture in order to fit into predominately White college environments (Alvarez et al., 2009; Loo & Rolison, 1986). Marginality, the sense of not fitting in, is often a permanent condition for members of minority groups (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). When students have trouble adjusting to their new environments and find a lack of social support, feelings of marginalization can increase as they struggle to fit in and gain acceptance from their peers (Schlossberg, 1989).

Although AAPI's are one of the fastest growing racial groups in the United States, as well as the largest minority group enrolled in college, over the past decade, approximately one percent of articles published in five of the most widely read peer-reviewed academic journals in

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

the field of higher education have given specific attention to AAPI college student issues (Museus, 2009; Museus & Maramba, 2011; USCB, 2012b). As a result of their widespread absence in scholarly literature and inaccurate racial stereotypes, AAPIs are one of the most misunderstood populations in United States higher education (Chang, 2008).

Collectively, these factors exemplify the need for a deeper understanding of the adjustment process Asian American student's experience in their college environment. Understanding the experiences of underrepresented groups is an important step in making higher education more inclusive and representative of the diversity experienced in the greater United States.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework guiding this study is based on a model derived from critiques of Tinto's original Student Integration Model. An underlying assumption of Tinto's Student Integration Model (1975/1993) is that students must assimilate into the cultural mainstream to succeed, committing what some scholars have called "cultural suicide," disassociating themselves from their cultures of origin (Tierney, 1999, p. 82). For students who come from cultures incongruent with the culture of their college campus, Tinto implies that they must detach themselves from their culture of origin and adopt the values, assumptions, and norms of the culture of immersion to succeed. Although the Student Integration Model is arguably the most pervasive theory of student persistence in higher education, it falls short due to the lack of a cultural dimension, implicitly excluding minority student experiences (Braxton et al., 1997; Tierney, 1999/2000).

The framework that provided the theoretical underpinnings for this study is Museus and Quayle's (2009) intercultural perspective of racial and ethnic minority college student

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

persistence, a modification of Kuh and Love's (2000) original cultural persistence model. To comprehensively understand the perceptions, behaviors, and educational experiences of minority students, these models, embedded with intercultural and cultural nuances guided this study.

Intercultural Perspective of Racial and Ethnic Minority College Student

Persistence. Museus and Quaye's (2009) intercultural perspective of racial and ethnic minority college student persistence is a modified model of Kuh and Love's (2000) eight cultural propositions. The original eight propositions include: 1) Students' college experiences and decisions are mediated by a student's cultural meaning-making system; 2) Students' precollege cultures determine the importance they associate with attending or graduating from college; 3) Knowledge of both students' precollege cultures and campus cultures is necessary to understand their abilities to navigate the campus cultural milieu; (4) The likelihood of persistence is inversely related to the incongruence between students' precollege and campus cultures; 5) Students who travel a long cultural distance must either acclimate to the dominant campus culture or join one or more cultural enclaves (i.e., subcultures) to succeed; 6) The amount of time students spend in their cultures of origin during their college career is positively associated with cultural stress and eventual student departure; 7) The likelihood a student will persist is related to the extensity and intensity of their sociocultural connections to the academic program and to affinity groups; and 8) Students are more likely to persist if they belong to one or more cultural enclaves, especially if those enclaves value achievement and persistence.

Museus and Quaye (2009) modified the eight cultural propositions integrating cultural agents and cultural integrity into the model to provide a useful framework to observe how students' precollege cultures and the dominant campus culture interact to affect persistence and adjustment. Their theory offers an intercultural view of college student adjustment, focusing on

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

the importance of students' precollege and campus cultures in shaping their experiences and outcomes. The term intercultural was used to differentiate their model from the original as it refers to interactions across multiple cultures, specifically addressing a) multiple cultures- cultures of origin and immersion, as well as dominant campus cultures and subcultures-which are central to this emergent perspective; b) the emergent intercultural perspective focuses on the interactions between those cultures of origin and immersion; and c) the term "intercultural" distinguishes the new perspective from Kuh and Love's (2000) original set of cultural propositions (Museus & Quaye, 2009).

Museus and Quaye's (2009) updated intercultural propositions focus specifically on college students of color and include: 1) Minority students' college experiences are shaped by their cultural meaning-making system; 2) Minority students' cultures of origin moderate the meanings that they attach to college attendance, engagement, and completion; 3) Knowledge of minority students' cultures of origin and immersion are required to understand those students' abilities to negotiate their respective campus cultural milieus; 4) Cultural dissonance is inversely related to minority students' persistence; 5) Minority students who experience a substantial amount of cultural dissonance must acclimate to the dominant campus culture or establish sufficient connections with cultural agents at their institution to persist; 6) The degree to which campus cultural agents validate minority students' cultures of origin is positively associated with reduced cultural dissonance and greater likelihood of persistence; 7) The quality and quantity of minority students' connections with various cultural agents on their respective campuses is positively associated with their likelihood of persistence; and 8) Minority students are more likely to persist if the cultural agents to whom they are connected emphasize educational achievement, value educational attainment, and validate their traditional cultural heritages.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

This framework is useful in the examination of how culture permeates almost all aspects of higher education and provides a lens to help institutions understand how they may intervene to increase student adjustment. This study examined how students' cultures of origin and immersion contributed to and shaped students' adjustment at PWIs in the Northeast. These perspectives guided this study, acknowledging that students face a variety of stressors in adjustment to college and that ethnic minorities face additional stressors beyond those typical to all students. By analyzing data gathered through these intercultural frameworks, the importance of cultural context will be brought to the forefront of this study to discover new aspects of student adjustment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to add to the existing body of research on ethnic student persistence by describing how cultures of origin and immersion affect the adjustment of Asian American students from Hawai'i attending PWIs in the Northeast. Extracting the essence of students' experiences to understand their interpretation of how cultural incongruities between home and college environments affect their adjustment process will help institutional agents develop future initiatives and institutional policies to better support students of color. Understanding the challenges students face while navigating divergent cultures of origin and immersion is an important element of the greater student affairs literature and the results of this study can be used to foster campus environments that are amenable and supportive for Asian American students.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Research Questions

The central question guiding this study is: how does cultural incongruence affect the adjustment process of Asian American Hawai'i residents attending predominantly White institutions of higher education in the Northeast? Subordinate, but related questions were:

- 1) How do cultures of origin contribute to adjustment challenges?
- 2) How do cultures of immersion contribute to adjustment challenges?
- 3) How do cultures of origin facilitate adjustment?
- 4) How do cultures of immersion facilitate adjustment?

To understand the essence of participant experiences, this study involved a phenomenological approach, using the in-depth interview guidelines established by Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009). A phenomenological approach was most appropriate for this inquiry, as it focused on tapping the essence of student experiences to understand the complexities of their adjustment to college.

Significance of the Study

Historically, there has been very little research focusing on the impact of organizational culture on student persistence (Kuh & Love, 2000); however recently, this topic has received increased attention (Guiffrida, 2003/2006; Murguia, Padilla, & Pavel, 1991; Museus, 2008/2009; Museus, Lam, Huang, Kem, & Tan, 2012; Museus & Quaye, 2009; Rendon, 1994; Rendon et al., 2000; Tierney, 1999). Additionally, many of the studies of minority student adjustment to college are quantitative, thus lacking the voices and stories of the different students on which these studies report (e.g. Cerezo & Chang, 2013; Johnson et al., 2007; Kalsner, 2003; Roberts et al., 1999; Wei et al., 2011). Student voices and stories are key to providing the rich details that allow practitioners to learn what factors influence their attitudes about their education and their decision to persist (Bean & Metzner, 1985). Developing an understanding of the adjustment

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

process of Asian American college students at PWIs is an increasingly important issue as the number of minority students, Asian American students in particular, is on the rise (Kim, 2011). Therefore, this study will contribute to the existing knowledge base by providing valuable insight into how incongruities between cultures of origin and immersion affect Asian American Hawai'i residents' adjustment experience at PWIs in the Northeast.

The geographical remoteness from the rest of the United States, its majority-minority population, and the limited educational options available in-state present unique circumstances for Hawai'i's college-bound high school graduates (Ichiyama, McQuarrie, & Ching, 1996). When Hawai'i high school graduates desire to attend a highly selective institution, they have no choice but to leave the Islands; they cannot simply drive to the next state, but rather, must fly thousands of miles from their home. This migration from their culture of origin to a new culture of immersion is inevitably filled with contrasting cultural norms, rituals, values, and experiences.

As mentioned, despite extensive national research on student adjustment, there is a paucity of literature directly addressing the experience of Asian American students and their issues arising from cultural incongruities. While persistence literature has been growing since the 1960s, the Asian American perspective has been greatly lacking. Furthermore, the experience of Asian American students whose first exposure to traits associated with minority status in a predominantly White setting has even less of a presence in the empirical and theoretical realms.

Thus, the findings of this study may help higher education practitioners and administrators better understand how the navigation of conflicting cultures influence student adjustment. Additionally, these results may have implications for institutions to reexamine their current minority student policies and practices and discover alternative strategies to support Asian American students as they manage cultural incongruence.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Working definition of Local.

As cited throughout this paper, the definition of Local is nebulous and fluid. In fact, there are still ongoing discussions about what makes one Local. In 2008, Honolulu Advertiser columnist Catherine Toth (2008) sparked heated discussion in her editorial “Obama . . . Local—or trying to be.” She questioned whether President Obama was truly Local since he was born in Hawai‘i, attended a Hawai‘i high school, and spoke of Local things during his visits, or just trying to relate to Local residents.

Although I acknowledge that there are many definitions of Local, for the purposes of this study, Local Asian American Hawai‘i residents will be defined as follows:

- Having lived in Hawai‘i for at least half plus one year of your life
- Coming from the second-generation or later of immigrants to Hawai‘i
- Self-identifying as Japanese, Chinese, Korean, or Filipino, including multi-racial
- Having completed four years at and graduating from a Hawai‘i high school
- Self-identifying as Local

Gaining an understanding of the history of a Local identity is germane to this conversation as I will be asking students to self-identify as Local. Additionally, this criterion provides a historical, political, social and economic lens in which to understand the construction of the Local culture. This framework is necessary to understand how Local students may relate to being thrust into an Asian American identity upon relocating to the continental United States.

Key Concepts and Definitions

Adjustment: The absence of psychological distress coupled with feelings of academic well-being and institutional commitment (Chartrand, 1992).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI): An ethnic category encompassing Asian American and Pacific Islanders. Pacific Islanders are defined as people whose ethnic origins are from Hawai‘i, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands (USCB, 2013b).

Culture of origin: Comprised of a students’ precollege environment and may include of immediate family, friends, school and community, shapes one’s meaning making-system (Kuh & Love, 2000).

Culture of immersion: Comprised of a students’ college environment.

Mainland: A term used by Hawai‘i residents to refer to the continental United States.

Hawai‘i: In this study, the state of Hawai‘i includes the eight main islands, Hawai‘i, Maui, O‘ahu, Kaua‘i, Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i, Ni‘ihau and Kaho‘olawe.

Majority-minority: A state whose minority population is greater than 50 percent. Hawai‘i is one of the five majority-minority states with minorities comprising 77.1 percent of the population (Bernstein, 2012).

Northeast: Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania (USCB, n.d.).

Persistence: The continued enrollment of an individual in higher education from the time of inception until baccalaureate degree attainment.

Ethnic minority: A U.S. citizen who is not of Caucasian descent. For purposes of this study, this category will be limited to Asian American individuals. Although broader uses of this term may include international students, they are not the focus of this study and therefore excluded from this category.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Ethnic groups found in the AAPI Category:

Central Asians Afghani, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgians, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Mongolian, Tajik, Turkmen, Uzbek.

East Asians Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Okinawan, Taiwanese, Tibetan.

Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (in the U.S. Jurisdictions & Territories) Carolinian, Chamorro, Chuukese, Fijian, Guamanian, Hawaiian, Kosraean, Marshallese, Native Hawaiian, Niuean, Palauan, Pohnpeian, Samoan, Tokelauan, Tongan, Yapese.

Southeast Asians Bruneian, Burmese, Cambodian, Filipino, Hmong, Indonesian, Laotian, Malaysian, Mien, Papua New Guinean, Singaporean, Timorese, Thai, Vietnamese

South Asians Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Indian, Maldivians, Nepali, Pakistani, Sri Lankan (APIIDV, 2013).

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study aims to add to the ethnic student adjustment knowledge base by exploring the essence of Asian American Hawai'i residents' experiences as they interpret their adjustment to PWIs in the Northeast. This review of literature provides context regarding the importance of studying Asian American college student adjustment as well as illuminates the conceptual underpinnings of this study. By gaining insight regarding how students' cultures of origin and immersion might facilitate or impede their adjustment to college, we may gain a better understanding of how these contexts interact with student adjustment and how colleges might better support minority students.

This chapter encompasses a review of research and literature presented in three primary areas: Asian Americans in higher education; identity, adjustment, and persistence; and intercultural theories. First, I provide a brief overview of Asian Americans in higher education. This includes demographic information, the model minority myth, educational achievement, and the historical context of Asian Americans in Hawai'i. The next part of the chapter will investigate the intersections of identity, adjustment, and persistence while examining the social and academic experiences of minority college students to make sense of how Asian American Hawai'i residents' college adjustment fits into the existing research on college student adjustment. Finally, intercultural theories will be presented, including the conceptual framework guiding this study, Museus and Quayle's (2009) intercultural perspective on racial and ethnic minority student persistence.

Asian Americans in Higher Education

Demographic information. The term Asian American refers to American citizens of Asian descent (Far East, South East Asian, and the Indian Subcontinent) living in the United States (USCB, 2013b). The Asian American category spans more than fifty ethnic groups that differ from each other in language, religion, values, educational circumstances, and socioeconomic backgrounds (Hune, 2002; Kiang, 2002; Museus, 2009). In the current conversations on issues of race and ethnicity and their intersections with education, Pacific Islanders-people whose ethnic origins are from Hawai‘i, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands-are often grouped with Asian Americans, creating the AAPI racial category (USCB, 2013b). The AAPI racial category includes over fifty different ethnic groups.

Asian Americans have lived in the United States for over one-and-a-half centuries; however in the continental United States, records have shown that prior to the 1960’s, as a whole, Asian Americans were discriminated against and targeted by vigilante lynch mobs, as well as federal, state, and local laws (CARE, 2008). For example, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 made Chinese Americans into the first “illegal aliens,” barring them from ever becoming naturalized Americans, and stripping citizenship from those who had already become American citizens. Then, the 1924 Immigration Act forbade Asians from entering the United States and sharply limited entry for Eastern and Southern Europeans. Most recently during World War Two, 120,000 Japanese Americans, 64 percent of who were American-born citizens, were imprisoned for the duration of the war as suspected “enemy aliens.” Largely due to these, and other discriminatory practices in the continental United States, the Asian American population was relatively nonexistent before the mid-twentieth century (CARE, 2008; Tamura, 2001).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

As late as 1940, Asian immigrants and their descendants constituted less than 1 percent (.0019) of the United States population (Daniels, 1997). However, Hawaii stands in sharp contrast to the rest of the United States. During that same period 58 percent of its population was of Asian descent, a figure attributed to Hawai'i's territory status and plantation history (Miyares, 2008; Okamura, 1994; Tamura, 2001). The Asian American population in the continental United States did not experience growth until the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, allowing access to formerly excluded groups. Since then, the AAPI population has seen immense growth from one million in 1960 to 18.2 million in 2011 (USCB, 2013a).

Participation in higher education. As highlighted in Chapter One, the trend of increased participation in higher education by minority students is already evident. Within the minority population, AAPI students accounted for the largest subpopulation enrolled in college, increasing from 23 percent to 35 percent between 1998 through 2008 and are expected to continue increasing throughout the next decade (Kim, 2011; Prescott & Bransberger, 2012). Furthermore, AAPIs are the second fastest growing racial group in the nation and are projected to comprise approximately one of every ten citizens by 2050 (Bernstein, 2012; USCB, 2013a). Therefore, it is imperative that higher education respond to this major demographic shift that will shape the composition of both campuses and surrounding communities for years to come.

Despite their increasing numbers, scholars have charged that educational research does not adequately meet the needs, challenges, and experiences of AAPI students, particularly in regards to the social and institutional contexts in which they pursue their educational aspirations (CARE, 2011). The dearth of literature has pushed AAPI students to the outskirts of higher education discourse largely in part to the problematic conceptualization of AAPIs as the model

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

minority (Museus, 2009; Museus & Maramba, 2011; CARE, 2011; Suyemoto et al., 2009; Ying et al., 2001).

Asian Americans in Hawai‘i

This study focuses on the experiences and factors that impact the adjustment of undergraduate Asian American students from Hawai‘i at PWIs in the Northeast. To fully comprehend the intricacies of their experiences, it is necessary to understand Hawai‘i as a culture of origin. The following sections provide a brief overview of the ways in which history, culture, politics, and economics have shaped the Asian American community in Hawai‘i and contribute to college students culture of origin.

In 2011, AAPIs comprised almost six percent of the overall United States population, with the highest concentration living in Hawai‘i (57 percent). AAPIs are also the largest minority group (77.1 percent) in the state of Hawai‘i and contribute to Hawai‘i’s “majority-minority” status as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau (USCB, 2012b/2013a). Due to the significant AAPI population in Hawai‘i (California has the next highest concentration at 22 percent) residents of Hawai‘i experience distinct ethnic, racial, and cultural contextual differences compared to their mainland counterparts, particularly in terms of diversity.

Despite the official categories in literature on ethnic identity, in Hawai‘i the term Asian American is rarely used (Okamura, 1994). Instead, many Hawai‘i residents proclaim a Local identity rooted in a shared island experience, as opposed to origins in a motherland country or a nationally recognized racial category (Ch’oe, 2006; Grant & Ogawa, 1993; Ohnuma, 2008; Okamura, 1980; Rohrer, 2008; Trask, 2000). The Local identity and culture has emerged primarily from the experience of immigrant laborers who made a living on the sugar and pineapple plantations and is an amalgamation of Asian-Pacific immigrant cultures and Native

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Hawaiian culture. I would like to note that Local identity and culture is not synonymous with the Hawaiian identity and culture. The latter refers to the specific indigenous people of the land whereas Local traces its roots back to the sugar plantations and is a much more recent construction, resulting from the many immigrant groups who have come to Hawai'i over the past two centuries (Okamura, 1994; Trask, 2000).

The definition of a Local identity has been discussed in literature from different perspectives and is a subjective construct by definition, yet there are clear opinions on what categorizes a person as an out-group member. While in-group members may share similar attitudes, beliefs, and values, an out-group member may be considered inferior due to their differences. To gain a better understanding of the characteristics and traits of a Local identity, I will explain Hawai'i's history leading up to the plantation era, examine the history of a Local identity, compare and contrast the pan ethnic Asian American identity in the continental United States with the Local identity in Hawai'i, and identify a working definition of Local.

History of Hawai'i. Today, the Hawaiian islands are rich with ethnic diversity and culture attributed to Hawai'i's plantation history. However, before the arrival of plantation workers, an indigenous culture of Hawai'i existed. To understand the emergence of the Local identity, it is important to recognize Hawai'i's indigenous past.

Hawai'i's native people are thought to have migrated from Tahiti and the Marquesas, as early as 500 to 750 AD, when early Polynesians were expanding their settlements (Fornander, 1880; Hunt & Lipo, 2006). The Polynesian settlers eventually developed what is known today as the Native Hawaiian traditional culture, featuring clearly defined social classes based on birthright and occupation (Hunt & Lipo, 2006). Over the years, the Hawaiian culture and language grew and a thriving society developed. Prior to any outside influence, the Hawaiians

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

relied on an oral culture, preserving their history and ancestry through dance and chant passed on from generation to generation (Coan, 1899; Fornander, 1880).

The Hawaiian monarchy ruled the Hawaiian Kingdom, and the Hawaiian people lived a simple life with an unwritten language (Coan, 1889; Fornander, 1880). Due to Hawai‘i’s extreme geographic isolation, this system remained undisturbed for centuries, until the arrival of Captain James Cook in 1778 (Daws, 1968). Cook’s arrival initiated a major transformation of Hawai‘i, opening it up to the West, and introducing disease, prostitution, and insects to the previously undisturbed nation (Daws, 1968; Stokes, 1930). The years following Cook’s arrival were marked by power struggles within the kingdom, western influence and most notably, the arrival of missionaries (Sai, 2011; Silva, 2004).

The first waves of missionaries arrived from New England around 1820 and upon their arrival were called “haole” (without breath), because they did not speak the Hawaiian language nor greet the Hawaiians using the traditional greeting, sharing hao (the breath of life) (Miyares, 2008). This term came to symbolize the identity of non-Asian settlers in Hawai‘i and is still in use today (Miyares, 2008). Additional groups of missionaries continued to arrive in Hawai‘i through the mid nineteenth century, heavily influencing changes in Hawaiian society as well as developments in education, healthcare, organization of government, and entrepreneurship.

Although Hawai‘i remained an independent monarchy until 1893, through their strong relationships with the royal Hawaiian family, American and European missionaries and their offspring soon came to own the bulk of the potentially valuable agricultural land, control the economy, and dominate the political environment. They obtained large tracts of land for sugar cultivation and employed Hawaiian commoners as laborers and when Western diseases began to weaken the Hawaiian population, they turned to the recruitment and importation of laborers to

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

continue the viability and success of the sugar economy (Geschwender, Carroll-Seguín, & Brill, 1988; Miyares, 2008).

The first sugar plantation laborers to come to Hawai‘i were from China. It is estimated that between 1852 and 1885, approximately 28,000 Chinese came to Hawai‘i to work in the sugarcane fields (Edles, 2004; Miyares, 2008; Trask, 2000). The early Chinese laborers were entrepreneurial in spirit and only a small proportion of them worked on the plantations more than a few years (Glick, 1938). By 1889, the Chinese were “holders of 23.5% of the licenses issued to the wholesale merchants, of 62% of the licenses issued to the retail merchants, and of 84.7% of the licenses issued to restaurateurs” (Cheng, 1953, p. 163). Glick (1938) explains that this upward economic mobility and entrepreneurial monopolization may have been due to the Chinese being predominantly American citizens and holding the largest “proportion of college-trained men and women than any other non-Caucasian group” (p. 164).

The next wave of plantation laborers were from Japan and arrived in 1868; however most of the immigrants in the early groups returned to Japan upon completion of their contracts until Hawai‘i requested more laborers in 1884 (Richards, 1912). In 1886, 28,000 men applied to come to Hawai‘i, and by 1904, nearly 32,000 Japanese men were working on sugar plantations, constituting nearly 70 percent of all plantation laborers (p. 399). While many Chinese laborers arrived in Hawai‘i with the intention of staying, many Japanese laborers intended to return quickly to their homeland to share their earnings with their family (Masuoka, 1940).

The Portuguese were the first non-Asian group recruited to join the plantation workforce and were the largest European group to enter Hawai‘i as plantation laborers (Geschwender et al., 1988). By the time the Portuguese were recruited, plantation owners learned from their challenges with Asian laborers and offered the Portuguese more liberal contracts, greater pay,

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

and recruited them with their families in efforts to create a more sustainable workforce. The Portuguese immigrants arrived in two waves, 1878-1887 brought 12,000 and between 1906 to 1913 13,000 more arrived along with some Spaniards, resulting in 25,000 over a 35 year period (Greschwender et al., 1988, p. 516).

Koreans constituted the fourth wave of laborers and were recruited to meet the need for more employees during the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and because they were cheaper than their European counterparts (Ch'oe, 2006; Kwon, 1999). Additionally, because of political unrest in their country during this time, Koreans were expected to seize the opportunity to leave their homeland and find comfort in a new and welcoming land. After intentional recruiting plans, in 1903, the first large group of Korean laborers arrived (Ch'oe, 2006). This was significant for Korean history, as “it was the first officially sanctioned immigration of Korean people to any foreign country” (Ch'oe, 2006, p. 13).

The last wave of plantation laborers were brought over from the Philippines in 1906; however by 1908 the likelihood of the Philippines being a strong source of laborers was dismal. Although the hope from the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association was to bring more Filipino laborers, there was much opposition from community members, as “some church leaders were concerned that the social imbalances caused by the relatively few women immigrants would cause serious problems” (Anderson, 1984, p. 2). Also, the Japanese laborers were not in support of the new recruits because “the new immigrants would undercut the wages received by the Japanese as well as effectively eliminate any serious strike threats that the Japanese plantation workers might mount” (p. 3). The Japanese stood to lose power on the plantations and did not welcome the idea of another group of laborers.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

The Filipino laborers were constantly faced with a mindset of racism and inferiority from others, due to their lower wages and last immigrant group to Hawai'i status. It was difficult for them to fight this social structure, because no other immigrant groups were moving to Hawai'i for work, and therefore they remained at the lower strata.

The beginning of a local culture. Throughout the years, American and European plantation owners created an economic structure that cultivated a stratified society in which the social and economic elites worked to keep the ethnic groups distinct and segregated. Many interventions were applied to keep the groups segregated in their housing arrangements, pay scales, and even through the size and shape of their identity tags (Miyares, 2008). The growing diversity of plantation laborers was a challenge to owners as new groups arrived, the more senior groups moved up on the social ladder. Although different national groups agreed to varying wages in order to come to Hawai'i, owners realized that if the groups were to unite, the sugar economy would be seriously disrupted. Eventually, the owners could not keep the workers segregated and the labor strike of 1920 commenced uniting the Japanese and Filipino workers.

Despite the efforts of the plantation owners, these diverse immigrant groups created a blended Local culture that continues to be evident among working-class residents of Hawai'i today (Miyares, 2008). The first-generation laborers experienced challenges communicating because there was no shared common language; however they developed a simple vocabulary of essential words to communicate with each other. They also realized that with numbers came power and in order for communication to happen, they needed to work with and accept each other. The second-generation laborers were able to capitalize upon the successes of the first generation and the fact that although they were segregated residentially, as children they played together, attended the same schools, and participated in each other's cultural celebrations. This

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

generation enhanced the vocabulary used by their parents and developed pidgin English, “a creolized form of English that used Hawaiian grammatical forms and sentence structures and a synthesis of English, Hawaiian, and laborer-contributed words” (Miyares, 2008, p. 519). This new language became the common tongue of the plantation labor class and new waves of laborers learned to speak this form of English as part of their adaptation process (Bickerton, 1998; Miyares, 2008).

Throughout the years, many second- and third-generation laborers began to leave the plantations, creating a growing, educated entrepreneurial and professional class of Asians. Those who stayed on the plantations created a culture linked by their experience of plantation life. This community was immersed in their identity, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds. Additionally, by this time, many of the plantation laborers intermarried, producing mixed race off-spring, further embracing the blend of different cultures. Whereas in the continental United States many ethnic groups were still marrying within their group, in Hawai‘i, due to the plantation communities and occasional shortage of male or females of the same ethnicity, intermarriage rates exceed that of the continent (Samuels, 1970). On the plantations, and throughout Hawai‘i, intermarriage was not uncommon, although some groups had lower rates of intermarriage than others (Samuels, 1970). These marriages eventually led to interracial families and communities, establishing a sense of belonging to the Hawaiian Islands, and less to countries of origin (Cheng, 1953). These intermarriage rates continue today as the latest Census report indicated that one in every four Hawai‘i residents is of mixed race (Welch, 2011).

Scholars explain that by the third-generation of plantation laborers, thanks in part to intermarriage, a new culture had evolved, “with its own language, an eclectic menu of foods, a mixture of celebrations and musical forms, and somewhat syncretic religious practices. This

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

culture had all the characteristics of a new ethnic identity” (Zelinsky, 2001, 43-44). This new socially constructed identity became known as being Local (Miyares, 2008).

After the Hawaiian Islands were illegally annexed in 1898, the United States military developed a growing presence in Hawai‘i and by 1940, there were an estimated 48,000 troops in Hawai‘i (Farber & Bailey, 1996; Miyares, 2008). When the troops arrived, unlike in the continental United States, they did not find themselves in a society where their new surrounding society was of a Caucasian working class, but rather people of mostly Asian and Pacific Island descent, “and the level of racial tolerance (if not equality) was higher in the islands than on the mainland” (Farber & Bailey, 1996, p. 646). As the military presence grew in Hawai‘i, especially during World War Two, Local was used to distinguish members of the military who grew up in Hawai‘i apart from those who were from the mainland.

In addition to using the Local identity to differentiate themselves from those in the military, it also emerged through race related tensions between Hawai‘i residents and the military. Due to the stark difference compared to the continental United States, the Army (1942) provided American soldiers with a *Pocket Guide to Hawai‘i*, which featured an image of, “a drawing of a cute, naked, dwarfish, dark-skinned man shown from the rear, with his head turned,” apparently supposed to represent a Hawaiian man; however ironic because “the average Hawaiian man was taller and more powerfully built than the average white man” (Farber & Bailey, 1996, p. 649).

Propaganda similar to this from the United States military, coupled with the distrust of outsiders due to Hawai‘i’s history, led to occasional conflict between Hawai‘i residents, the military, and outsiders. Scholars cite the 1931 Massie-Kahahawai case as the official first reference of the Local identity when a Honolulu Advertiser newspaper reporter documented an

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

assault on a group of young men of Asian descent who were mistakenly accused of the rape of an elite Caucasian naval officers' wife (Okamura, 2008). In reports of the incident, the reporter used the term Local to describe the accused rapists whose "racial and class status and origins in the islands contrasted sharply with those of their White, military accusers from the continental U.S." (p. 113). The newspaper called the young men "local boys," and everyone seemed to understand the connotation-Hawai'i-born and raised and probably the children of plantation workers (Daws, 1967).

Although up until this point, the Local identity was emerging, Miyares (2008) and Okamura (1994) claim that statehood in 1959 was the impetus for Localness to become an identity of resistance to Caucasian conformity, and represented a distinct mainstream culture into which newcomers could choose to assimilate, particularly if they were of Asian descent. In particular, along with statehood came external social and economic forces that were perceived as detrimental to the quality of life that Local people had come to value. These forces included, "substantial immigration of Whites from the U.S. mainland, increased immigration from Asia and the Pacific, and the tremendous growth of the tourist industry" (Okamura, 1994, p.162). As a reaction to these forces, the Local identity continued to evolve into a shared appreciation of the land, people, and culture of the Islands.

Hawai'i as culture of origin. Ichiyama et al. (1996) studied Hawai'i residents who relocated to the mainland to attend college in a quantitative study evaluating the effects of group attitudes and length of residence in the mainland on ethnic identity and affiliative behavior. Their findings indicated that students from Hawai'i became aware almost immediately upon arriving in the mainland of their reduced social status. The authors also found that there was a negative association between the length of residence in the mainland and Hawai'i students' perception of

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

how the majority group viewed them. Their findings suggested that students from Hawai‘i relocating to the mainland “may not fully anticipate the effects of the change from majority to minority group status but become quickly aware of their distinctiveness, and perhaps diminished status, in relation to their majority group counterparts” (Ichiyama et al., 1996, p. 470).

Local identity in Hawai‘i is commonly used to define a sense of community and defend against outside influences. However, when Locals find themselves on the mainland and under the prevailing United States racial ideology are racialized in unfamiliar ways—usually as Asian Americans or people of color—identity conflict can occur (Young, 2014). While Asian Americans living in the continental United States may appear conspicuous, the same is not true in Hawai‘i.

In Hawai‘i, Chinese and Japanese Americans are politically and socioeconomically dominant (Okamura, 2008). Therefore, Asian American children growing up in Hawai‘i, have seen role models of their own, or similar ethnicities well represented in respectable roles. This is a sharp contrast to Asian Americans growing up in the continental United States who come from communities in which Asian Americans are the minority and may not hold such prominent roles.

In Hawai‘i, Local culture is based on the assumptions of a collectivist society where the group’s goals hold more priority than those of the individual. Additionally, relationships are at the forefront of Local values and the relationship of the individual to the family and community is often emphasized. For most students who have grown up in Hawai‘i, the family is the fundamental unit and is broadly defined as relatives by blood, marriage, and adoption (Okamura, 2008).

Hawai‘i’s collectivist culture is a sharp contrast with the majority of the United States which is considered individualistic, although considerable regional variation may exist (Neuliep, 2013). Hawai‘i is rated the most collectivist state in the nation, a characteristic that Neuliep

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

(2013) attributes to its high composition of residents with Asian backgrounds. In individualistic cultures the focus is on individual pursuits as people prefer to act as individuals rather than as members of a group. Each person's personal goals hold precedence over group goals and self-interest is paramount (Hofstede, 1993). In contrast to collectivist societies, a child learns to respect the group it belongs, and to differentiate between in-group members and out-group members. When children grow up they remain members of their group, and they expect the group to protect them when they are in trouble. In return, they have to remain loyal to their group throughout life. In contrast, in individualist societies, a child learns very early to think of itself as "I" instead of as part of "we" and expects one day to have to survive on their own without the protection or help from its group; and therefore it also does not feel a need for strong loyalty (Hofstede, 1993). Many island cultures fall into the collectivist category and Hawai'i is no different (Saffu, 2003). Moreover, research has suggested that family support, interest, and encouragement can help students persist in college (DeWitz, Woolsey, & Walsh, 2009; Lee, Sax, Kim, & Hagedorn, 2004; NTAC, 2007).

In addition to the empirical literature providing a glimpse into the challenges some Hawai'i students face as they begin college on the mainland, the Hawai'i popular press has also highlighted the struggles students have faced. In Fassler's (2004) article "To go or not to go?" he warns "the mainland is not for every Hawai'i student," as culture shock is one of the reasons that many students quickly return. In another article, he subtly addresses the issue of being a minority, explaining that students may "be the only Asian in a predominantly haole (white) dorm" (Fassler, 2003).

The model minority myth. In 1966, at the height of the Civil Rights movement, the term model minority was coined. Since then, scholars have attributed the lack of higher education

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

research on Asian Americans to this problematic stereotype which suggests that Asian Americans have universal and unparalleled academic and occupational success (CARE, 2008; Museus & Kiang, 2009). The stereotype has become so pervasive that numerous reports have shown that teachers, counselors, and administrators in schools from kindergarten through higher education are so convinced that their “model minority” students will excel on their own that they do not recognize that AAPI students contend with the same issues that other communities face (CARE, 2008). Case in point, as recently as May 2006, a New York Times column entitled *The Model Students* declared that “stellar academic achievement has an Asian face” and that others would be “fools” not to learn “some Asian lessons” (Kristof, 2006).

The model minority myth emerged in the 1960s to reaffirm the ideological notion of the American Dream during a time when the United States was experiencing a decline in the international economy and saw the birth of a new African American underclass and a diminishing White middle class (CARE, 2008; Kawai, 2005; Lee & Ying, 2001; Spickard, 2007). Through the model minority myth, Asian Americans were given traits associated with White culture rather than as marginalized people of color due to their obtainment of markers traditionally associated with Whiteness such as educational attainment, economic success, and social capital. Contrasting the perceived success of Asian Americans with other minority groups, the media and parts of society painted an inaccurate portrait of Asian Americans in the United States that did not apply to all members of Asian American subgroups. Indeed, as a byproduct of the stereotype, conflict was also created among other groups of color as Asian Americans were racialized as successful as a result of their supposed assimilation into White, dominant culture (Kawai, 2005; Museus & Kiang, 2009).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Of all first-time, full-time students who enter a four-year postsecondary institution, as a whole, Asian American students have the highest six-year graduation rate. Sixty-nine percent will complete a bachelor's degree within six years, followed by White students at 62 percent, and Hispanic students at 50 percent (NCES, 2012). However, scholars assert that this number oversimplifies the complexity and diversity that exists within each subgroup represented under the AAPI category (Hune, 2002; Maramba, 2008; Museus, 2008; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Museus & Troung, 2009; Museus & Quaye, 2009). Although a quick glance at national statistics makes AAPI students seem to be highly successful, disaggregated data shows otherwise. Chang (2008) contends that AAPIs can be considered one of the most misunderstood populations in higher education in the United States due to the lack of inclusion in scholarly literature and the veiling of their disparities and diverse experiences, abilities, and achievement among those categorized as such. Furthermore, this misrepresentation of AAPIs is systemically problematic in higher education as the model minority myth has perpetuated the notion that AAPIs are overrepresented in higher education institutions, when in actuality, certain subgroups are underrepresented, underserved, and most noticeably underachieving.

The practice of categorizing students on the basis of race and oversimplifying the discrete differences between various subgroups is problematic (CARE, 2011; Museus & Kiang, 2009). Although many Asian American ethnic subgroups have high rates of persistence and degree completion, some subgroups hold four-year degrees at rates far below the national average (Hune, 2002; Museus, 2009; Museus & Kiang, 2009). Scholars have examined disaggregated national census data on educational attainment in the AAPI population and found that Southeast Asian American populations hold college degrees at rates far lower than their East and South Asian counterparts (Hune, 2002; Museus, 2009).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

The model minority myth casts AAPIs in a one-dimensional light, focusing solely on their academic achievement; however scholars note that the narrow focus fails to shed light on other measures of success, such as successful college adjustment and functioning in life (Lee & Ying, 2001; Museus, 2009; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Suyemoto et al., 2009; Ying et al., 2001; Yoo et al., 2010). Recent studies have attempted to demystify the stereotype and findings have indicated that Asian American adolescents experience significant distress in pursuing academic achievements, face numerous culturally based challenges, and have higher rates of mental illnesses than previously suspected (Lee & Ying, 2001; Ying et al., 2001; Museus, 2009; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001; Yoo et al., 2010). Additionally, although AAPI students are more likely than White students to persist and graduate from college, they are also more likely to go on medical leave in college, deal with mental health issues and experience dissatisfaction in their college choice (Kam, 2013; Museus, 2008). Scholars have long contended that the model minority myth has detracted attention from Asian American students' social and psychological needs by measuring their success solely on grades and degree completion (Li & Wang, 2008; Maramba, 2008; Museus, 2009; Museus & Kiang, 2009).

Despite its seemingly positive generalization, the model minority stereotype has contributed to numerous negative ramifications. In domains involving academic achievement, Maddux, Galinsky, Cuddy, and Polifroni (2008) found that among college students, peers who stereotyped Asian Americans as intelligent and ambitious viewed Asian Americans in a more negative light when they were competing for scarce resources such as job placement as opposed to when there was no competition. Perceiving Asian Americans as model minorities can generate increased negative resentment from peers from different racial groups. These findings are consistent with other research suggesting that Asian Americans are viewed not with

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

admiration or positivity, but rather with ambivalence and resentment for their perceived success (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Frisbie, Cho, & Hummer, 2001; Gee, Ro, Shariff-Marco, & Chae, 2009; Ho & Jackson, Pancer, Pratt, & Hunsberger, 2000). Scholars have also noted that the myth has been strategically employed by equal opportunity opponents to support the notion of meritocracy by contending that racial discrimination does not exist or impede the educational and occupational progress of ethnic minorities (Museus & Kiang, 2009).

Evidence also suggests that Asian Americans experience significant pressure to conform to this stereotype and that this pressure impedes Asian American students' willingness and desire to engage in the learning process and also to seek mental health services if they fail to embody the academically successful stereotype (Carrasco & Weiss, 2005; Li & Wang, 2008; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Miller et al., 2011; Museus, 2009; Suyemoto et al., 2009; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001; Yoo et al., 2010). Recent studies have also indicated that Asian American adolescents experience significant distress in pursuing academic achievements, face numerous culturally based challenges, and have higher rates of mental illnesses than previously suspected (Lee & Ying, 2001; Ying et al., 2001; Museus, 2009; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001; Yoo et al., 2010). In fact, Asian American college students have been reported as having the highest suicide rate out of all racial and ethnic groups in the country (Carrasco & Weiss, 2005). The existence of the model minority stereotype has plagued the Asian American community for over half a century. However, over the last two decades scholars have begun to empirically demonstrate that this notion of universal and unparalleled success is misleading and more of a stereotype than actual fact.

Identity, Adjustment, and Persistence

Although adjustment is at the forefront of this study, it would be a disservice to ignore the issues of student persistence and identity as contextually, all three are interrelated. If a student experiences conflict regarding their identity upon transition to college, they may experience challenges adjusting to their new environment. If these challenges are not remedied, the student may decide not to persist, leaving the institution due to their inability to successfully adjust into their culture of immersion.

For many students, college serves as a time for self-exploration. As they enter a new environment, they take the opportunity to evaluate which parts of their younger self they want to keep and which parts they want to leave behind. When students enter a new college environment, in addition to exploring their identity, the social pressures and influences of the dominant culture can affect their sense of belonging and their ability to acclimate to their new environment.

Together, adjustment challenges initiated by identity conflict or confusion may have an effect on student persistence. While early research on student persistence and adjustment focused on student characteristics such as high school GPA, gender, and socioeconomic status; recently, scholars have highlighted the importance of the interaction between the student's precollege environment and the institutional environment (Bennet & Okinaka, 1990; Berger & Milem, 1999; Bordes & Arredondo, 2005; Cerezo & Chang, 2013; Elmers & Pike, 1997; Gloria & Robinson-Kurpius, 1996; Gonzales, 2003; Guiffrida, 2003; Hall, Cabrera, & Milem, 2010; Hurtado et al., 1996; Ichiyama et al., 1996; Johnson et al., 2007; Kalsner & Pistole, 2003; Kuh & Love, 2000; Loo & Rolison, 1986; Maramba, 2008; McDonald, 2002; Museus, 2008; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Museus & Troung, 2009; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Rendon et al., 2000; Stage & Hossler, 2000; Terenzini, 2005; Tierney, 1999, 2000; Torres, 1993; Wei et al., 2011; Yau, Sun,

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

& Cheng 2012). These studies demonstrated that a lack of perceived fit between a student's needs and the college environment can contribute to the student's decision to withdraw.

Furthermore, the greater the fit between the student's culture of origin, including attitude, values, goals, and interests and their culture of immersion, the more likely a student will persist at the particular institution. Within the higher education field, the topics of identity, adjustment, and persistence are extremely broad; therefore in the next sections I will discuss pertinent aspects of each topic, highlight the areas that are germane to my study, and identify a working definition for this study.

Identity. The topic of identity spans many subcategories; however this study focuses specifically on the existing identity models relevant to Asian Americans. Before discussing the models, key terms related to an individual's identity and their sense of membership in various groups within society are defined. For purposes of this study, definitions build on the work of Museus, Vue, Nguyen, and Yeung (2013).

- *Identity:* The characteristics and beliefs that make a particular person or group different from others.
- *Ethnic Identity:* A sense of collective identity that is based on an individual's understanding that they share a common origin, history, culture, and language with a specific cultural group.
- *Racial Identity:* A sense of collective identity that is based on the notion that the individual shares a common heritage or experience with members of a specific racial group, in this case Asian Americans.
- *Racial Minority Identity:* A sense of collective identity that is based on an individual's perceived shared experience with other non-White members of society,

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

which include racial prejudice and discrimination, racial exclusion and isolation, and race-related disenfranchisement (p. 51).

In the context of this study, Asian American Hawai‘i residents who claim a Local identity are associating with their ethnic identity, whereas Asian Americans residing in the continental U.S. associate with their racial identity. Historically, ethnic identity was seen as a static and fixed trait similar to a racial identity; however recent sociological and anthropological scholarship has brought to light the notion of “the fluid, situational, volitional and dynamic character of ethnic identification” (Nagel, 1994, p. 152; Okamura, 1981). As Nagel (1994) states, ethnic identity is most closely associated with the issue of boundaries as it determines who is a member and who is not. In the field of Asian American studies, researchers have also accepted the fluid definition of ethnic identity, demonstrating how different Asian ethnic groups negotiate identity through interaction within and outside of their communities.

The pertinent identity models relating to Asian Americans can be broken down into three categories: 1) racial identity stage models, 2) racial and ethnic identity stage models, and 3) external factor models. Each model has innate strengths and weaknesses; therefore each type will be reviewed. To conclude this section, I will introduce the concept of a Local identity, specific to Hawai‘i residents. Because many Hawai‘i residents do not associate with the Asian American categorization and identity, I felt that it is necessary to explain the Local identity and compare it to existing Asian American models (Okamura, 1994).

Racial identity stage models. The earliest Asian American identity models were presented as stage-like models sharing three basic stages: “pre-encounter,” “immersion,” and “integration” that most identity models were built on (Kim, 1981; Museus et al., 2012; Sue & Sue, 1971). Kim’s (1981) model includes five progressive stages: First, in the Ethnic Awareness

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

stage an individual develops positive or neutral attitudes toward one's own ethnic origin based on the amount of ethnic exposure conveyed by the caretakers. White Identification is the second stage and is defined by the realization of differentness between themselves and White individuals as well as a possible internalization of White values. The third stage is the Awakening to Social Political Consciousness in which individuals recognize and accept themselves as a minority and adopt a new perspective, often correlated with increased political awareness. The Redirection stage follows and consists of a reconnection or renewed connection with one's Asian American heritage and culture. Finally, during the fifth stage of Incorporation, the individual develops a positive and comfortable identity as Asian American and consequent respect for other racial and cultural heritages.

Sue and Sue's (1971) Cultural and Racial Identity Development model is somewhat similar as it too moves an individual through five progressive stages of identity development. Conformity is the first stage in which the individual exhibits a preference for the dominant White cultural values over their own cultural values. The next stage is Dissonance in which an individual experiences an encounter that challenges them to question their culturally held beliefs, attitudes, and values from the conformity stage. In this stage, denial may occur and there is a questioning of ones' beliefs and attitudes held in the conformity stage. Resistance and Immersion is the third stage in which the individual withdraws from White culture to probe further into their own racial or ethnic culture to define their new identity. The fourth stage is Introspection, in which the individual actively devotes more energy toward understanding themselves as part of a minority group and what that means at a deeper level. The final stage is Synergistic Articulation and Awareness in which the individual has resolved conflicts experienced in earlier stages and

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

now has more of a sense of control and flexibility, including the ability to recognize the pros and cons of both cultural groups while trying to eliminate all forms of oppression.

These early racial identity stage models laid a foundation for understanding Asian American identity and provided the framework for practitioners to understand how to facilitate development among members of this population. The challenges of these early models are that they focus on one specific dimension of identity and fail to allow for the fluidity of movement between stages that often occurs in reality.

Racial and ethnic identity stage models. More recently, scholars have created alternative progressive stage-like models to account for both racial and ethnic identity (Ibrahim, Ohnishi, & Sandhu, 1997; Nadal, 2004; Museus et al., 2013). They have recognized the differences between the various ethnic subgroups within the pan-ethnic Asian American category and used historical and social contexts to develop models specific to an Asian American subgroup. For example, Museus et al. (2013) proposed a model of Southeast Asian American identity based on historical and social contexts, consisting of five processes. Rather than stages or phases that implied static factors, the authors chose processes which highlight the fluidity and interconnectedness of each process. The first three processes are similar to those in Kim's model, albeit on a broader scale, as they acknowledge that Southeast Asian Americans can experience a multidimensional awareness and acculturation to various groups in which they belong or associate with, not just to the dominant White group. Process four is the Redirection of Salience in which the individual experiences a situational redirection of salience to various identities in a given time or space. The final process is the Integration of Dispositions, referring to the process by which individuals integrate with their 1) identification with various groups, 2) attitudes about the dominant majority, and 3) sense of activism and agency to address inequalities among those populations.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

This model differs from that of earlier racial and ethnic identity theorists (Ibrahim et al., 1997; Kim, 1981; Nadal, 2004) as it notes that process five is an ongoing process that begins at a very young age.

These models are important to consider as they highlight the importance of the role that ethnicity and race play in the way that Asian Americans relate to other racial and ethnic groups. Additionally, they were the first models to draw attention to the fact that the identity development process may be different for various ethnic groups within the Asian American population as the different subgroups face political, social, and historical factors that affect their subpopulations.

External factor models. While the previous two types of models focused on patterns of development at the different levels of awareness, the external factor models are non-hierarchical and focus on external factors that may influence one's identity (Accapadi, 2012; Kodama, McEwen, Liang, & Lee, 2002). For example, Kodama et al., asserts that traditional Asian family values such as family influence, collectivism, and interpersonal harmony, in addition to experiences of racism contribute to an Asian American identity. These models also assert that the Asian American identity is shaped by racism from dominant cultures in society. These models are important as they highlight the various ways in which external environmental factors can play a significant role in identity development. However, they are limited in the extent to which they explain the process by which Asian Americans develop their sense of ethnic identity.

Local identity. To understand the challenges that Asian American Hawai'i residents face when attending PWIs in the Northeast, an understanding of the Local identity is important. One of the factors that contribute to the marginality of the Asian American identity in Hawai'i is the significance of the pan ethnic Local identity that many Asian American groups in Hawai'i

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

affirm. Due to Hawai‘i’s unique social history, many Hawai‘i residents proclaim a Local identity instead of an Asian American identity.

The Local identity does not stem from origins of a motherland country, but rather a shared experience. While those who identify as Local are mainly of cultures from Asia and the Pacific Islands, the Local identity stands independently as a special group with its own traits and characteristics. To complicate the matter, the Local culture is nebulous, as Okamura (1994) clarifies, “The structural dimension of local identity is based on the categorical opposition between groups considered local and those considered nonlocal . . . Local is essentially a relative category; groups and individuals are viewed as Local in relation to others who are not so perceived” (165). The definition of a Local identity has been discussed in the literature from different perspectives (Grant & Ogawa, 1993; Ohnuma, 2008; Okamura, 1980; Trask, 2000), and seems to be a subjective construct by definition, yet there are clear opinions on what categorizes a person an out-group member.

Asian American identity. The term Asian American refers to American citizens of Asian descent (Far East, South East Asian, and the Indian Subcontinent) living in the United States (USCB, 2013b). Historically, the term Asian American was derived from the social and psychological boundaries that influenced where one could live, the quality of their schooling, earning potential, and access to social and health services and was a boundary established and enforced by law (Carter & Goodwin, 1994). Civil rights activists were the first to use the term Asian American in the 1960s during social reform efforts to create a sense of solidarity and political empowerment and to bring together Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino Americans for strategic political purposes during the Civil Rights movement. Later, it was expanded to include other Asian origin groups and in the 1970s the term Asian American was formally adopted by

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

the federal government's United States Census Bureau and continues to be used for reporting purposes today (Hune, 2002; Spickard, 2007; Wei, 1993).

Intersection of Local and Asian American identities. Despite its prominence on the continent, the concept of an Asian American identity never took hold in Hawai'i although there are several Asian American groups that represent significant proportions of the general population (Okamura, 1994). Scholars believe that because of the overall structure of political and ethnic relations in Hawai'i (majority-minority state), the individual ethnic groups did not find it necessary to establish and affirm a collective pan-Asian American identity or movement (Miyares, 2008; Okamura, 1994). Okamura (1994) claims that the Local identity may be responsible for the nonsalience of the Asian American identity in Hawai'i since it too claims a pan-ethnic identity. Additionally, claiming a Local identity allows individuals to go one step further, claiming their ties to Hawai'i, whereas the Asian American identity is a much broader category and has roots throughout the United States.

Wooden (1981) explains that many Hawai'i residents adopted the term Local as they did not want to be associated with becoming too American or too ethnic, like their Asian American mainland counterparts. In contrast, in the continental United States the term Asian American grew out of the need for strength in numbers and common radicalized experiences, in Hawai'i, because of the large Asian American population, there was less of a need for a pan-ethnic identity, thus the Asian American term was less prevalent (Spickard, 2007). Rather, residents colloquially use the term Local to refer to their ethnic and island culture. Furthermore, due in part to the history of immigration to Hawai'i, the Local identity often suggests an identity of color (Okamura, 1994/2008; Young, 2004).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

When exploring the intersection of a Local and Asian American identity, it is important to consider situational ethnicity, the juxtaposition of the concepts of social situation and ethnicity (Okamura, 1981). Okamura's (1981) model of situational ethnicity argues that the way a person expresses their identity is dependent on the behavioral choices available in any given social setting. He explains that "the structural features of the setting provide the overall framework of social relationships, while at the level of the situation concern is on the different courses of action actors may then pursue according to their understanding of their personal circumstances within this framework," (Okamura, 1981, p. 453). This notion is particularly applicable in the context of this study as Local Asian American Hawai'i residents may identify as Local while in Hawai'i, but find themselves having to assimilate with continental United States Asian American norms and identity on the mainland.

According to Reed (2001), understanding identity in Hawai'i can be challenging as typical continental United States categories are not normalized, instead social and cultural arrangements elicit patterns of identity construction and negotiation. The typical cultural and ethnic identity markers that dominate the cultural discourse on the continental United States center around Black, Latino, and White ethnicities; however in Hawai'i, those groups are not dominant. In Okamura's (1994) article, "Why there are no Asian Americans in Hawai'i: The continuing significance of local identity," he explains that the term Asian American is not commonly used in Hawai'i except by academics and the media, instead many Hawai'i residents proclaim a Local identity (Grant & Ogawa, 1993; Ohnuma, 2008; Okamura, 1980; Trask, 2000).

While students from Hawai'i know that they are Asian American by definition, many do not live that categorization until they physically set foot on the mainland (Okamura, 1994). Once students step off the airplane, the Asian American identity is thrust upon them, forcing them to

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

see themselves as those on the mainland do, marking a significant shift in their worldview as they move from ethnic majority to minority status (Ichiyama et al., 1996). This can create powerful incongruities in social contexts for students as they undergo a significant shift in privilege and power structures.

It is important to understand Asian American identity development models as these models may explain the way in which Asian American students growing up on the continental United States experience life and their identity. I would argue that these models are very much specific to life on the continental United States as they are rooted in the notion that White culture is the dominant culture in which individuals experience their identity development. This experience of a White dominant culture is not something that Hawai'i residents experience; therefore these models may not be relatable to Asian American students who grow up in Hawai'i until they are placed in a situation in which the White culture is dominant. Rather, it further complicates their immersion into the culture of the continental United States, because while outwardly they may look like other Asian American citizens, internally, their lived experiences are extremely different.

In the context of this study, it is important to consider the existing Asian American identity development models as well as the existence of a Local identity. As Local students move from Hawai'i to the continental United States to attend college, they may find themselves moving through the Asian American identity development models. However, given their prior majority status in Hawai'i, their progress through identity development models may not be as clear as theorists imagined. Additionally, because the concept of Asian American identity never took hold in Hawai'i, Local students may face additional challenges as they compare and

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

contrast their Local identity with that of what is forced upon them as they enter a new minority culture.

Understanding the differences between Asian American identity and Local identity formation are germane to this study as they may have an impact on the experiences Asian American Hawai'i residents undergo as they transition from their culture of origin, to the Northeastern United States. These potentially conflicting identities may affect student experiences as they begin life in their new environment. In addition to the different cultures they may encounter, their identity formation and validation may also affect their ability to successfully adjust to their new environment.

Adjustment. For purposes of this study, student adjustment represents the extent to which a student finds their institution's social environment to align with their personal preferences shaped by their background, values, and aspirations. Social adjustment is often measured as a combination of peer-to-peer interactions and faculty-student interactions and differs from academic adjustment which reflects satisfaction with academic progress and choice of major (Kuh et al., 1994). Throughout this study, I focus on social adjustment, rather than academic adjustment as cultural incongruity is a socially occurring phenomenon.

The transition between high school and college represents a stressful time for many students as they are challenged to adjust both academically and socially into a new environment. A considerable number of students who prematurely leave college attribute their departure to the inability to make the adjustment to their new college environment (Tinto, 1993). If early departure, or lack of persistence, reflects a student's inability to adjust to college, understanding the factors that influence college adjustment is imperative. Although there is no single definition of student adjustment in higher education literature, scholars infer that student adjustment is

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

dependent not only on individual student characteristics, but also how those characteristics interact with their institutional environment (Askham, 2008; Bean, 1980/1983; Bean & Metzner, 1985; Bennett & Okinaka, 1990; Braxton et al., 2007; Chartrand, 1992; Elmers & Pike, 1997; Hall et al., 2010; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Hurtado et al., 1996; Ichiyama et al., 1996; Johnson et al., 2007; Kalsner & Pistole, 2003; Loo & Rolison, 1986; Museus, 2008; Museus & Quaye, 2009; Rendon et al., 2000; Terenzini & Reason, 2005; Tierney, 1999/2000; Tinto, 1975/1993).

Social integration to college, or college adjustment, is a concept originally introduced by Tinto (1975). Much of the empirical research on undergraduate adjustment for both minorities and non-minority students stem from the premise advanced by Tinto's Social Integration Model. The Social Integration Model asserts that when high school students transition to college, they move from one community to another, experiencing rites of passage in three related areas: first they must separate from the previous community (e.g. high school, high school friends, and family); second they must transition into a new community and learn its values and expectations; and third they must sever ties with their home cultures and adopt the cultural values of their campus in order to increase their likelihood of success. To successfully adjust and integrate into the college environment, students must learn to make meaning out of their experiences and decipher how to navigate the social and academic system of higher education; consequently, students who fail to complete these phases are more likely to depart. According to Tinto's model, students who leave college before graduation were unable to effectively distance themselves from their family or community of origin and adopt the values and the behavioral patterns that symbolize the environment of the institution they are attending (Tinto, 1975/1993).

Ethnic minority student adjustment. Although Tinto's theory has contributed to the foundation of student adjustment and persistence literature, more recent empirical studies have

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

built upon his framework to include the examination of potential differences between minority and non-minority students (Bennett & Okinaka, 1990; Bordes & Arredondo, 2005; Cerezo & Chang, 2013; Elmers & Pike, 1997; Feagin, Vera, & Imani, 1996; Gonzales, 2003; Hurtado et al., 1996; Johnson et al., 2007; Kalsner & Pistole, 2003; Kuh & Love, 2000; Maramba, 2008; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Museus, 2008; Tierney, 1999). Furthermore, researchers have critiqued Tinto's assumption that students must disassociate from their home cultures and adopt the values and norms of the dominant campus culture to succeed, claiming this notion is culturally biased and fails to explain the departure of students of color. Additionally, the Student Integration Model fails to emphasize the responsibility of the institution in terms of helping students adjust to the new college environment.

Racial or ethnic minority students have a higher probability of leaving postsecondary education than ethnic majority students. As the number of ethnic minority students continues to grow, this trend is a serious and long-term problem, as these students are not completing college degrees, contributing to the negative economic and societal implications of declining levels of educational attainment in the United States. Although minorities cannot be consolidated into a homogenous group, several studies of college persistence have suggested that minority students, in general, encounter common experiences that are different than those of nonminority students (Museus, 2008; Elmers & Pike, 1997).

Driven by the low participation rates and high probability for non-persistence of minority students, Nora and Cabrera (1996) were among the early wave of scholars who attempted to understand the issues of minority student persistence and adjustment. They sought to assess the direct and indirect effects that perceptions of prejudice and discrimination had on student's academic performance and social adjustment at an institution. Through a quantitative study, they

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

found that at PWIs, perceptions of prejudice had an adverse effect on the adjustment of students of color. Additionally, in contrast to Tinto's (1975) Student Integration Model, continuing to maintain ties to one's culture of origin was identified as a key factor for the successful adjustment to higher education by students of color. It was also found that while perceptions of prejudice and discrimination had a negative effect on minority student adjustment, it did not have a significant impact on their ability to persist towards graduation, as minority students in the study were used to experiencing discrimination and hence, developed resilience against its potentially negative effects on college persistence.

Bennett and Okinaka (1990) conducted a study of undergraduate student attrition at Indiana University. Pertinent to this study, they found that White students who complete college are more satisfied and less alienated than Asian students who graduate. Additionally, satisfaction, openness, and college adjustment are important predictors of persistence among Asian freshmen. However, for Asian students in their fourth year, they found that the issues of persistence and alienation were separate. Their study showed that persisters felt less satisfied and more socially alienated than their counterparts who left the university.

Through interviewing minority students enrolled in professional programs at a large research university, Hendricks, A., Smith, K., Caplow, J., & Donaldson, (1996) saw the emergence of a common theme: cultures of origin played an important role on minority students' decision to persist. In recent empirical studies, researchers have demonstrated that external support heavily influences the decision to persist among minority students (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Terenzini, 1994). Although family and precollege support networks can be a source of support for minority college students, Terenzini et al. (1994) found that cultures of origin, could have an equally negative influence on persistence. For example, the decision to attend college for

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

first-generation minority students was considered a “break in tradition,” representing a departure from the ways of their family, as opposed to an extension of tradition for non-minority students.

Further research has supported the belief that minority student adjustment is influenced by cultures of immersion and its intersection with cultures of origin (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Johnson et al., 2007; Kuh & Love, 2000; Museus & Quaye, 2009). Hurtado and Carter (1997) found that even the most successful Latino students can have difficulty adjusting if they perceive a climate where majority students think minority students are special admits, feel like they do not “fit in” with the majority, there is group conflict, or there is a lack of trust between minority students and the administration. However, to support adjustment, Hurtado and Carter (1997) and Museus (2008) found that students who belonged to racial-ethnic clubs or organizations exhibited a relatively higher sense of belonging to the university than students who did not belong to such groups, despite negative college climates or direct experiences of racial or ethnic tensions in their university context.

Building on Hurtado and Carter’s (1997) Latino student adjustment study, Johnson et al. (2007) studied the relationships between aspects of cultures of immersion and students’ sense of belonging. They found that African American, Hispanic, and AAPI students overall reported feeling a weaker sense of belonging on their campuses than White students. Also, consistent with the results of Hurtado and Carter’s (1997) study on Latino students, Johnson et al. (2007) found that students of color who experienced a smooth academic and social transition to college and had a positive perception of the campus racial climate were likely to perceive a strong sense of belonging to their campus. Kalsner and Pistole (2003) also found that ethnic minority students who experienced positive perceptions and interactions with the campus racial climate were more likely to have a positive adjustment experience.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

In their exploratory study, Cerezo and Chang (2013) examined the influence of cultural fit on the achievement of Latino college students by testing whether cultural integration factors (e.g. cultural congruity, ethnic identity, connection with ethnic minority peers) could predict college academic achievement and persistence. Their findings revealed that students' connections with other ethnic minority peers in addition to cultural congruity were significant predictors of college academic success. Similarly, Nora and Cabrera's (1996) research demonstrated that social adjustment significantly affects students' overall college adjustment and that problems with social adjustment can be detrimental to African American student success at PWIs.

Asian American Student Adjustment. While recent scholars have begun examining Asian American student experiences in more depth, in comparison to the existing research on Latino and African American students, Asian American students remain marginalized in the discourse on minority student persistence. Existing research on Asian American student persistence has focused primarily on how culture and affiliations with campus subcultures help students develop a sense of belonging and connectedness to their institution (Lee & Davis, 2000). Scholars have found that consistently, subcultures such as cultural clubs and ethnic or racially oriented groups and support services, have served as a conduit of student adjustment and sense of belonging (Bennett & Okinaka, 1990; Ichiyama et al., 1996; Ching, 1996; Maramba, 2008; Museus, 2008; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Museus & Truong, 2009; Museus & Quaye, 2009; Ying et al., 2001). While these findings affirm the importance of cultural groups, institutional agents, and peer-support systems as a means of student adjustment, it is a disservice if we believe these factors exist in a silo. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the role of other factors of

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

higher education institutions, such as institutional cultures, to understand their role in the student adjustment process.

Moreover, there is a dearth of literature addressing the unique issues faced by students from Hawai'i. Given Hawai'i's unique cultural composition and the prevalent claims of a Local identity, it is necessary to look at the role of cultural dissonance when examining student adjustment. Although existing literature is useful in understanding how specific programs in specific contexts contribute to Asian American persistence as a whole, taking into consideration Hawai'i's unique cultural makeup, it is important to understand how cultures of origin and immersion affect these students' adjustment at PWIs.

Another factor to take into account is Hawai'i's high ranking on the Collectivism Index, marking its unique cultural nuances in comparison to the rest of the nation. The collectivism score quantifies the role cultural dissonance may have in the student adjustment process. (Table 2.1) To develop the collectivism index, Vandello and Cohen (1999) researched state-level data that reflected a wide range of cultural practices, including family and living arrangements, as well as political, occupational, and religious behaviors. Their final index was comprised of eight items:

- Percentage of people living alone
- Percentage of elderly people (aged 65+ years) living alone
- Divorce to marriage ratio
- Percentage of people with no religious affiliation
- Average percentage voting Libertarian over the last four presidential elections
- Ratio of people carpooling to work to people driving alone
- Percentage of self-employed workers

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Table 2.1. State Rankings on the U.S. Collectivism Index (Vandello & Cohen, 1999)

| Collectivism Index (Hawai'i vs. Northeast States) <i>Note: Higher score indicates more collectivism</i> | |
|---|--------------|
| State | Score |
| Vermont | 42 |
| New Hampshire | 43 |
| Maine | 45 |
| Massachusetts | 46 |
| Rhode Island | 48 |
| Connecticut | 50 |
| Pennsylvania | 52 |
| New York | 53 |
| Hawai'i | 91 |

Minority student adjustment at PWIs. Cultural dissonance has also been shown to affect the ethnic minority experience; especially at PWIs due to the perceived incongruity between their own culture and that of the dominant campus culture (Gonzalez, 2003; Kuh & Love, 2000; Museus & Quaye, 2009; Museus, Ravello, & Vega, 2012). The greater the distance between a students' culture of origin and immersion, the greater cultural dissonance a student will experience, highlighting the significance that campus cultures can play in the facilitation or hindrance of minority students' adjustment to college.

As defined by Chang (2002), PWIs are institutions whose prevailing norms, values, and practices cater to White students. This culture, may lead to unfriendly, and in some cases hostile environments for students of color. Evidence suggests that low graduation and completion rates

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

among minority students could be a result of their inability to find membership in the cultures of immersion at PWIs (Kuh & Love, 2000). Additionally, scholars have found that the dominant cultures at PWIs can be problematic for minority students because they can convey messages of unimportance, devaluation, and exclusion (Gonzales, 2003). As established by previous research, negative perceptions of the campus climate, often affected by feelings of belonging and fit with the university, are associated with non-persistence attitudes and are thus important to explore (Hurtado & Carter, 1997).

The dominant campus cultures of PWIs can pose challenges for minority students (Gonzales, 2003; Lewis, Chesler, & Forman, 2000; Museus, 2007). Lewis et al. (2000) interviewed 75 African American, Asian American, Latino, and Native American students at a PWI and found that these students experienced feelings of marginalization and faced contradictory pressures to represent their race and assimilate to the majority culture of their campus. Participants also expressed that they felt excluded from campus social networks that their White counterparts had access to (Lewis et al., 2000). Additionally, many felt that while they experienced pressures from Whites to be "representatives" of their ethnic groups, they also experienced pressures to assimilate into the mainstream dominant White culture. As noted by Feagin et al. (1996) and other researchers, this pressure to assimilate is a salient theme throughout the literature on students of color at PWIs.

Scholars have also found that the cultures of PWIs may present additional challenges for Asian American and African American students. For example, in addition to the afore mentioned issues, research suggests that stereotypes about academic abilities of students coming from these two groups may cause pressures that hinder their engagement in the learning process at PWIs (Museus, 2007). Distinctively, pressures for Asian American students to conform to the model

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

minority myth and pressures for African American students to disprove academic inferiority stereotypes can comprise sobering barriers to those students' engagement in and outside of the classroom. Indeed, these two groups report the most negative assessments of the environment at PWIs, a sentiment mirrored in the data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (Feagin et al., 1996; Kuh, 2005; Lewis et al., 2000; Museus, 2009).

Cultural congruence. In relation to this study, Berger and Milem (1999) found that students who have values, norms, and established patterns that mirror those already in existence on campus are more likely to persist. When students' perceptions of how their personal and cultural values align with the prevailing values of the university, cultural congruence occurs (Museus & Quaye, 2000). Researchers have found that increased cultural congruity has positive associations with perceptions of the university environment and sense of belonging as well as increased persistence and psychological well-being for Latino college students (Bordes & Arredondo, 2005; Cerezo & Chang, 2013). Researchers (Gloria & Robinson-Kurpius, 1996; Guiffrida, 2003; Museus & Trong, 2009; Torres, 2003) have found that students who come from predominantly White cultures of origin typically face fewer difficulties navigating the culture of immersion at PWIs than those who come from more diverse cultures of origin. It has also been discovered that increased cultural congruity has positive associations with perceptions of the university environment and sense of belonging and contributes to increased persistence and psychological well-being (Bordes & Arredondo, 2005; Museus & Trong, 2009; Torres, 2003).

When studying cultural fit, it is especially important to consider how congruity relates to postsecondary achievement. Edman and Brazil (2009) reinforced that cultural congruity was correlated with GPA and academic self-efficacy for a community college sample of 75 Latino students. Furthermore, the authors found that cultural congruity had a stronger positive

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

association with cumulative GPA than academic self-efficacy. Additionally, it has been found that a higher level of cultural congruity was related to fewer perceived educational barriers and perceiving a more positive university environment (Lewis et al., 2000).

Empirical research supports the notion that the incongruence between ethnic minority students' precollege and campus cultures can pose challenges and affect student adjustment, persistence and success (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Feagin et al., 1996; Gonzalez, 2003; Gloria & Robinson-Kurpius, 1996; Lewis et al., 2000; Museus & Quaye, 2009). Scholars have found that students of color can experience difficulty finding membership in the dominant culture of PWIs due to the pressure to conform and assimilate (Lewis et al., 2000). Nora and Cabrera (1996) found that minority students may experience a lack of adjustment at PWIs due to perceptions of prejudice, thus lowering their quality of the college experience and affecting their persistence rates. Chickering and Reisser (1993) explain that when an institution's culture assigns second-class citizenship to certain types of students, stereotypes are reinforced and student development suffers.

Acculturation. Empirical studies have demonstrated that students who were least like the dominant peer group on campus, particularly with regard to race and political attitudes, were least likely to persist (Berger & Milem, 1999). Acculturation provides one way to examine the process in which ethnic minority students navigate the adjustment to college life. Acculturation refers to a newcomer's adoption of a host culture through the adaptation of the norms established in the broader social setting. Culture consists of implicit and explicit behaviors and patterns that connect one to a collective group of people who share common heritage, history, geographic region, language, rituals, values, societal roles, and beliefs (Veroff & Goldberger, 1995). According to Berry (2005), acculturation, the process of adjusting to a normative culture,

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

involves change in identity, values, behaviors, cognitions, and attitudes. In Berry's (2009) model of acculturation, two levels of acculturation are introduced: population and individual. At the population level students encounter and cope with the changes in the ecological, social, cultural, institutional, economical, and political area. In contrast, at the individual level, students deal with changes in behavior, identity, values, traits, and attitudes. The speed and succession of the acculturation process depends on several factors, including location and discrimination. It is important to note that acculturation is determined in part by the individual as they decide how much they want to dress, speak, and behave like members of the dominant campus groups (Gans, 1997).

The association students have with their ethnic group can provide them with a sense of belonging and help them cope better with the greater society. However, when their culture of immersion consists of different social orders and cultural norms, a sense of loss ensues, causing acculturation stress. This stress can result in feelings of marginality, alienation, and identity confusion, negatively affecting students' adjustment and persistence in their new environment (Berry, 2005). Marginalization, when imposed by the dominant group is referred to as exclusion, and can be the root of many minority students' college adjustment problems (Berry, 2005).

Persistence. For purposes of this study, student persistence is defined as the continual enrollment of a student in a degree program leading toward the completion of the program and an awarding of a college degree in the student's field of study. The decision to persist until graduation is a function of the dynamic relationships between the individual and other actors within the college and their home community (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2006).

Kuh et al. (2006) claim that race, which is closely associated with and complicated by socioeconomic status, also plays a role in persistence. White and Asian American students are

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

more likely to persist toward a degree than their African American and Hispanic counterparts (U.S. Department of Education, 1997). However, Swail, Redd, & Perna (2003) concluded that the combination of factors associated with persistence is for the most part similar for White students and students of color: academic preparedness; the openness of the campus climate to diversity; students' commitment to their educational goals and the institution, social, and academic integration; and the availability of financial aid. Three of those five factors are tied to student adjustment and therefore germane to this study.

To understand the experiences and persistence of students of color, Museus & Quaye (2009), reflect upon three alternative cultural frameworks. First, the Cultural Integrity and Minority Student Persistence Model asserts that expecting college students to sever ties with their traditional cultural heritages places an unnecessary burden on the students and ignores the institutions responsibility to facilitate student integration. Tierney's (1975) model highlighted the importance of cultural integrity, which places value on creating programs and teaching strategies that capitalize upon various student ethnic backgrounds in a positive manner. This model demonstrated that ethnic minority students could benefit from being secure in their own cultural heritages (Museus & Quaye, 2009).

The second tier of models, Cultural Perspectives of College Student Departure, critiqued and built upon Tierney's model, by including a more detailed persistence process. Scholars in this tier claim that Tierney failed to explain how cultural integrity could be tied directly to student persistence strategies. To substantiate the claim, Kuh and Love (2000) identified a cultural perspective of student departure by outlining eight culturally based propositions that helped define and explain minority student persistence. They proposed that the level of incongruence between students' culture of origin and immersion is inversely related to

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

persistence and students who have high levels of dissonance must acclimate to the dominant campus culture or associate with a campus subculture to successfully find membership and persist in college.

The final type of model, Cultural Agents and Bicultural Socialization, highlights the importance of students forming relationships with cultural agents (i.e. faculty and peers) on their campuses. Empirical studies have shown that cultural agents can provide students with more relatable and personalized subcultures within the larger campus, and offer a means for socialization into the larger campus community, increasing feelings of adjustment, thus contributing to student persistence (Museus & Quaye, 2009).

Although identity, adjustment, and persistence are three separate topics, each with their own field of extensive research, in this study, I view adjustment and persistence as closely intertwined and a function of how an individual processes their identity in relation to their environment. As I strived to explore whether cultural incongruities affect the adjustment process of Asian American Hawai'i residents at PWIs in the Northeast, the racial and ethnic identity models discussed helped me unpack student experiences. Moreover, the empirical evidence suggesting that the relationship between precollege and campus cultures influences the persistence of ethnic minority students supported the theoretical framework used throughout this study.

Expectations Versus Reality. The literature addressing student expectations versus reality has also received surprisingly little attention in the greater student persistence discourse (Bank, Biddle, & Slavings, 1992). Scholars have found that student expectations often do not align with actual experiences and when this occurs, these prematriculation expectations can have an impact

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

on persistence and adjustment (Jackson, Pancer, Pratt, & Hunsberger, 2000; Smith & Wertlieb, 2005).

In relation to the conversation on students of color, Braxton, Vesper, and Hossler (1995) found that institutions need to accurately portray their institutional characteristics to prospective students if they want students to persist. The findings of their study highlighted the importance of student perceptions of institutional traits and are germane to this study as they validate the need to have students of color perspectives accurately reflected when promoting the institution. Data from previous studies have also indicated that students' perceptions of campus climate can influence their achievement, self-esteem, and sense of belonging (Hurtado et al., 1996; Nunez, 2009; Reid & Radhakrishnan, 2003).

Intercultural Theories

The previous sections have laid the foundation for understanding the context of Asian Americans in higher education as well as Asian American Hawai'i residents' culture of origin and its differences from continental United States college cultures of immersion. Additionally, student adjustment framework has been introduced to uncover the experiences of minority college students and demonstrate the historical and socio-cultural context under which the experiences of Asian American Hawai'i residents attending PWIs must be viewed. This lens is integral to recognizing that these students have unique educational experiences that can contribute to the greater discourse on what it means to be a minority student in higher education. With this in mind, the following conceptual frameworks were identified to account for the roles of culture in the student adjustment process.

Cultural perspective of college student persistence. Since Tinto (1975) first introduced his theory of student integration, scholars have built upon his ideas to create new theories that

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

incorporate minority student experiences and the interaction between cultures and minority student departure (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Tierney, 1999). Kuh and Love (2000) argued that the use of a cultural lens was imperative to understanding students' college experience. Their cultural focus proposes that the level of incongruence between students' precollege cultures and dominant campus culture has an inverse relationship with persistence. They maintained that culture is a dynamic entity, constantly evolving and mediated through daily interactions and one's understanding and meaning in relation to those interactions. Additionally, they proposed that students from cultures incongruent with the dominant campus culture can either acclimate to the dominant culture or seek membership in one or more subcultures in order to increase their likelihood of success.

As referenced in Chapter One, Kuh and Love (2000) developed eight cultural propositions that relate student culture to the process of college student departure. The underlying assumption of these propositions suggests that the level of incongruence between students' precollege cultures of origin and dominant campus culture of immersion is inversely related to persistence. They assert that students must become immersed into a campus subculture to find membership in the dominant culture of immersion and once that membership is gained, students will have a greater likelihood of persistence.

In relation to this study, these cultural propositions are significant as they acknowledge the important role students' cultures of immersion play in their subsequent adjustment to their institution. This model demonstrated an inverse relationship between persistence and the incongruence between students' culture of origin and culture of immersion. Moreover, Kuh and Love's (2000) framework establishes that when a student perceives an incompatibility between their precollege and institutional cultures, they are less likely to continue the path toward their

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

degree; a notion that directly conflicts Tinto's model that states that students must sever precollege ties and assimilate into the institutional culture to persist.

Intercultural perspective of minority student persistence. Museus and Quaye (2009) tested Kuh and Love's (2000) propositions on racial and ethnic minority students in a qualitative study and used their findings to modify the original propositions into eight intercultural propositions that could offer a potential explanation of persistence among minority college students. They used the term intercultural to refer to interactions across multiple cultures as the revised model highlights a) multiple cultures-cultures of origin and immersion, and dominant campus cultures and subcultures, are central to this perspective; b) the emergent intercultural perspective focuses on the interactions between those cultures of origin and immersion, and c) the term intercultural distinguishes itself from Kuh and Love's (2000) original set of cultural propositions. As mentioned in Chapter One, Museus and Quaye (2009) found support for Kuh and Love's (2000) first, third, and fourth cultural propositions, and modified the five remaining propositions based on existing literature and the data collected in their study.

This modified model reinforces Kuh and Love's (2000) theory that a student's precollege culture of immersion significantly affects their persistence in college and goes a step further by detailing the importance of a student's cultural meaning-making system as well emphasizing the role of institutional and collective cultural agents in helping them adjust to their culture of immersion. Museus and Quaye (2009) also underscore the importance of cultural integrity and validation, as students' connections to their traditional cultural heritage can be positively associated with their likelihood of success if the campus cultural agents to whom they are connected emphasize achievement, value attainment, and validate their individual cultural heritage.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

These tenets challenge the Student Integration Model's underlying assumptions that students must assimilate into the dominant culture of the institution in order to survive (Tinto, 1975). Through the foundation set forth by Kuh and Love (2000) and expanded upon by Museus and Quaye (2009), the importance of being able to negotiate multiple cultures and capitalize upon the strengths of each is highlighted. The intercultural concept of minority student persistence reinforces the value of maintaining ties to one's culture of origin. Cultures of origin allow students to develop a sense of belonging and find continual validation from family, friends, and community. The intercultural perspective also highlights the value of cultures of immersion as students are able to find meaning in continuing to persist and work towards their goals of college completion. Due to their recognition of the importance of cultural integrity and the negotiation of multiple cultures, Museus and Quaye's (2009) intercultural perspective was utilized as a major component of the theoretical framework for this study.

Cultural integrity. Dominant theories of student persistence contend that integration, not cultural integrity, is necessary to student success. Although Tinto's theory of student integration is the most widely cited theoretical perspective of student departure, it has also received criticism regarding its cultural bias (Kuh & Love, 2000; Museus, 2008). Tierney's (1999) critique of Tinto's model asserted that requiring students to sever ties with their precollege culture of origin was a form of "cultural suicide" and instead, he offered a notion of cultural integrity which emphasizes programs that foster cultural validation by engaging students' racial and ethnic backgrounds (p. 82). Tierney's cultural integrity notion challenges traditional assimilation models and is based on the belief that colleges can shape dominant campus cultures of immersion to engage and honor the diverse precollege cultures from which racial and ethnic minority students originate.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Museus (2008) expanded upon this framework by exploring the role of ethnic student organizations at PWIs. He found that these organizations encourage minority students to find membership in their new cultures of immersion, thus establishing a sense of belonging and translating into a positive effect on student adjustment. Furthermore, the ethnic organizations provided students with a scaled-down environment that functioned as spaces where students could connect with peers who shared similar cultural backgrounds and understandings on campus. Museus and Quayle's (2009) propositions also weaken Tinto's model by highlighting the importance of developing quality relationships and connections at college coupled with maintaining ties to their home culture and family as a source of support.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the existing literature pertaining to Asian American students in higher education. To provide context for this study, the historical context of Asian American Hawai'i residents and the significance of cultural values, identity development, and minority student adjustment experiences were also examined. The final section of this chapter introduced Museus and Quayle's (2009) intercultural propositions and justified its use as the theoretical framework for this study.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the research methods used to conduct this phenomenological study are addressed. To gain a holistic impression of students' experiences I used a qualitative phenomenological approach. Furthermore, the in-depth interview guidelines established by Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) allowed me to gain insight into the worlds of my participants.

While quantitative studies have explored minority student adjustment (e.g. Bennett & Okinaka, 1990; Hall et al., 2010; Ichiyama et al., 1996; Yau et al., 2012; Ying, Lee, Tsai, Hung, Lin, & Wan, 2001), qualitative literature in this area is lacking (Museus, 2009; Tinto, 1993). Additionally, the dearth of scholarship on Asian American undergraduates in general, is problematic. Through qualitative inquiry, I provided students from Hawaii with a vehicle to elucidate the essence of their adjustment experiences at PWIs in the Northeast.

Characteristics of Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative methods were best suited to address the research questions guiding this study. Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) confirm that *how* and *why* questions are best addressed through the use of qualitative inquiry. Several characteristics distinguish qualitative research from quantitative research (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Patton, 2002). First, whereas quantitative researchers base their work on the belief that facts and feelings can be separated and that a single knowable reality exists; qualitative researchers believe that multiple realities exist and that they are socially constructed by different individuals' views of the same situation (Bogdan & Biklen, 2010; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Additionally, in contrast to qualitative research, quantitative research focuses on attempting to examine relationships by using instruments that garner numerical data and statistical information (Creswell, 2009).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Finally, in qualitative research, the sample is rarely set before the study begins creating a fluid and ongoing sample identification process (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2006).

For the purposes of this study, Hawai'i residents who experienced varying precollege environments were selected, as their cultures of origin affected the way they socially constructed and experienced their transition into their culture of immersion. After the data was collected through a series of open ended interviews, phenomenological reduction was used to extract and analyze information from these interviews, allowing for the identification of common themes that impacted the multiple realities of their adjustment processes. This study was exploratory and personal—values embodied in qualitative research. Although two demographic questionnaires (Appendix C, F) were used, their purpose was to gather information that grounded the context of participant experiences that were then fleshed out through qualitative methods.

Qualitative researchers strive to become immersed in the situations they are researching and it is common for the researchers' personal experiences and insights to play a critical factor in the interpretation of results (Patton, 2002). For that reason, reflexivity and moral courage were essential considerations, as qualitative researchers must be sensitive to the biases, theoretical predispositions, and preferences they possess (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Finally, and most notably, in contrast to the numerical outputs of quantitative research, qualitative research is best described through rich descriptions of participant experiences, including actual quotations, to portray themes discovered through analysis of interviews. These quotations infuse the study with life as they are finely intertwined into a narrative description to best depict a stated phenomenon. Carefully crafted questions and a thoughtfully designed

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

protocol enabled me to understand the nuances of participants' worlds through this phenomenological approach.

The Phenomenological Research Method

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2010), phenomenological research was influenced by the philosophers Edmund Husserl and Alfred Schutz, emphasizing *verstehen*, the interpretive understanding of human interaction (p. 33). Additionally, phenomenological inquiry asserts that phenomenologists do not assume they know what things mean to the people they are studying; rather they attempt to gain entry into the conceptual world of their participants.

Phenomenologists also accept that participant descriptions are a single description and no one interpretation of one's understanding can exhaust other forms of experience (Bogdan & Biklen, 2010).

Although a substantial body of research has expanded knowledge regarding the factors that influence the persistence and adjustment of minority students, the large majority of those studies have been quantitative in nature, with focuses that tended to be broad rather than deep (e.g. Cabrera, Nora, & Castaneda, 1992/1993; Cerezo & Chang, 2013; Johnson et al., 2007; Kalsner & Pistole, 2003; Roberts et al., 1999; Wei et al., 2011). These expansive studies have been limited in their ability to capture a holistic understanding of minority student persistence as they lacked the student voices and stories that could provide rich details that allow practitioners to learn what factors influence students' attitudes about their education as well as their decision to persist (Bean & Metzner, 1985).

For this reason, I pursued a qualitative research approach, designed to understand the experiences and perspective of a group of individuals. This type of study allowed me to obtain a more holistic description of the research question with an emphasis on describing in detail all

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

aspects of a particular phenomenon (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). While many types of qualitative studies exist, I conducted a phenomenological study as all participants have experienced the same phenomenon. Furthermore, phenomenology placed an emphasis on examining the intricacies identified through a qualitative lens of personal experiences (Creswell, 1998; Patton, 2000).

Phenomenology has been described as being “based in a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity, and emphasise [sic] the importance of personal perspective and interpretation” (Lester, 1999, p. 1). Patton (2000) states the common focus is “exploring how human beings make sense of experience and transform experience into consciousness, both individually and as shared meaning” (p. 104). Patton (2002) also described phenomenological analysis as a way “to grasp, and elucidate the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of a phenomenon for a person or group of people” (p. 482).

Through this approach, this study focused on the personal experiences of individuals, while finding common themes that emerged through the data analysis. Creswell (1998) identifies the most important factor as learning from the “individuals who have experienced the phenomenon being explored and can articulate their conscious experiences” (p. 111). There are more detailed subcategories of phenomenology; however Patton (2000) states the common focus is “exploring how human beings make sense of experience and transform experience into consciousness, both individually and as shared meaning” (p. 104).

The strengths of a phenomenological approach are rooted in its structure, allowing the researcher direct interaction with participants. Through the careful design of an interview protocol, researchers are able to draw out rich and complete descriptions of human experiences and meanings (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). Being able to directly interact with participants

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

provides the researcher with the opportunity to ask for clarification and to ask immediate follow-up questions. Additionally, the researcher is able to observe nonverbal responses which can be supportive or contradictory to participants' verbal responses. Participant interaction through this approach can greatly contribute to the depth of the topic being studied. Finally, it is possible to gain different in-depth perspectives of the same phenomenon because phenomenologists believe that multiple interpretations of reality exist and that they are socially constructed by different individuals' views of the same situation (Bogdan & Biklen, 2010; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Finally, in a phenomenological study, findings are allowed to emerge, rather than being imposed by an investigator. Through carefully structured interviews, the researcher digs deeper during the interview to peel away the layers of each experience to unpack its essence. In phenomenology, the underlying assumption is that there is always a core shared understanding among a group of people that holds a particular phenomenon together (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). That shared understanding is what I aimed to expose.

Although phenomenology has many strengths, it does have limitations, the foremost being that the method greatly depends on the articulate skills of the participants and the interview skills of the researcher. Interviewers must develop rapport and be respectful, non-judgmental, and non-threatening in order to gain entry into the world of their participants (Merriam, 1998). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) stress the importance of rapport and trust as integral not only to securing participation for a study, but also to sustain participation over time. Additionally, researchers must dedicate time and energy into the creation of their interview protocol as without the correct wording, they may have challenges collecting usable information from participants. On a practical level, it is also important to acknowledge that participants, and their ability to express themselves, can greatly affect the success of a study. Since the data collected in a

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

phenomenological study are gathered through interviews, participants need to be interested, willing to participate, and articulate. If they are not able to clearly express themselves, or if the interviewer is not able to make participants feel comfortable enough to do so, the researcher may never collect enough usable data to draw significant conclusions.

Another limitation of the phenomenological method is that it may be limited toward a particular time phenomenon; therefore the methodology may miss information about broader periods of time or about the development of an experience. Additionally, by focusing on a rich description of an experience, phenomenology may overlook information about what led up to that experience, what its outcomes or consequences might be, and what the concomitants and other factors associated with the experience are (Creswell, 1998; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008).

Critics have also argued that phenomenological research can be heavily influenced by researcher bias, either actively or passively. Although researchers may strive to recognize their biases, they may be unable to bracket them and thus, subconsciously or consciously, transfer them to participants affecting data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). Because the researcher serves as the instrumentation tool collecting data, researcher bias is a common threat and steps should be taken to minimize bias. Steps taken to minimize researcher bias are described in detail in the Data Collection Procedures and Quality Control sections of this chapter.

Finally, critics contend that the findings of phenomenological studies are difficult to generalize to a larger population due to the relatively small number of participants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Although the results of the study will not be generalizable, it is my hope that it will be transferable to the experiences of individual readers through naturalistic generalization (Stake, 1995).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Sampling techniques. Phenomenological methodology involves studying small groups of participants through extensive engagement to develop concepts of meaning in order to understand the lived experiences of others. A basic phenomenological study includes three aspects: description, investigation of essence, and phenomenological reduction (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Moustakas, 1994).

Phenomenological studies typically cover more depth than breadth; therefore it is important to create a sample consisting of information-rich participants and it is not uncommon to select a small group of participants so that rich descriptions of their experiences may be extracted. Patton (2001) notes that there is no rule for sample size in qualitative research and Luttrell (2010) emphasizes this by asserting that, “there is no magic number that ensures rich or accurate data” (p. 6). Therefore, I used purposeful sampling to select ten participants. I felt that this sample size was sufficient to yield the best understanding of how cultural incongruity affects the adjustment process (Luttrell, 2010). In the end, the validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry will be affected more by the quality of the information rich data generated in interviews and my observational and analytical skills, rather than the sample size (Patton, 2002, p. 245).

Patton (2002) describes purposeful sampling as a non-random method of sampling that allows the researcher to select information rich cases for study in depth. One of the benefits of purposeful sampling is that it allows the researcher to select participants, whose information rich cases will shed light on the questions under study, thus allowing for a more direct data analysis experience. My research question aimed to describe the experiences of a particular subgroup in depth; therefore a homogenous sample allowed me to choose participants who shared a common

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

characteristic: Asian American Hawai'i residents attending PWIs in the Northeastern United States (Patton, 2002).

After I identified the homogeneous sample, two types of purposive sampling methods were utilized, snowball and maximum variation sampling (Patton, 2002). First, I applied maximum variation to gather participants who had varying experiences of adjustment at their respective PWI. Then, I used snowball sampling to grow the sample size by asking participants to refer others to the study (Creswell, 1998; Patton, 2002). Snowball sampling allows researchers to locate information-rich key informants through a referral process, asking participants and key institutional agents if they know of people who would fit the study criteria (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002).

Another benefit of purposeful sampling was that it could be used to understand the experiences of a specific population, within a specific place (Patton, 2002). Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator must select a sample from which the most can be learned (Merriam, 1998). Jones et al., (2006) elaborate by stating that the use of sampling criteria should reflect the variables, characteristics, qualities, and demographics most directly linked to the purpose of the study and thus, is highly important to the construction of the sample.

Within my homogeneous sample, I strived to obtain maximum variation to create a purposefully selected group of students who represented a wide range of adjustment experiences at PWIs in the Northeast. Because the goal of my research question was to describe the experiences of Asian American Hawai'i residents, applying maximum variation to the homogeneous sample allowed me to choose participants who met my demographic criteria and represented a wide range of experiences, instead of a random and generalizable sample (Patton, 2002). This type of sample was best suited for this study because it enabled me to learn from

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

each participant through an emergent approach. Additionally, what I learned from one participant informed the subsequent direction of the study (Patton, 2002). Merriam (1998) emphasizes that maximum variation samples are useful for identifying findings from a small sample of great diversity as any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and valuable in capturing the core experiences and the central aspects of a program. Creswell (1998) reinforces maximum variation samples' strength in qualitative research and explains that when a researcher maximizes different experiences of participants, there is an increased likelihood that the findings will represent different perspectives.

To create maximum variation in my sample, I made a conscious effort to select participants who represented a wide range of student types and had varying adjustment experiences. Although there are many PWIs throughout the Northeastern United States, I did not have the resources to randomly select enough students from each institution to generalize my findings across all PWIs. Therefore, I intentionally selected students who represented geographical and demographic diversity, and had both positive and negative adjustment experiences. By using a maximum variation sampling strategy, my goal was not to generalize findings to all people or all groups, but instead to look for information that elucidates experiential variation and significant common patterns within that variation (Patton, 2002).

Sampling Issues

For the purposes of this study, I selected Hawai'i residents who experienced varying precollege environments and background demographics, since their cultures of origin affected the way they socially constructed and experienced their transition into their culture of immersion. I applied maximum variation to a homogenous sample, including both genders, varied developed

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

environments (i.e. urban, suburban, rural), socioeconomic statuses, high school type, college type, and students of all class standings.

Including students from varying socioeconomic statuses added depth to my findings as socioeconomic class can influence one's culture of origin, values, and motivations. Additionally, socioeconomic class may also tie into the type of high school they attended which may affect their culture of origin. In Hawai'i, the educational system plays a significant role in social mobility and identifying a person's high school can explain a lot about the person such as geography and social class. Learning where a student attended high school could also provide insights into the ethnic makeup of their institution, which may have an impact on their coping and adjustment mechanisms at their PWI.

In the state of Hawai'i, Asian Americans belong to the majority despite their ethnic minority status. This experience would differ from that of a Pacific Islander student who would not belong to a majority group in Hawai'i. Therefore, when identifying my sample population, I excluded Pacific Islander students, but included them in the literature review given the categorical grouping favored by the government and educational scholars. To create a sample that would provide the most information rich cases, I narrowed down the types of specific Asian American Hawai'i residents. Given that all fifty groups do not hold majority status in Hawai'i, I focused specifically on Chinese American, Japanese American, Korean American, and Filipino American Hawai'i residents. In addition to being the top four Asian American ethnicities in Hawai'i, historically those groups were the first four Asian immigrant groups to work on the plantations and thus, their families may have an increased chance of living in Hawai'i for multiple generations (Okamura, 1980; USCB, 2013b).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

These subgroups also represent varying social and economic classes in Hawai‘i. Although I acknowledge that I cannot categorize an entire ethnicity into a socioeconomic class, in Hawai‘i it is possible to draw general conclusions on socioeconomic classes based on the history of each group. Since the plantation days, Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans have advanced themselves to share socioeconomic and political power with Whites in Hawai‘i by historically availing themselves of the public schools and the University of Hawai‘i and by being among the leaders in the rise to power of the Democratic Party in the 1950s and 1960s. Okamura (2008) explains that Chinese American and Japanese American groups have risen to become socially and economically dominant groups, whereas Filipino Americans have been stigmatized due to demeaning stereotypes of their immigrant ancestors. Although Filipino Americans have attained a degree of socioeconomic success as small business owners, that success has taken a very long time to achieve compared to other ethnic groups (Okamura, 2010). Filipino Americans in general have not established themselves socioeconomically, as evident from their comparatively low educational, occupational and income status despite their 100-year presence in Hawai‘i (Okamura, 2008, p. 53). Finally, Korean Americans straddle the space between the socioeconomic successes of the Japanese American and Chinese American groups and the challenges experienced by the Filipino Americans. Compared to Filipino Americans, Korean Americans also experienced a large segment of post-1965 immigrants employed as service workers and are also subject to racist stereotypes, but have had greater success in attaining socioeconomic mobility, especially through higher education. This difference in social status between Filipino Americans and Korean Americans can be partially accounted for by the much higher socioeconomic status attained by the descendants of Korean plantation laborers compared to the descendants of the Filipino plantation generation (Okamura, 2008).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

The state of Hawai‘i is comprised of six major islands: Kaua‘i, O‘ahu, Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i, Maui and the island of Hawai‘i. Each island has its own distinct characteristics, communities and economies. Although all participants ended up coming from O‘ahu, this study was open to residents of all islands as each island has communities that could add another dimension to the study depending on the setting in which participants were raised (urban, suburban, or rural). Different types of communities exist on each island; therefore it is possible to have two students who attended the same private school, but grew up in different communities. Learning about these subtleties could also affect their adjustment experience. For example, a student who grew up on a rural farm, but attended a private school in an urban setting, may have an easier time adjusting at their PWI due to their previous experience navigating two different cultures. In contrast the student who grew up in an urban setting and attended the same private school may not have had experience navigating multiple cultures and therefore have a more challenging time adjusting.

In identifying my sample, I felt that it was important to account for the various types of communities within the state of Hawai‘i because it allowed me to gain greater insights into this phenomenon by examining all angles. Using a maximum variation sample also helped identify common themes that were evident across the sample. Finally, I felt that the carefully established criteria allowed me to have an increased likelihood of identifying themes that reflected different perspectives.

Sampling Strategy. My maximum variation sampling process was fluid and ongoing until I reached my desired sample population. I initially solicited a call for participants via email inquiries to student affairs professionals at PWIs. However, that approach did not yield any participants so I resorted to posting a call for participants on my Facebook page and also sent a

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

call out to Hawai'i Clubs at PWIs in the Northeast on Facebook. Participants were also referred to the study, through snowball or chain sampling methods (Creswell, 1998; Patton, 2000).

Once potential participants expressed interest, my first contact with them was an email message sent from my hawaii.edu email account towards the end of the fall 2014 semester (Appendix A). I sent an email instead of a hard copy letter as I have noticed that many students do not immediately read mail, but are always connected to email not only on their computer, but on their smart phones. The initial email contained a consent form, introduction to the study, and compensation information (Appendix B). Potential students who were interested in participating and completed the consent form were then asked to complete a prequalification questionnaire which was emailed to them (Appendix C). This prequalification questionnaire was used to select participants that met the study criteria. Table 3.1 is a Selection Criteria Matrix to capture the criteria used to determine whether a student was eligible for study participation.

Table 3.1 Selection Criteria Matrix

| Selection Criteria | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| College Location | Participant must be attending a college in the following states: Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania |
| Hawaii Resident | Participant must be a current Hawaii resident |
| Identify as Local | Participant must self-identify as Local |
| College Student Status | Participant must be a current undergraduate college student |
| Length of residence in Hawaii | Participant must have lived in Hawaii for at least half plus one year of their life |
| Generation | Participant must be from the second-generation or later of immigrants to Hawaii |
| Ethnic Identification | Participant must self-identify as Japanese, Chinese, Korean, or Filipino, including multi-racial |
| High School | Participant must have completed all four years of high school in Hawaii and graduated |

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Once qualified students were identified I contacted them via email to set up an interview via Skype. Prior to conducting my interviews, I piloted the interview questions to practice my interviewing techniques and to determine whether my questions were clear and understandable. Pilot testing allowed me the opportunity to rephrase some of my questions for clarity.

This study adhered to all procedures and safeguards designed to protect the welfare of all participants as established by the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Institutional Review Board (UHMIRB). Additionally an Exempt Application to the UHMIRB was submitted before beginning the interview process to insure the safety, welfare and rights of my human participants (University of Hawai‘i Committee on Human Studies, 2013). A copy of the UHMIRB approval is included in Appendix D.

To insure the confidentiality of the participants, no personal identifying information was included in the results and all digitally recorded and transcribed data will be destroyed once this dissertation has been accepted and approved. All participation in this study was voluntary and all participants were notified that they could withdraw their participation at any time. Additionally, each participant was given the opportunity to request a summary of my findings upon completion of my research.

Participants

Participants in this study were ten Asian American Hawai‘i residents who are attending PWIs in the Northeast. The selected participants were part of a purposive homogeneous sample because not all students who expressed interest in participating were included. Students who expressed interest, but were not selected did not meet study criteria including ethnic identification, current class level, or birthplace. Ten participants who met the prequalification criteria and identified with one of the four Asian American groups were interviewed. Although

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

the study was open to four ethnic groups, in the sample only three groups were represented.

Table 3.2 is a Participant Matrix to capture demographics of the sample population and introduce participant pseudonyms. Throughout the following chapters, these pseudonyms will be referenced, as quotes from the interviews will be examined for insight into the adjustment process of these students.

Table 3.2 Participant Matrix

| Pseudonym | Age | Gender | Generation | Birthplace (City, State) | Class Level | Ethnic Identification | High School Type | College Type | College State |
|-----------|-----|--------|------------|--------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Mika | 19 | F | Fifth | Honolulu, HI | Sophomore | Japanese | Private | Private | NY |
| Caroline | 22 | F | Second | Honolulu, HI | Senior | Filipino | Public | Private | NY |
| Linda | 22 | F | Fourth | Honolulu, HI | Senior | Japanese | Private | Private | NY |
| Sonia | 22 | F | Fifth | Honolulu, HI | Senior | Chinese | Private | Public | PA |
| Addison | 20 | M | Fourth | Honolulu, HI | Sophomore | Japanese/Chinese/Filipino | Private | Private | CT |
| Kevin | 19 | M | Fourth | Honolulu, HI | Junior | Japanese/Chinese | Public | Private | CT |
| Amanda | 19 | F | Fourth | Honolulu, HI | Sophomore | Japanese | Private | Private | NY |
| Jasmine | 19 | F | Fifth | Honolulu, HI | Sophomore | Japanese | Private | Private | NY |
| Jackson | 18 | M | Fifth | Pearl City, HI | Sophomore | Chinese/Filipino | Private | public | MA |
| Jocelyn | 22 | F | Fourth | Honolulu, HI | Senior | Japanese | Public | Private | NY |

Site Description

The institutions that were included in this study were chosen for their geographic location in the Northeast and student body composition reflecting the description of a PWI. Data was

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

collected from undergraduate students attending eight universities across the Northeast. Table 3.3 provides a profile of each institution from the most recent year available.

Table 3.3 2012 Institutional and student characteristics

| Institution Pseudonym | Sector | UG Enrollment | Percent Asian American | Locale | Asian American Hawai'i First Time Freshman 2010 (Most recent year available) |
|------------------------------|---------|---------------|------------------------|---------------|--|
| Small University | Private | 14,155 | 16.4 | City: Small | 10 |
| Suburban College | Private | 1719 | 3.1 | Suburb: Large | 4 |
| Large College | Private | 4929 | 1.4 | Suburb: Large | 8 |
| Midsize College | Private | 2389 | 2.6 | City: Midsize | 0 |
| University of the Northeast | Private | 4847 | 2.7 | City: Midsize | 0 |
| University of the East Coast | Public | 20,773 | 7.5 | Suburb: Large | 2 |
| University of the North | Private | 10,789 | 17.9 | City: Large | 8 |
| Mideast University | Private | 5344 | 15.2 | City: Midsize | 7 |

Source: College Results Online, 2015; Chronicle of Higher Education, 2011

Data Collection Procedures

Data for this study was collected using three different instruments, a prequalification survey, a Skype interview, and a demographic questionnaire. First, the prequalification survey instrument was used to ensure students met study criteria (Appendix C). The survey was created using the free Google Forms software and posted on Facebook. Google Forms was used because it is embedded within the Google@UH platform and meets the University of Hawaii security requirements. Since the survey was used to prequalify students, it was not anonymous. The prequalification survey indicated that participants chosen for the study may be eligible to receive a \$10 gift card to Starbucks for their participation.

Based on the information disclosed in the prequalification survey I identified qualified students and emailed them a consent form sent from my hawaii.edu email account. When the signed consent form was returned, the second instrument, a semi-structured Skype interview (see

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Appendix E), was conducted to collect the primary data required to answer the research questions. According to Kvale & Brinkmann (2009), interviews are conversations that have structure and purpose. Each interview lasted approximately one hour in length and was open-ended. The qualitative research interview attempts to understand the world from the “subjects’ point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, to uncover their lived world” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 1). The use of semi-structured interviews also allowed me to acquire the data necessary to understand the overlap between culture of origin, culture of immersion, and student experiences, while providing flexibility to explore data on unexpected emerging themes (Museus & Quaye, 2009). This notion was extremely important as this study aimed to unravel the impact of cultures of immersion and origin in student adjustment.

All interviews began with a set of predetermined open-ended questions and then continued as I actively followed up on participants’ answers, seeking clarification or asking critical questions to gather rich data (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). All questions were formulated to extract participants’ descriptions of the effects their home culture and campus cultures had on their adjustment to college. All interviews were conducted via Skype using the interview protocol in Appendix E.

During each interview, I took notes to record participant reactions and non-verbal cues. I also used bracketing as a means to set aside my biases. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), bracketing is an attempt to place the common sense and scientific knowledge about the phenomenon being studied within parenthesis in order to arrive at an unprejudiced description of the essence of the phenomenon (p. 27). The use of bracketing increased objectivity by unpacking the phenomenon and peeling away the symbolic meanings, biases, or pre-judgments that I had until only the phenomenon itself remained.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

The final instrument was a demographic questionnaire that solicited additional student characteristics and demographic information (Appendix F). The questionnaire was administered at the end of the interview and was more in-depth than the pre-qualification survey since the demographic characteristics collected were used to triangulate and support analysis of interview data. Since data collected in this survey was used for triangulation and demographics, this survey was not anonymous.

Data Analysis Plan

Moustakas (1994) suggests specific steps for phenomenological data analysis, including combing interviews for statements that describe how the phenomenon is being experienced; grouping the statements into categories of meaning with descriptions to define the categories; viewing the phenomenon through multiple perspectives in order to create a definition of the phenomenon; capturing the essence of the phenomenon; and repeating the process for each participant in order to compile a composite description of the phenomenon (Creswell, 1998). Creswell (1998) summarizes the process, stating that data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis, reducing the data into themes through a process of coding, and then representing the data in figures, tables, or discussion. Although this is not my first qualitative study, I consider myself a novice researcher; therefore I followed Creswell's (1998) six step process for data analysis:

1. Organize and prepare the data for analysis.
2. Read through all data, making notes and familiarizing myself with the data.
3. Begin detailed analysis using a coding process derived from theoretical framework.
4. Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

5. Advance how the description and themes will be represented in the qualitative narrative.
6. Interpretation of the data using theoretical framework.

I used Creswell's (1998) method of data analysis to transcribe each interview, examine the transcription, and code the data into categories for comparisons of similarities and differences. After the initial coding, similar themes across interviews were grouped into categories, and then divided further into subcategories. This deep level of coding ensured a contextualized explanation for the phenomenon being studied.

My theoretical framework provided the organization for this study and served as the lens through which my topic was examined. As the data was interpreted, the intercultural perspective of racial and ethnic minority college student persistence provided the foundation for this study. This framework was also used to identify the coding categories which were created to analyze the data and explain and clarify the phenomena that participants experienced (Museus & Quaye, 2009). Utilizing a theoretical framework served as the guiding light for the study and influenced the structure of this dissertation by helping identify the key variables that influenced the phenomenon by providing the groundwork necessary to compare and contrast those variables.

To comprehensively understand the perceptions, behaviors, and educational experiences of minority students, this model embedded with intercultural nuances, provided the theoretical underpinnings for this study. Creswell (1998) indicates that it is important for the researcher to acknowledge the theoretical perspective used in the study and to insure that the analysis is consistent with that perspective. In addition to the coding categories originating in Museus and Quaye's (2009) framework, I also used subcategory coding to mirror the work of Bennett (2001), regarding research in multicultural education. Subcategories may be coded to correspond with one or more of the factors related to ethnic identity, as defined by Bennett (2001): self-labeling,

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

feelings of belonging or feeling set apart, and a desire to participate in activities associated with the group (p. 192).

Quality Control and Validity

Qualitative research attempts to understand the world from the participant's point of view. The human interaction in the interview affects the interviewees, and the knowledge produced by an interview deepens the understanding of the human condition (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In addition to UHMIRB approval, I followed the ethical protocol derived from Kvale and Brinkmann's (2009) ethical issues identified in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Ethical Issues at Seven Research Stages

Thematizing: The purpose of an interview study should, beyond the scientific value of the knowledge sought, also be considered with regard to improvement of the human situation investigated.

Designing: Ethical issues of design involve obtaining the subjects' informed consent to participate in the study, securing confidentiality, and considering the possible consequences of the study for the subjects.

Interview Situation: The personal consequences of the interview interaction for the subjects need to be taken into account, such as stress during the interview and changes in self-understanding.

Transcription: The confidentiality of the interviewees needs to be protected and there is also the question of whether a transcribed text is loyal to the interviewee's oral statements.

Analysis: Ethical issues in analysis involve the question of how penetratingly the interviews can be analyzed and of whether the subjects should have a say in how their statements are interpreted.

Verification: It is the researcher's ethical responsibility to report knowledge that is as secured and verified as possible. This involves the issue of how critically an interviewee may be questioned.

Reporting: There is again the issue of confidentiality when reporting private interviews in public, and of the consequences of the published report for the interviewees and for the groups they belong to.

(Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009)

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Strategies such as member checks and triangulation were used to rule out validity threats. To reduce the chance of misinterpreting the meaning or perspective that my participants presented, I solicited feedback about my data through member checks with each participant once each interview was transcribed (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Maxwell, 2010).

To reduce the risk of bias and to allow for better assessment of common themes, I used triangulation (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008; Maxwell, 2010). The use of triangulation methods coupled with other strategies such as member checks, helped me assess whether my observations were in line with participant experiences (Maxwell, 2010). The demographic questionnaire provided the basis for triangulation of interview transcripts to determine whether my data sources were strong enough to provide the evidence needed to substantiate the common themes that emerged.

Personal Statement

When deciding upon my dissertation, two criteria were of importance: 1) I wanted to conduct a qualitative study, and 2) I had to be passionate about the subject. Once I identified my research question-how cultural incongruities affect the adjustment of Asian American Hawai'i residents at PWIs in the Northeastern United States I had to define my sample, a feat much easier said than done.

Initially, I could not determine how to define the group of students I wanted to study. I knew I wanted to study students like myself who were from Hawai'i and attended a PWI, but the challenge was identifying the appropriate label for this group. Growing up, if anyone asked what ethnic group I identified with, my first response would be Local, if I was pushed and told that was not a real category, my second response would be Japanese, and finally, if someone would

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

not accept that for an answer, eventually I would say Japanese American. It was not until I went to college, that I realized that my Japanese American counterparts who lived on the continental United States associated with an Asian American identity, and that I too was a part of this group. This paradox is why I struggled over what to call the group of students in my sample. Some of the possibilities that I brainstormed were: Local students, Hawai‘i students, Hawai‘i residents, Locals, Hawai‘i Locals, but nothing seemed to fit. I wanted my research to have a broad audience; however I wanted it to resonate with Local students like myself.

To make matters more complex, as I began my literature review, I quickly realized that empirical studies on students from Hawai‘i was greatly lacking and therefore, I would not be able to find ideas regarding labeling my sample from other researchers. As I dug deeper into higher education literature, I realized that there was no such thing as a “Local” student outside of Hawai‘i; at least not in the context that Local is used in Hawai‘i.

Wanting to keep my study relevant to the general public as well as education scholars, I decided to call my sample Asian American Hawai‘i residents, because by definition, that is what my participants are. Deciding upon the term Asian American Hawai‘i residents was not an easy decision; as I reflected upon myself in efforts to disclose and recognize my biases, I struggled with the fact that I rarely ever identified as an Asian American. Furthermore, I wondered whether it was appropriate to label my participants as Asian Americans if they in fact rejected that label. This notion bothered me so much so, that I asked friends and family what ethnic or racial groups they identified with. Not surprisingly, in my very unscientific survey, very few said Asian American. Although Asian American is not a popular term in Hawai‘i, I decided to use that phrase instead of Local because it was more descriptive and would reach a broader audience.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Elated that I decided upon what my sample would be called, I continued with my literature review only to stumble upon another challenge; in the current conversations on issues of race and ethnicity and their intersections with education, Pacific Islanders, people whose ethnic origins are from Hawai‘i, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands, are often grouped with Asian Americans (USCB, 2013b). My first instinct was to change my title and sample to Asian American Pacific Islander Hawai‘i residents; however upon further reflection and after discussing this issue with my dissertation committee, I realized that I should focus on Asian American students specifically as their ethnic background characteristics differ from Pacific Islanders in Hawai‘i, so much so that their differences could greatly impact their adjustment experiences.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher, especially in qualitative research, is significant as the researcher is the key instrument in qualitative inquiry. Merriam (1998) stresses that since the researcher is the primary vehicle of qualitative research and is therefore limited by being human, “The researcher must be aware of any personal biases and how they may influence the study” (p.21) to minimize missed opportunities, mistakes, and the interference of personal bias.

My role as the researcher in this study is to provide insight into how cultural incongruence affects the adjustment process of Asian American Hawai‘i residents attending PWIs in the Northeast. Furthermore, at the conclusion of the study, my role includes providing recommendations about how administrators, faculty members and other institutional agents may use the findings of this study to foster successful adjustment among Asian American Hawai‘i residents at their institutions.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

As a phenomenological researcher, I had to encourage participants to relive in their minds the experiences they encountered (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). My role was to be the vehicle that allowed them to recall previous experiences and then to objectively document and cluster any commonalities in a coherent manner, allowing others to learn from my findings. It was my goal to give these students a “voice,” by helping them describe the themes of their everyday worlds then synthesizing these themes to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

Given my role as the researcher, it is important to understand my background as it may have affected the collection and interpretation of the data in this investigation. My background knowledge of higher education and qualitative methods were fundamental in designing the study, conducting interviews, analyzing and interpreting the data, and identifying common themes. Although I have conducted previous qualitative studies, I still consider myself a novice researcher and relied on my dissertation chair and committee for periodic check-ins to insure my research was in line with best practices. As previously cited, I also followed Creswell’s (1998) data analysis process to minimize the human error involved with being a novice researcher. My prior educational and professional backgrounds in journalism also provided a familiarization with ethical considerations involved in interviewing and reinforced my strong ethical foundation for my research behaviors.

I am a Local, Japanese American female resident of Hawai‘i who studied journalism at a small, liberal arts, PWI in the Pacific Northwest. While earning my bachelor’s degree, I worked twenty hours a week on campus and was involved in a limited number of student organizations, most notably the Hawai‘i Club. Due to my lack of engagement with the greater campus community my sense of belonging to the university was limited to those in the Hawai‘i Club and my on-campus job. I graduated in three and a half years, which diminished my sense of

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

belonging to the university, as I was more involved academically than socially. Similar to Hendricks et al. (1996) findings, my culture of origin was the main reason I persisted despite my negative adjustment experience.

If I had the chance to attend college again, I would not choose to attend a PWI due to the challenges that I experienced with adjustment. Feelings of unhappiness with my campus culture encouraged me to focus on academics as I knew it would allow me to graduate sooner, and thus leave the campus. Immediately after I arrived on campus, I realized that I did not fit in. I had a hard time getting along with my roommate and other girls in my dormitory due to our different values. Additionally, I did not fit in with the “mainland Asian” students. Although from the onset I did not intend to befriend other students from Hawai‘i, due to our out-group membership and common challenges fitting in with other groups, I formed a close bond with them. These negative experiences sparked my interest in learning how other students experienced adjustment in similar settings. I felt that the best way to address my biases as a researcher and to correct for them was to be aware of what they were; my undergraduate experience is one of them and I need to be cautious not to let this experience affect the delivery of my questions or my analysis.

Following my undergraduate education, I went on to pursue a Master’s of Business Administration (M.B.A.) and a Master’s of Education in Educational Administration (M.Ed.). My M.B.A. was earned at the same PWI that I attended for my undergraduate education and I earned my M.Ed. at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, a large research university located in Hawai‘i. During my time earning my bachelor’s and master’s degrees in the Pacific Northwest, I became increasingly aware of the role that my minority status played and how it affected my interest in participating in on-campus activities and interacting with various institutional agents.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Researchers who are members of marginalized groups have an insider advantage of obtaining more detailed, candid responses and picking up subtleties or nuances of the cultures (Maramba, 2008). This privilege also comes with great responsibility as it can involve a tension between a professional distance and a personal friendship in the interview. Often, in the context of a feminist, caring, committed ethic, the qualitative research interviewer can be conceived as a friend, or a warm and caring researcher; therefore I must be careful not to take advantage of this position (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). As a Japanese American female in my thirties who may share some of the same characteristics as some participants, I was also careful to mitigate any perception of power as I interviewed younger participants.

Finally, as a non-instructional faculty member at a community college, I tried to mitigate any perception of power or control in gathering my sample and executing the interview. Throughout the interviews, I stressed that there were no right or wrong answers and that I was interested in participants' honest opinions and experiences.

My experiences attending a PWI, in addition to my personal beliefs, values, biases, and perspectives about this topic guided and influenced the research questions, methodology, and outcomes of the study. Researchers often study participants to learn more and understand themselves and their relationships with others (Luttrell, 2010). Although in the qualitative field, this notion is acceptable, in other contexts, qualitative researchers have wrestled with charges that their prejudices and attitudes may bias their data and findings (Bogdan & Biklen, 2010). Critics of qualitative inquiry assert that this approach is too subjective, mainly because the researcher is the instrument of both data collection and interpretation, and because qualitative strategy includes having personal contact and sometimes forming a relationship with the people and situation under investigation (Patton, 2002).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

The experiences that I encountered attending a PWI definitely affected this study. Although my theoretical framework and other empirical studies grounded my research, my personal experiences may have influenced the design and structure of this study. I acknowledge that there is no method guaranteed to yield valid data or trustworthy conclusions; however to increase the validity of the data collected as well as its analysis, I used some of the assessment procedures recommended by Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007). Although they recommend twenty-four different techniques, I utilized a select number to legitimize my data due to time and resource constraints.

I used reflexivity to identify and understand the biases and assumptions I had that may affect my decisions and interpretations. Although some qualitative researchers have attempted to minimize the impact of researcher subjectivity in qualitative inquiry, others have adopted a constructivist approach and advocate the importance of researcher reflexivity (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2005). I followed the latter approach as it allowed me to embrace my subjectivity and incorporate it into the discourse of my research. My perspective and reflexivity were important considerations, as qualitative researchers have an obligation to be mindful and reflexive about the biases they possess (Creswell, 1998). Although I embraced my subjectivity, I was careful to take measures to minimize any perceptions of bias. To do this, I followed recommendations of Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007); all interviews were conducted on a neutral site, I disclosed my intentions of the study from the onset, I used maximum variation sampling, maintained a theoretical framework, triangulated data, and continually kept my research questions in mind. In addition to recognizing my biases, throughout data collection and analysis, I used bracketing to deliberately put aside my personal beliefs about the phenomenon under

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

investigation. The use of bracketing can increase objectivity by unpacking the phenomenon by peeling away the biases that the researcher has until only the phenomenon itself remains.

Finally, to reduce the risk of bias and to allow for better assessment of common themes, I used triangulation and member checks (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008; Maxwell, 1996; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). Triangulation involved the use of multiple sources to obtain corroborating evidence, thus reducing the possibility of chance associations and allowing greater confidence in any interpretations drawn (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007.) I analyzed multiple data sources, interview transcripts and the demographic questionnaire results, to determine whether my data sources were strong enough to provide the evidence needed to substantiate the common themes that emerged. I used member checks following interview transcription to allow participants the opportunity to verify the accuracy of my transcription. According to Maxwell (1996), member checking is the most effective way of eliminating the possibility of misrepresentation and misinterpretation of the “voice.”

Limitations

Several study limitations are worthy of note. First, selection bias may have affected the data that informed this investigation. To find my sample, I initially reached out to Hawai‘i Clubs, faculty, and administrators at PWIs to recommend students who could provide valuable insights to participate in this study. However, this method was not successful; therefore I ended up posting an open letter on my Facebook page and sending it to Hawai‘i Clubs at PWIs via their Facebook accounts. Many of the participants responded through the Hawai‘i Club Facebook post; therefore they were already involved in some aspect of campus life. It is important to note that students involved with the Hawai‘i Club may have different experiences of growing up in Hawai‘i than those who choose not to be involved with a campus Hawai‘i Club.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Another limitation may be location threat. In an ideal situation, each interview would be conducted face-to-face at the students' institution; however due to resource constraints involving time and money, all interviews were conducted via Skype. While undertaking the research involved in this study, I was working full-time and did not have access to resources that would allow me to travel to interview each student in a face-to-face setting. The settings of the interviews may have affected responses as students may unintentionally recall their experiences differently due to their physical setting. The locations in which the interviews were executed may create alternative explanations for the results and may affect data because the location was not constant for all participants (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008).

Data collection occurred between March 2014 and December 2014. This time frame may also be viewed as a limitation as it is fixed and did not allow for multiple data collection points. Although all attempts were made to collect data rich enough to elicit the students' experiences and voices, a longitudinal study would better track students and their experiences over a longer period of time, providing richer data.

Another limitation of this study may be the issue of generalizability. A common objection to interview based research is that there are too few participants for the findings to be generalized (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). It is important to note that through this study, I sought to understand the lived experiences of Asian American Hawai'i residents attending PWIs in the Northeast. In this qualitative study, my goal was not to make known the probability of certain variables that lead to persistence or departure, rather my goal was to make known the lived experiences, the essence, of these students. Findings of this study cannot be generalized to any broader population of colleges and universities. The goal of qualitative research is transferability

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

rather than generalizability. Readers of the research decide whether the work transfers to their particular situation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Finally, personal biases that are a function of my own history, knowledge, and experiences may have affected my interpretation of the data collected in this study. It is possible that a person of a different ethnicity, geographic upbringing, college experience, or gender may interpret the findings of this study in a different way. I do; however, see my ethnicity and similar college experiences as both a strength and a limitation. It is possible that my participants were more disclosing to an Asian American female from Hawai'i than they would have been with a researcher of differing ethnicity and gender, especially since seven out of ten participants were female.

Although the phenomenological research method has its share of limitations, I feel that the strengths previously identified outweigh them. Moreover, through careful execution of Onwuegbuzie and Leech's (2007) recommendations for legitimization, some limitations may have been remedied. Through the guidance of my dissertation chair and committee, coupled with Creswell's (1998) data analysis procedures, I felt that I identified a solid data analysis plan that was strengthened through my theoretical framework. Additionally, I felt that this method was best suited for my research question and background, as it allowed me to capitalize upon my role as a researcher, with the understanding that great responsibility and care must be undertaken through this process.

Summary

This chapter described the sites, participant selection, consideration of human participants, data collection and analysis procedures, quality control and validity, role of the researcher, and limitations. Through a review of significant literature on phenomenological

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

research, this qualitative study was developed purposefully and thoughtfully to extract the essence of the participants' stories to contribute the body of knowledge surrounding minority student adjustment in PWIs.

CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS

The first year, especially the first few weeks of college are a critical adjustment period for new students (Astin, 1993). As a result, this transition period, for minority students in particular, is especially important to understand. Existing research in this area has mainly focused on African American and Latino minority student populations. Additionally, the model minority myth has inadvertently silenced Asian American student experiences causing their voices in the greater student adjustment literature to be overlooked or excluded. Furthermore, it is extremely rare to find the experiences of Asian American students from Hawai'i disaggregated and included in scholarly literature. As this chapter unfolds, it is my hope that scholars and practitioners understand the essence of the experience Asian American Hawai'i residents face as they enter college environments in the Northeastern United States.

All participants in this study are persisting and expect to graduate, yet to some extent they all experienced issues adjusting to college life. Most of their challenges originated from the discord they encountered as they left their culture of origin and entered their culture of immersion. Although each participant's experiences were unique, through an analysis of the data, five themes emerged: Cultural Dissonance, Entering the Unknown, Challenges to Identity, Geographic Isolation, and Persistence. Together, these themes represent the essence of these participants' experience as Asian American Hawaii residents at PWIs in the NE United States. Each of these themes is discussed in detail in the following sections.

Cultural Dissonance

As I reviewed the interview data, the most pervasive theme that emerged was cultural dissonance. Cultural dissonance is a phenomenon that occurs when individuals experience a clash between cultures. Students in this study experienced varying levels of cultural dissonance

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

from the moment they arrived on campus. Cultural dissonance occurred when students were faced with situations in which they perceived conflicts between their home cultures, or cultures of origin, and that of their campus and peers, or cultures of immersion. This theme addresses the underlying issues that caused cultural dissonance for students by looking at sub-themes encompassing the following areas: a) Different from mainland culture: Some people will never understand b) Layers of culture c) Geographical and cultural misunderstandings: Oh my God, you're from Hawai'i?! and d) Coping mechanisms.

Different from mainland culture: Some people will never understand. This expression summed up the attitudes of participants as they struggled to make sense of the cultural dissonance they encountered on campus. All participants could easily recollect at least one time in which they had to explain actions or behaviors which were common in Hawai'i to their peers. Many participants shared that after repeatedly trying to explain their culture, the general consensus was that "some people will never understand."

Hawai'i is often noted for its vibrant cultural diversity reflected in its multiethnic population. Hawai'i's unique cultural heritage stems from an openness in the sharing of cultures and fosters an environment where people value their differences and communities are not afraid to borrow language, rituals, or values from other groups. Growing up in this unique atmosphere shaped the expectations students had in terms of how receptive others would be towards learning about their culture. Jasmine described her experience trying to share her ethnic culture with her peers:

When it's something different and it's not apparent to them, I have to explain it and I want to make sure that they don't get this idea that we're sort of foreign . . . so I want to explain that there's a logical reason to why we do things the way we do things or what we think, or how we think.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

She also clarified that it took a considerable amount of extra energy to explain herself to her non-minority peers and while initially she was eager to share her ethnic culture, as time went on, her enthusiasm diminished. This statement held true for the majority of the participants as they shared stories about the blank stares, confusion, and disinterest that met their attempts at sharing their culture.

As students discussed their experiences trying to teach their peers about their culture, I often wondered whether their peers were truly not receptive, or were simply trying to absorb new information. When participants attempted to share their culture with others who had no previous interaction with minorities or other cultures, silence or their questioning of certain behaviors may have been their way of trying to understand a new culture. I wondered if perhaps as time went on, participants got tired of answering the same questions about their culture of origin and thus viewed these interactions as negative although their peers were actually trying to gain a deeper understanding of a new culture they had never been exposed to.

Participants' existing values, attitudes, and behaviors played a key role in their adjustment experiences. Participants consistently described the Local culture that they associated with as laid back, warm and caring, culturally sensitive, and open to new experiences. Sonia described what being Local meant to her, "it's being exposed to all the different customs and foods and traditions and things that aren't even Asian, but have the Hawaiian influence. You're Local or you're not." Jocelyn described being Local as:

It's so hard to put your finger on it, but it's a knowledge and acceptance and appreciation of so many different cultures that come together to make Hawai'i . . . it's the mixture of the cultures mixed with the friendliness and acceptance we have in Hawai'i that's different . . . that creates that Local feeling and it's like a shared understanding, a shared language . . . something as simple as that.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

While this was a common theme during the interviews, it was difficult for many participants to clearly articulate the specific attitudes, behaviors, and traits associated with the Local culture.

Many of the descriptions that participants shared lacked definitive qualities, but rather associated Localness with unspoken behaviors and traits learned over time and rooted in Hawai'i's indigenous Native Hawaiian and plantation history.

A common observation was that people from Hawai'i tended to be more open-minded than the people in their college environment. All of the students mentioned a lot of pride associated with being from Hawai'i and arrived at college ready and eager to share their culture. However, most of the participants explained that a lot of the people they met at college were not open to trying new foods or learning about different culture based concepts. Many described this lack of interest from their peers as hurtful, as they were excited at the prospect of sharing what they perceived as special. Amanda shared her experience trying to introduce her peers to her Asian culture:

Being Asian here really pauses a conversation, if you ever approach a subject and talk about being Asian, or Asian things, it really feels like you're going off on a tangent, that is not normal conversation here and it's known. People here don't know how to respond when you say things like that. They'll either ignore it and keep talking, or I'll have to spend time explaining what I meant and I feel like I never have an adequate explanation.

Linda had a similar experience, sharing:

In freshman year I came here really excited . . . I was really open to meeting a lot of people . . . then there were a lot of people I didn't like, a lot of people that I didn't get along with, or our values didn't match up. They thought what I did was weird, what I ate was weird, and I got really tired of explaining myself . . . I thought that I could get along with pretty much everyone and then I found out that there are just people I really can't get along with. Some people will never understand. People see it (my culture) as weird and they don't want to learn more.

Jasmine shared, "Hawai'i people . . . are rather open people, they're knowledgeable enough to be different and accept diversity . . . I think our ideas of what is foreign and what is

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

ethnic is different . . . (up here) they just seem more reluctant to try new things.” Jasmine cited numerous examples in which she tried to share favorite foods from Hawai‘i with others, but was quickly turned down or judged before she was able to share anything. Many of the students contrasted this experience with their willingness to try new foods. Jasmine further explained:

(In the cafeteria) we had this special chef, an Indian chef, come in and I was so psyched to try it! Actually I can’t even think of anything that would make me at least not want to try something new . . . but I was sitting with a bunch of people . . . and no one really got any of the Indian food and I was like ‘why?!’ and everyone was like, ‘no, it’s gonna be too spicy, it’s gonna be too hot.’ And I was like why don’t you guys just go try it and no one wanted to try it . . . I was sort of disappointed because they were missing out . . . but they were just unwilling to test it out and I feel like that is sort of representative of smaller things here and there.

These experiences were echoed by many participants who felt that despite their efforts to explain their culture, share their foods, and try to educate others about what being from Hawai‘i really meant, their peers tended to be closed minded and disinterested. Linda further clarified:

I never thought being a minority would bother me, first of all, if anything it was like ‘Oh, it’s special, I can introduce my culture to people and they’ll really like it, but what I didn’t count on was people being so closed minded about certain things and I didn’t really realize how difficult it would be a minority and on one hand you do want to fit in with other people, you want to fit in with the majority, but at the same time, you don’t want to give up the values that you were born and raised with. So it’s really difficult to make that transition between the two. I really think that you have to reevaluate your situation and decide is it really worth it.

Linda’s challenge of navigating the space between the two cultures was experienced by the majority of the study participants. Jasmine, a Japanese American student, shared an example of cultural insensitivity and what happened when she tried to provide context for the situation she encountered:

I remember talking to a Jewish girl and in the middle of our conversation I remember her saying, ‘they’re such Japs!’ and I was like, ‘What?!’ and she’s like, ‘yeah, they’re such Japs!’ So I said, ‘do you even know what that means? It means something bad’ . . . and she explained that it meant Jewish American Princess. So I told her it is actually something you should never say to a Japanese person, but she was completely unaware of

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

it and continued . . . I'm Japanese and I was standing there like what is she doing, why is she saying this in front of me and she was totally oblivious to it.

Jasmine attributed this experience to her peers' lack of exposure to other cultures and her unwillingness to be open. She shared that when her peer did not stop saying "Japs" even after her explanation, it was hurtful and uncomfortable.

Although this situation left a negative impression with Jasmine, I wondered if it was an isolated incident in which one party was not actively listening or whether it represented a larger pattern. Frames of reference can color the way people understand the meaning of certain words and I wondered if this was a case in which both of the students were locked into their own understandings, leading to a case of mutual misunderstanding.

Although all participants experienced cultural dissonance and mentioned frustration, disappointment, and occasional anger over their peers unwillingness to learn more about other cultures, they were quick not to pass judgment. Addison and others attributed their peers' attitudes to a lack of diversity in their cultures of origin explaining, "I don't think many people here have experienced ethnic or racial diversity so they tend not to be interested . . . or think things are weird." Jackson explained:

Growing up in Hawai'i you experience a lot of diversity; there's not one set culture. You just pick and choose from the different cultures. It just seems like people from Hawai'i are a lot more cultured, they bring a lot with them. A lot of people in the mainland, the Caucasians, they just seem very similar to each other . . . they don't know any better.

This justification by participants fascinated me as it could be interpreted in different ways. Initially I viewed the justification as embodying the Local culture of open-mindedness; rather than complaining or simply stating that their peers were closed minded or lacked diversity, all participants provided context for the situation by referencing Hawai'i's diversity and its benefits. However, upon deeper reflection I realized that perhaps participants were not as open-

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

minded as they thought. Jackson's comment that Caucasians, "seem very similar to each other," and Jasmine's remark that, "Mainland Asians are like white people in an Asian suit . . . they're just mainlanders . . ." were reflective of others' comments regarding Asian Americans being Westernized and similar to Caucasians. I wondered if this outlook was representative of an unwillingness to look beyond the surface and whether participants only valued diversity in certain forms. While participants were getting frustrated over their peers' lack of interest in their cultures, perhaps their peers felt the same way.

Throughout the study, at some point each participant mentioned how accepting and open-minded people in Hawai'i tend to be and associated this trait with Localness. However, it is important to note that some groups would disagree with this statement. For example, people who move to Hawai'i, including Asian Americans, can often feel like outsiders and perceive discrimination because they are not Local. While Hawai'i may be more accepting of differences in comparison to other parts of the United States, this openness is definitely contested.

Layers of culture. Students' culture of origin is best understood when it is deconstructed into the various layers that influence learned behaviors, values, and perceptions. Participants' membership in multiple subcultures contributes to the unique and interconnected layers that encompass many cultural elements. To name a few, these layers include family culture, indigenous Native Hawaiian culture, island culture, college student generation, and socioeconomic class.

These layers are influenced by students' immediate family, friends, school, and community influences and shaped the students' pre-college meaning-making systems. Like pieces of a puzzle, these layers of culture shaped participants' frames of reference, significantly contributing to their culture of origin for the first seventeen or eighteen years of their life. In all

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

instances, the culture of origin that students came from was drastically different from their college environment, contributing to the discord experienced.

An important layer of culture that shaped all students was the indigenous Native Hawaiian culture based in the traditions, values, language, rituals, and food of Hawai‘i’s original inhabitants. Most notably, the influences of the Native Hawaiian indigenous culture places value on a symbiotic relationship with each other and the environment. Participants highlighted the sense of responsibility to others and the environment that growing up in Hawai‘i imprinted on them. Amanda explained her interpretation of this concept:

This kind of laid backness that we have . . . an appreciation for all cultures . . . a responsibility to other people and the land. People up here move around a lot, they don’t stay together as compactly as people from Hawai‘i so they don’t get that concept that you have a responsibility to others, they may be remotely a part of your life.

A few participants mentioned that students from Hawai‘i were more inclined to clean up after themselves in public spaces in comparison to their counterparts and attributed this to a respect for the land originating from Local values. The appreciation and respect for the environment heavily influenced the Local culture and many participants noted their passion for the outdoors and their disappointment at not being able to be outdoors year round due to harsh winter weather.

The Local culture also embodies an island culture which values collectivist notions. Many students contrasted Hawai‘i’s collective nature with the more individualistic nature of their mainland peers. When asked to articulate what makes growing up in Hawai‘i special, Jackson expanded on the notion of responsibility to others:

They don’t understand the concept of a big extended family . . . I guess because people move around a lot and don’t stay together as compactly as people from Hawai‘i have to so they don’t get that concept that you have a responsibility to treat people a certain way.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

You never know who the person you meet will be related to so you need to treat them with respect.

Jackson and Amanda's examples articulate the tendency of Hawai'i students to put the needs of their communities above their own personal needs or preferences. In island culture destinies are often intertwined, making the needs of the individual and their survival dependent on the larger community. Many participants contrasted the individualistic behaviors of their peers such as being emotionally disconnected from their family, being temporarily involved with multiple groups, and creating short-lived relationships with Hawai'i students' collectivist values. Sonia mentioned, "Here, it's more of like you're on your own figure it out type of mentality, whereas at home it's more of a community, we all help each other, it's a small island mentality." This island culture added another layer to students' culture of origin. The intersection of Hawai'i's distance from the continental United States, tropical year-round weather, ethnic diversity, Native Hawaiian influences, plantation history, and Local culture created a unique precollege environment that heavily influenced the meaning making system of all participants.

All students stated that growing up in Hawai'i was so drastically different from growing up on the continental United States that it played a greater role in their adjustment than did being Asian American. Kevin explained, "Being Asian American hasn't affected my college experience, but being from Hawai'i definitely had an impact . . . it's like being from Hawai'i makes you feel a little more of a minority than being Asian American because you're so different . . . and so far away."

When cultural dissonance was experienced between themselves and the dominant majority, some students turned to other layers of their cultural make up to find commonalities with others. These layers included first generation college students, athletes, students from

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

warmer climates (i.e. California, Arizona), and other ethnic minorities. These additional layers allowed participants to identify common interests with others and use those shared experiences to establish the beginnings of friendships and common bonds. For example, some participants befriended other first generation college students who may not have shared an ethnic minority layer, but shared the common experience of being the first in their families to attend college. Other participants like Amanda, turned to ethnic minorities who grew up in similar diverse precollege environments. Participants mentioned that these different layers of culture allowed them to branch out and establish connections with others on their campus.

Although no one directly pinpointed socioeconomic class as a source of conflict, students' stories hinted at differences in socioeconomic upbringings. Many students mentioned that they could not afford to fly home for the holidays or that their parents or friends did not visit due to the cost of a transcontinental flight. Additionally, many participants indicated that many of their peers exhibited an entitlement mentality. This was best described by two students who shared what I called the door phenomenon. Sonia shared:

You'll hold the door open and everyone will just rush in and you're stuck holding the door because you're like 'no, no, you go ahead, you go, I'll wait, I'll hold it' . . . and sooner or later you noticed you've been standing there for like 25 seconds and are going to be late for class because you're stuck there holding open the door and nobody is going to hold open the door for you.

Jocelyn also gave a similar example sharing the moment she realized that if she did not stop holding the door open for others, everyone would continue rushing in without giving her a second thought. Although she never stopped holding the door for others, each time she did, she was conscious of how long others rushed in leaving her a human doorstep. Although this experience may be a marker of social class, it is important to note that rules of politeness may also be culturally imprinted and influenced by collectivist or individualist values.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Subtle differences in class were also hinted at when students talked about their initial move to campus. Jocelyn shared that the first time she ever flew by herself was to move in to college. Her family was unable to accompany her to help her get settled because of the high cost of airfare to the east coast. Other students agreed that the cost of airfare and the time away from work that a transcontinental flight would require was too much for their families to incur; therefore they arrived at college alone, whereas many of their peers arrived with their families. A few students also mentioned that in comparison to their peers, their dorm rooms were bare as they could not bring more than a few suitcases with them. While these factors may be interpreted as differences in class, it is important to note that they could also be attributed to the geographic proximity of their peers. If their peers lived closer to campus, it would have been easier for their friends and family to help them move in and also for them to bring more items from home to fill their dorm rooms.

Arriving at college alone caused additional challenges for students who grew up in a collectivist society. Making a huge life transition without the physical support of family and friends was a noteworthy contrast with the nature of growing up in Hawai‘i. The majority of participants mentioned that they were jealous of their peers who had the physical support of family and friends while moving in to college.

Geographical and cultural misunderstandings: Oh my God, you’re from Hawai‘i?!

All of the study participants talked about the novelty of being from Hawai‘i and how stereotypes of life in Hawai‘i affected their interactions getting to know and relating to their peers. Although the participants had varying positive and negative associations with the novelty of being from Hawai‘i, they all pointed to this factor as one of the bumps in their adjustment process caused by

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

dissonance. Amanda shared how she initially associated positive feelings with her uniqueness; however over time began to disassociate with being from Hawai‘i when she met new people:

First semester I’d always tell people I was from Hawai‘i, because I was proud of that . . . then I started feeling uncomfortable telling people where I’m from because you kind of get this reaction like, ‘oh my god, you’re from Hawai‘i, that’s really cool!’ . . . it started to annoy me . . . especially people who wouldn’t know what it was or would think it was another country, or would ask me questions that seemed stupid or would make a corny joke . . . it kind of peeved me to have to say where I was from so I started hoping people wouldn’t ask . . . I would rather start a conversation with someone first and then do names and places later because I found I didn’t have to go through the ‘oh, you’re from Hawai‘i, that’s so exciting’ conversation *again*.

Jackson had a similar experience, initially being open and willing to share about his life in Hawai‘i, but as time went on, he encountered more people who cast stereotypes upon him.

They knew nothing about the islands, but would make assumptions like, ‘oh you go to the beach all the time,’ or ‘oh you must surf every single day.’ So you have to explain a lot . . . that’s one difference people in the mainland don’t have to deal with. It can get old very quickly . . . in the end, I didn’t mention it as much.

Jasmine experienced the consequences of Hawai‘i stereotypes as she shared her frustrations:

I’ve tried to explain the culture of Hawai‘i to people. Sometimes I think that they got it, but I found myself having to explain a lot of things and it got old. The longer I was there I felt alienated and it made it harder because I started a very bad cycle of living, I was sort of nocturnal and people would joke all the time, ‘oh, it’s like you’re on Hawaiian time’ and I was like, ‘shut up!’ it was just so stupid.

Although most of the students were initially excited to share their culture, the perceived ignorance and stereotypes about life in Hawai‘i that they encountered eventually wore on their patience and willingness to start a conversation. The discord they experienced when others in the majority group made jokes or stereotypical references about their home cultures eventually became a constant source of angst. However, not all students had negative associations with having to explain their upbringing to others. Kevin had a positive association with being from

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Hawai‘i, “I’d tell people I was from Hawai‘i . . . you can get a lot of people’s attention and use that to make friends.”

Coping mechanisms. Each of the participants identified strategies that helped them mitigate cultural dissonance. For some students that meant becoming more selective about the people they called friends. Linda, a first generation college student, arrived at college eager to share her culture with others; however that eagerness drastically diminished the longer she was at her institution. During her freshman year she tried to meet a lot of people, but as the years went by, she found herself drawn more to other minority students:

I started disassociating myself with more and more people . . . now I just have a really close knit group that I really consider friends . . . People who were first generation (college students) . . . or ethnic minorities . . . they also had a hard time adjusting so I ended up hanging around with them as I felt like I could relate to them more, we had a lot more in common. The minorities sort of band together, even though you may not be the same type of minority, you’re all minorities so you have things in common.

As she met more people on campus, Linda realized that the difference between her precollege and college environments was so great that it was challenging finding a common ground with her peers. However, she noticed that as she met students who shared some of her minority characteristics, she began to feel more at ease. Although she did not initially set out to befriend other minority students, commonalities stemming from their minority status established a common bond for lasting friendships. Amanda had a similar experience stating, “I don’t think they do it on purpose, they’re (white students) just not as open as we (people from Hawai‘i) are . . . Most of my friends are minorities, like Indian, Hispanic. I feel that I have more in common with them, they’re not afraid to try new things . . . maybe by nature they need to be more open, you know.” Other participants echoed this notion as they conceded that they had an easier time befriending other minority students.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

For some participants mitigating cultural dissonance was a matter of keeping busy and immersing themselves in activities which allowed them to engage with others who shared common interests. Jackson, Kevin, and Jocelyn shared that their engagement with campus activities (sports, Greek life, and band) positively facilitated their adjustment to college by introducing them to others who had similar passions. Additionally, Sonia and Caroline mentioned that their Hawai'i Club involvement helped them cope with adjustment challenges. The majority of the students also cited senior Hawai'i students as playing the role of cultural agents who helped them cope with the challenges of cultural dissonance by sharing their expertise and experiences.

Entering the Unknown

The transition into college requires a significant amount of adjustment as students learn to navigate new academic, cultural, and social environments. All students expressed some level of fear and anxiety related to starting their college experience. For the majority of the students, moving to college was the first time they set foot on their college campus. Due to resource constraints the majority of participants were unable to visit their campus prior to committing their attendance. Therefore, to prepare for the move they relied on the internet and printed materials to research criteria like institutional diversity and campus culture. Although students prepared in different ways, when it was time to make the move, each shared that the prospect of starting a new chapter in their life understandably filled them with varying levels of excitement, fear, and anxiety.

For minority students whose home communities mainly consist of people from diverse racial and ethnic minority backgrounds, the adjustment to college can be an especially stressful experience. For minority students entering predominantly White institutions, this stress may be

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

intensified by perceived differences between themselves and their White peers. Additionally, for participants in this study, the shift to minority Asian status from the majority Local Asian community in Hawai‘i, may have further contributed to their sense of displacement.

All students interviewed described their home communities as diverse neighborhoods composed of different ethnic groups, including Caucasians, but predominantly Asian American and Pacific Islanders. Sonia described her pre-college community:

Pretty much all ethnicities that I can think of except for African American, were fairly well represented. Growing up in Hawai‘i, there was a huge Asian population, Caucasians were less common, but not underrepresented, but definitely most in my community were Asian.

All participants described their primary and secondary educational settings as sites rich with diversity, filled mostly with Asian American students. Amanda recalled her childhood schools ethnic makeup as, “mostly Asian, some White kids, some were part Hawaiian, but most of my friends were either Asian or mixed.” Caroline had a similar experience recalling, “A lot of Filipinos, mostly Chinese and Japanese students, lots of mixed backgrounds.” Jackson’s experience was also comparable as he shared that his schools were filled with, “mostly Chinese, Filipino, some White people, but mostly Asians.”

All students’ precollege communities were in stark contrast to their college environments which caused varying levels of discord. Consequently, for many participants, the first few weeks of college at a predominantly White campus and the time leading up to them, caused feelings of confusion, fear, and anxiety due to not knowing what life would entail in this new environment. This theme is illustrated by Sonia’s comment comparing the differences between her home and college environments:

Before arriving, I definitely was anxious. I thought things would be a little bit easier and I thought I would acclimate better than I actually did in my first year and a half here. My

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

school was not what I thought it was going to be on certain levels. The culture on the east coast can be a little unwelcoming if you grew up your whole life in Hawai'i with people that know you, generally want to help you, and have your best intentions at heart.

Jasmine further illustrates this theme, as she shared the feelings she was going through as she made the transition:

It sort of felt like you died and were reborn again, because you're in a place you've never been for your whole life. You've never been with these people, culturally it's so different, it's just a separate different world and once you step into this one (college), it's like your whole past life for the past 18 years became a memory because everything is new. There's not one thing you can imprint on, not one thing that really feels familiar other than the stuff you brought and so it was hard because you get really sad . . . I couldn't even see how I was going to go forward because I just didn't have anything to attach to. I couldn't even think of a plan because everything felt so alien to me.

Before arriving on campus, Jackson, Amanda, and Jasmine mentioned that in addition to college literature, they developed their expectations of college life based on movies or television. These images and scenarios added to the anxiety these students experienced prior to arriving on campus by portraying exaggerated versions of college life. However, all mentioned that they quickly learned that college life was not as dramatic as the movies made it out to be.

Many of the participants chose their college without having the opportunity to visit the campus and therefore held preconceived notions of their culture of immersion. Most commonly, participants were warned by family and friends about the cold east coast mentality and the hurried pace of life. Addison shared his surprise when he realized that, "a lot of people were telling me how different it would be, but it hasn't been any different, people are just people. I mean treat 'em nice and they're just people . . . you always hear stories about how the east coast is so different . . . but it's not as rough, not the typical east coast rude you hear about." Jackson had a similar revelation, "the people are actually really nice . . . I heard that people wouldn't be as nice, but I haven't found that to be true. There's just a lot of White people, which is different,

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

but everyone is nice . . . maybe because we were all freshman and didn't know what was going on . . .”

Although each student engaged with their campus in different ways, some of the participants highlighted certain institutional efforts that helped facilitate their adjustment process on campus. Living in residence halls, summer programs, and participation in extracurricular activities were all vehicles that helped participants adjust to their new environment.

Thoughtful placement of students into living arrangements helped foster a sense of community in residence halls. These types of communities can provide support for students as they transition into college by consciously coupling students with similar interests. Jasmine's experience supported this notion as she explained:

I didn't think college would be so lonely . . . if you don't meet the right people, you can feel very alone. Thankfully I had a good amount of friends, they all lived on my side of the (residence) hall and we just all became friends, so I actually had a good support group even though at the time I was still missing people from home.

Amanda had a similar experience:

Pretty much all of my friends somehow or another were grouped up in the fact that we all lived in the sixth floor of my dorm. We just kind of grouped up, I guess it's because we had things in common, there weren't too many of us, and then we met a few people who joined our group.

Jackson lived in a residence hall that was specifically for freshman who had similar interests. He credits this experience as facilitating his adjustment:

Living in a freshman dorm allows you to make friends with the people living next to you. Freshmen don't have a connection with other people yet, they're kind of the same as you, and college is so new for them so they don't have a set friend base yet. Everyone is looking for friends and you can make friends with the people living next to you. Plus we all took the same intro class together so like half our dorm was all in the same class together and then just hung out and stuff.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

In addition to living arrangements, some students credited summer bridge programs with helping to ease their adjustment into their new environment. Jasmine, Jocelyn, and Kevin all participated in programs which required them to move to campus before the semester began. Kevin and Jocelyn's experiences illustrate the lasting effect that a well-planned and engaging summer program can have on the successful adjustment of minority college students. Kevin was part of a summer program for minority and first-generation college students:

I had a very easy transition into the actual first semester because I already knew this group of people who were all in the same position as I was . . . the program was to help you transition into college, they didn't highlight the fact that it was for minority or first generation students, it was more like an introduction to my school . . . so my transition wasn't too bad because of that summer program which was really helpful . . . you go into the semester with a group of friends who you already know versus trying to make friends during orientation . . . I don't know what I would have done without that summer program.

Kevin shared that the program also maintained contact with its participants throughout the first year to make sure that they were transitioning into college successfully. He credits this program as one of the reasons for his smooth adjustment.

Jocelyn also arrived at college early as part of marching band camp. She credits the thoughtfully designed band program as laying out a solid foundation for her college transition:

The system was set up well, we all had band buddies who was there to help ease the transition, just having that person, knowing there was someone I could go to if I needed help, someone who was there to answer my questions . . . was really helpful. They had a little bit of background information on us, so my two buddies knew I was from Hawai'i and they could talk to me about that (even though they weren't from Hawai'i.) Something as simple as that, someone understanding your situation and knowing that I could talk to them if I needed to was definitely helpful . . . even though we weren't from the same place physically, mentally we had this connection and that allowed me to become more comfortable more quickly.

Jasmine arrived at college early as part of a fellowship program; however despite the camaraderie that the program fostered in the weeks prior to the semester, once the semester

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

began, the fellowship program's face-to-face component ended. Unlike Kevin and Jocelyn's programs, which sustained engagement beyond the summer, Jasmine's program left her wanting more and did little to facilitate her adjustment into college. The examples of these three students are indicative of the potential that well-planned summer programs may have on student adjustment when programming is extended beyond the summer and into the academic year.

For some participants collective cultural agents in the form of ethnic student organizations, both formal and not, fostered the sense of community they yearned for as they navigated the space between their home and college communities. Many students participated in their campuses' Hawai'i Club and felt that it helped them acclimate to their campus community by learning from and helping other students who were going through the same challenges. Sonia explained how the Hawai'i Club helped her adjust to college:

Everyone's there to show you the ropes and I always feel the best when I'm with Hawai'i Club. I mean I love my friends . . . they're incredible, but there's something about being with people from home, you don't have to say anything and they just get it because they know, they know you . . . that is always so special and that kinship that you get to share with those people that are all the way up here by themselves and missing home equally as much as you are . . . it's really special and something I cherish . . . it's been a huge part of my college experience and it helped me to acclimate in a way that I wouldn't have been able to without it here.

In addition to formal Hawai'i Clubs, some students relied on communities made up of their Hawai'i peers to get them through challenging situations. Caroline shared, "I usually turn to them (Hawai'i peers) if I'm feeling really homesick or need someone to relate to and understand me when I'm freaking out . . . people here just don't understand what I'm getting at and a lot of the times they're like why did you leave in the first place?"

Jocelyn's campus did not allow students to start a Hawai'i Club because, "it was locational . . . they said they'd need to have a California Club, a Washington Club, you get the

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

point . . . we tried to explain that it was different, but they didn't understand . . . so we just kind of do our own thing.” Her campus administrators lack of understanding caused Jocelyn and her fellow Hawai'i students to experience feelings of marginalization and frustration. Additionally, the lack of support and cultural awareness reinforced her feelings of being misunderstood and in some instances a second-class citizen on campus. Although administration may not have perceived a need for a Hawai'i Club, Jocelyn explained that an existing Asian club on campus welcomed Hawai'i students and allowed them to have, “a mini Hawai'i Club within their organization.” This was a much welcomed space as it gave students from Hawai'i a place to gather and a platform to share their culture with others.

During the interviews, I also asked participants whether there were any individual cultural agents on campus who helped them bridge the gap between their cultures. Two students identified individuals who provided support throughout their time in college. When she felt homesick Linda knew that she could turn to the Hawai'i recruiter for support:

She was from New York, but she understood (me), she visited Hawai'i enough to understand the culture so she tried to make sure that people were adjusting well . . . she was always there to talk, every once in a while she would invite us over if we didn't have anywhere to go for Thanksgiving, or other holidays. When she went to Hawai'i to recruit, she'd always bring back a local snack or something . . . she just tried to be there for us. She got it.

Jasmine also had an advisor that she could turn to for support, “I always felt like I could talk to him about classes and everything, good and bad . . . He never judged me for wanting to leave (my school), he was so supportive of everything, he was just always there.” Although neither of these agents were from Hawai'i they were credited with understanding the students challenges and simply listening, which ultimately helped facilitate student adjustment.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Challenges to Identity

The third theme emerging from the interview data highlights the challenges to identity that students experienced as they left their culture of origin, and entered their culture of immersion. The sub-themes in this category reveal the uniqueness of the experiences that students from Hawai‘i encountered and consists of three components: a) Identity Crisis: What?! I’m a minority? b) Societal groupings: I’m not like the *other* Asians and c) Identity conflict: Even though I’m half white, I don’t consider myself Caucasian.

Identity crisis: What?! I’m a minority? Growing up in a majority-minority population shaped the way that each of the participants viewed themselves. The students discussed how Hawai‘i’s diverse ethnic makeup allowed them to belong to the majority group in Hawai‘i’s larger social context despite their traditionally minority status. Every one of the participants mentioned that they did not consider themselves a minority while living in Hawai‘i, and most of them never categorized themselves as Asian American; rather, they associated with being Local or Asian. The phenomenon of proclaiming a Local identity rather than a nationally recognized racial category is not uncommon in Hawai‘i as previously discussed in Chapter Two. Most of the students could not pinpoint an exact moment in which they realized that they were minorities, but noted that they could definitely feel the difference not long after arriving on their campus. For many of the participants, their newfound Asian American identity caused discomfort and feelings of unsettledness as the way they viewed themselves for the past eighteen years was suddenly challenged. Jackson explained:

I never identified myself as being Asian American, but everyone sees you like that here and so it changes the way you see yourself . . . that’s the way I look, but being told I’m Asian American was something different. I’m Local . . . If people are curious and ask what I am, I’ll say I’m from Hawai‘i and these are my ethnicities, but they just look at me and say, ‘oh you’re Asian American.’

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Sonia explained how being from Hawai‘i affected her adjustment experience more than being Asian American did:

In Hawai‘i because you’re a majority, growing up (being Asian American) was a non-issue . . . Hawaiian Asians are raised in such a multi-ethnic community that makes us Local . . . we’re different because we grew up in a place that isn’t strictly Asian . . . I think if I grew up on the east coast I’d be blatantly aware that I was Asian, but in Hawai‘i because you’re a majority, it’s really a non-issue and that affects you . . . I feel like how we interact is different than traditional Asian people . . .

Caroline shared her experience:

I always knew I was technically a minority, but I wasn’t truly aware of it until I came to college. Then I was like, ‘wow, I’m really Asian!’ Back home there are so many Filipinos who were like me, but up here . . . I really feel Asian and I feel like I stand out.

Sonia explained, “I never really recognized that I was Asian until I came to college. I never identified with being Asian American, I never thought twice about it because everyone at home is some type of Asian.” Linda had a similar experience and tried to explain why being an Asian American from Hawai‘i is so different than being an Asian American who grew up in the mainland United States:

Asians from the mainland experience a lot more interaction with white people . . . and they are usually a minority, so they’re more used to it . . . as opposed to someone coming from Hawai‘i where you’d come from being a majority to being a minority, so it’s much more difficult to adjust.

Students adjusted to their new minority status in different ways. Some students like Jasmine went out of their way to show others that they were American:

You have to prove the American part more . . . I have to prove that I’m not an international student. Features wise it may not be completely obvious, if you don’t know me, you don’t know what I am. In Hawai‘i I’m Asian and it’s super normal and I don’t even think about the American part . . . in the continental U.S. I feel like I want to say, ‘hey guys, I’m westernized, I’m just like you guys’ it just pops up in my head more and I do have to unconsciously prove it a bit more. I don’t want them to think I’m foreign, I just don’t want them to think that . . . you consciously start looking at how people look at you and what they see.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

While participants may not have fully anticipated the effects that moving from a majority to minority group may have entailed, it was evident that they quickly recognized their reduced status in relation to their majority group counterparts. For some of the interviewees their new minority identity caused discomfort as it challenged the ideas about stereotypes and racial humor that is common in Hawai'i. Kevin explained how this shift in identity has affected his views on humor:

I need to be more thoughtful about what I say . . . people at home do joke around more about racial things . . . it's all fun and games, but in the bigger scheme of things, it does make you feel like more of a minority here. You need to be careful . . . the first time I realized it, I was like, 'what?! I'm a minority?'

Mika shared that her minority status caused her to feel marginalized, a feeling she never experienced growing up in Hawai'i. She shared how her interactions with her faculty advisor complicated her adjustment to college:

My advisor didn't understand how to pronounce my name because the way it is spelled, it is spelled in a Japanese way, so we fought a lot about how my name was said. And I was told . . . I was saying (my name) wrong so we fought for the first year and she spoke really slowly to me because she didn't think that I would understand . . . then I said I was from Hawai'i and she took it as we don't understand English very well. So it took me a full year to convince her that I am an American citizen . . . but to this day she still won't say my name the way it's supposed to be said, so I just kind of brush it off. She doesn't understand why my name is said another way when it's spelled like how you spell it in Japanese.

Societal groupings: I'm not like the other Asians. When researching college choices, many of the students looked at the published diversity statistics; however few actually considered them in terms of making their decision to attend their institution. Many students shared that they did not truly understand the implications of the diversity numbers until they arrived on campus. Jocelyn shared:

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

I knew the breakdown was going to be different, I knew that it was a predominantly White school, but it never really registered with me until I was walking around campus . . . they were predominantly Caucasian . . . sometimes when I walk around whenever I see someone who's Asian, in my head I'm like, 'Oh! It's someone else who's Asian!' . . . but even then we're different."

Amanda explained her expectations in regards to campus diversity:

"I remember looking at the diversity graph and thinking 'oh, there's a significant amount of Asians here,' . . . but when I got here I realized a whole lot of Asians were different from me . . . and were actually from China, Japan . . . so while they were Asian, they were different."

Addison shared his experience stating, "I'm definitely conscious of being Asian and a minority here . . . for me it's trying not to be a stereotypical Asian." This comment was interesting to me as it implied that Addison knew about Asian stereotypes and used them to determine how he should present himself. Furthermore, it exemplifies the lengths some students from Hawai'i will go to in order to put distance between themselves and other Asian American or Asian students.

The participants also elaborated on the challenges they had interacting with peers who assumed they were either international students or Asian American students from the continental United States. Caroline mentioned, "I didn't know how much diversity would affect me . . . I don't get what some people talk about and the stuff they do, it's just harder to make friends . . . I'm probably like 10% of the schools multicultural population so that's hard . . . some people just don't understand me." Sonia shared:

Diversity was kind of something I thought about . . . our campus is pretty diverse, but when I got here, I felt like a minority in being an Asian from Hawai'i . . . my upbringing, values, and disposition towards people culturally and personally is very different, so I feel more of a minority in my interactions to people and how I do things . . . being from Hawai'i we're Asian, but we're also not . . . we're like special Asian . . . people at home don't identify as being Asian American . . . people identify as being Local or being from Hawai'i before ever saying 'I'm Asian American' whereas most people here or from the

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

continental U.S. immediately identify as ‘I’m an Asian American’ because that’s a class in its own and that’s just how they identify themselves.

Amanda explained:

A lot of people assume that I’m from Asia and think that my culture is the same as people from China, Japan, but it’s not. I feel like there is a Hawai‘i Asian culture that’s entirely different. It’s like we take in some of the traditional culture of all ethnicities, but that’s hard to explain to people. They just assume I’m from Asia a lot of times until I start talking and explaining where I’m from.

Jackson’s experience was similar as he reflected on the ways he interacts with people the first time he meets them:

Being an Asian American in Hawai‘i, no one gives you a second look, no one will judge you, you just look Local. But on the mainland, people immediately decide whether or not you’re American or an immigrant and they determine that before they talk to you. Usually I’ll start speaking (in English) so people know I’m American, but you can tell people are always judging you or trying to determine what type of Asian you are from the first time you meet them.

For many students, the experience of transitioning into a community that was much less diverse than their home community was a learning experience. In addition to trying to understand the cultural nuances of their new minority status, they also had to negotiate the intricacies of the campuses Asian population. As Sonia mentioned, all students felt that being an Asian American from Hawai‘i was different than being an Asian American who was raised on the mainland and it was this difference, rooted in their culture of origin, that made adjustment challenging at a PWI.

Furthermore, many students mentioned the presence of three distinct Asian groups on their campuses—Hawai‘i Asian Americans, mainland Asian Americans, and international Asians.

Jasmine explained her interactions on campus:

I’m more likely to approach an Asian person because I feel like there’s something there, I feel like a lot of Asians, Hawai‘i Asians, U.S. Asians feel more comfortable approaching other Asian people. Hawai‘i Asians, we click with each other, we’re westernized, but not

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

white washed. Mainland Asians are sort of like white people in an Asian suit . . . they're just mainlanders at that point.

Mika shared some of the challenges of being perceived as Asian on her campus:

I didn't have too many friends . . . it's hard because there's this racial barrier that I have to break. The Asians at this school are more or less all international so the Asian American population is very small and I'm not like them either. So I have to break the barrier of whether I speak English and that I'm not like the mainland Asians . . . and then slowly I've been making friends.

Adrienne tried to explain the difference between the various types of Asian groups on her campus:

Between the three groups there are similarities . . . we're all very reserved and carry the Asian discipline that Asian families instill . . . but the U.S. Asians tend to be a little more shy and not very open to others, whereas the Hawai'i Asian Americans are very open to meeting new people. Then the international students, they just tend to keep to themselves.

Jackson mentioned:

I didn't expect there to be so many white people, I guess I kind of expected it, but I didn't know what it would be like until I got here . . . I definitely recognize the international students and the non-Local Asians (from the mainland). The mainland Asians are kind of the same as white people, they act very similar and seem to have the same values, the international ones, they kind of just keep to themselves, sometimes they'll talk to you, but most of the time they just keep to themselves. Locals from Hawai'i . . . they know the culture, the slang, they're different from the mainland Asians . . . we're a lot more interesting, a lot more cultured. Mainland Asians just seem very similar to each other.

Identity conflict: Even though I'm half white, I don't consider myself Caucasian.

Four of the students that I interviewed were part Caucasian; however despite their mixed race background, they all identified as being Asian rather than White. All of these participants mentioned that being of mixed race was both a blessing and curse in their new environment.

Many mentioned that they were physically able to blend in; however internally they felt discord as they viewed themselves as minorities. Often they felt uncomfortable when others in their peer

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

groups made comments like, “at least you don’t look Asian,” or “but you’re White right?”

Jocelyn explained the complexities of her mixed race background:

My entire life I’ve lived in Hawai‘i and even though I’m half white, I don’t consider myself Caucasian even though if people look at me . . . especially up here they assume I’m Caucasian . . . because I grew up in a much more diverse community it was very different . . . I started realizing that inside and outside didn’t always match. I knew coming to my school would be different, but a small part of me thought it won’t be too rough of a transition because a lot of them will assume I’m white . . . it sounds sort of silly, but it was something that I thought about, like I won’t stick out as much even though I know I’m different, other people might not. It does sound silly, but it does matter.

Amanda, Linda, and Sonia had similar experiences, sharing that growing up in Hawai‘i they associated with their Asian heritage, despite being part White. Linda shared her feelings of marginalization when others learned she was half Asian and then tried to make her feel better about it:

It was very different from what I knew, a little uncomfortable . . . people don’t get it though, they tell me I can fit in since I’m half white, but I’ll always have an outside perspective, I’ll always be a minority . . . I still participate in my same activities, cultural norms that I did back home as a minority, so even though I came up here and I look like others, I’m still a minority . . . I try to explain, it’s not just about how you look, it’s more about the personality and values of the person, it’s not just on the outside.

Amanda’s experience was similar:

I never had to think of my ethnicity at home, it just didn’t matter . . . I thought it’d be the same way (here), but I never realized that some people would see me as Asian because of some of my features, like I have small eyes . . . I feel that kind of popped out . . . other’s see me as more white until I try to explain my Japanese culture then I really feel different.

Geographic Isolation

Another theme that emerged from the interviews was Hawai‘i’s geographic isolation and how it contributed to students’ adjustment experiences. Although Hawai‘i’s proximity to the rest of the United States is not directly related to students’ Asian American backgrounds, it heavily influenced the adjustment experience of Hawai‘i residents as they entered new environments. In

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

fact, most of the students indicated that due to the distance between Hawai'i and their institution, they experienced a harder time adjusting than their peers. Within this theme, two sub-themes emerged, a) Cultural isolation: We don't have that luxury and b) Acclimating: It was a very bad winter.

Cultural isolation: We don't have that luxury. Although overall Jackson, Addison, and Jocelyn felt that they experienced a positive adjustment into college, Jackson admits, "it definitely wasn't easy . . . people from up here definitely had an easier time adjusting because they could just go home on the weekends . . . it's definitely harder for someone not from the states to try to adjust . . . it's not like I struggled heavily, but it wasn't as easy for me compared to my classmates." Addison shared his sentiments adding, "just being so far away from home . . . it's obviously different from people who just live a few hours drive away . . . overall I was fine, but it was definitely a different experience compared to my friends who live nearby." Jocelyn discussed the challenges she experienced flying by herself for the first time and realizing that she couldn't pick up the phone anytime she was feeling homesick:

We don't have that luxury (of going home regularly), you're a ten hour flight away and there's a five or six hour time difference on the phone . . . being so far away from home makes experiencing a culture that is so different a little bit more intense . . . if I'm homesick I can't go home over the weekend and spend time with my family . . . sometimes I can't even call them.

Many students felt that the convenience of being able to drive home for long breaks and being from a familiar type of setting enabled their peers to have an easier time adjusting to college. As Jasmine explained:

I always felt jealous of people who lived so close by because they didn't even have to think about how difficult it is to be so far away and what that entails . . . I've always been harder on people who live close by because I felt like they shouldn't be as homesick because they're not as far away . . . their parents helped them get everything setup and they could bring stuff with them from home . . . I got here and my mom had to leave to

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

go back to work . . . I had to slowly get my things (from home) in packages . . . it didn't seem like a humongous step for the majority of people . . . I felt like it was a big deal for me . . . it's not even on the same level, the difference between my adjustment and their adjustment.

Acclimating: It was a very bad winter. In addition to the distance from Hawai'i, the climate of the Northeast played a large role in the students' experiences. Sonia explained, "the cold is really hard on you especially when it's dark all the time . . . when it starts to get cold people walk really fast . . . you just don't want to be interacting outdoors and it makes people kind of shut themselves off and their demeanor may mimic the weather." Jasmine mentioned how the weather affected her emotionally, "It was a very bad winter . . . I think I was seasonally depressed part of it . . . I didn't want to be with people, it was something totally new . . . it was a very bad winter."

Many students attributed the cold weather to the different social activities that their peers favored in comparison to what they were used to at home, which affected their adjustment on a social level. They explained that in Hawai'i because of the year round temperate weather, they participated in a lot of outdoors activities; however due to the cold in the Northeast, their peers favored the indoor party scene. Additionally, in the cold weather, many participants felt that people were less open and willing to get to know them because they were always rushing from one building to another whereas in Hawai'i because of the pleasant climate, people are more willing to stop and have spontaneous conversations.

Some students mentioned that adjusting to the climate was a challenge and indicated that they felt more comfortable and had more in common with other students from warmer states.

Caroline shared:

I have friends from Washington and California . . . they're much more easier to relate to and get along with than people who grew up around here . . . my friends (from

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Washington and California) understand why I'm so cold whereas everyone else is like, 'yeah, this is nothing, I don't know why you guys are so cold.

Persistence: I'm a little stubborn, I chose to be here

The participants in this study experienced adjustment at varying levels; however one thing they had in common was their desire to persist. Even participants who self-identified as not having adjusted were planning to graduate despite their negative experiences and feelings of being an outsider on their campus. For many of these students, finances were the driving factor behind their decision to persist. Linda, Caroline, Jocelyn, Sonia, and Kevin received scholarships and financial aid that covered a large portion, if not all of their tuition. A common theme among these students was the fact that it would "be stupid" to turn their backs on the type of funding they received and have to pay out of pocket and graduate with huge amounts of student loans. Out of these students, some of them had thoughts of withdrawing, but cited finances and not wanting to let their family down as reasons for persistence. Sonia mentioned, "I'm a little stubborn, I chose to be here, I wanted to be here . . . my parents are working really hard to send me here so I can't withdraw . . . but there are definitely moments when I missed home or wasn't really happy with certain aspects of college."

When asked what was keeping her at her institution despite her claims of not fitting in, Caroline responded, "Money, they gave me a lot of scholarships, I'd be stupid to leave. Plus I don't want to let my family down." Linda had a similar reason for persisting, "I'm here on scholarship so I have a full ride . . . so even if I wanted to withdraw that wouldn't be a good idea. I'm going to graduate without loans, so I guess I can stick it out for four years."

In addition to financial reasons, many of the students cited a collectivist notion of not wanting to disappoint their family. Students mentioned that they had a responsibility to their

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

family since they were helping them fund college and going to the east coast was “a huge rite of passage.” Jasmine cited not wanting to let her family and friends down as a reason for persisting, despite how miserable and alone she felt at times:

In my mind it's hard to not feel like a disappointment if you come back (home). It's sort of like a rite of passage when you're able to leave Hawai'i . . . it's a big moment of showing you've grown up and then you realize it's so much harder, not just because things are different, because you're by yourself and you realize there is no place in the world like it (Hawai'i). Everything I loved about living in Hawai'i makes it harder for me to be anywhere else . . . but I know that I have to experience other places for my personal growth . . . plus I can't let my family down.

Overall, a handful of the students considered withdrawing from their institutions, but at the time of this study, none of them had plans to withdraw. When asked about their overall satisfaction with their college experience, only one student was “very satisfied.” Throughout the interviews I asked the students what was keeping them at their institutions and overwhelmingly, their responses tied back to making their family proud and their generous financial aid packages.

The students' desires to make their families proud and help carry the financial burden of their education ties back to collectivist Asian and island values. Hawai'i lies midway between Asian and North America and its culture reflects these influences. Asian values heavily impacted the Local culture of origin emphasizing collectivist characteristics. Therefore, although students took responsibility for their choices, they felt a responsibility towards their families as well. This responsibility may also be traced back to Asian values which emphasize loyalty and honor and look down upon bringing shame and embarrassment to the family. In Asian families although there is support for the individual, there is a greater importance placed on the well-being of the group, sometimes at the expense of the individual. In these instances, it may appear that students felt the need to bring pride to their families through graduation from their institutions, so were willing to make sacrifices to accomplish those goals.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Summary

Through the use of qualitative research, the individual experience of each participant was highlighted. The student voices in these findings demonstrate the unique college adjustment experiences of Asian American Hawai'i residents. Participants alluded to adjustment challenges that emerged in five areas: Cultural Dissonance, Entering the Unknown, Challenges to Identity, Geographic Isolation, and Persistence. Although all participants experienced varying levels of challenges associated with college adjustment, they were able to mitigate these challenges through their participation in campus programs, relationships with individual and collective cultural agents, and from the support of individuals and communities in their cultures of origin. These groups served as vehicles that helped students find a sense of belonging and membership on their campuses, contributing to their adjustment and persistence at their PWI.

The participants in this study also mentioned a growing understanding of what it meant to be a minority in the continental United States. Although the majority of them knew that they were minorities based upon their ethnicity prior to college, most of them indicated that it never affected them due to the majority-minority state of their culture of origin. Many students mentioned that attending a PWI gave them a greater appreciation for their culture of origin and home state as they reflected that it was this culture that had the greatest effect on their identity, values, and beliefs. Attending a PWI also gave them a growing understanding and appreciation for their culture of immersion as well as the characteristics that differed from their culture of origin. Despite challenges adjusting, many participants mentioned that attending a PWI added to their cultural capital by exposing them to other cultures and people, and that overall this was a valuable life experience.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

It is my hope that presenting these student experiences as they relate to adjustment provides a glimpse into their worlds and the challenges associated with moving from majority to minority status. Although all participants encountered varying levels of support and experienced different levels of satisfaction on their campus, many of them encountered similar challenges stemming from their differences between their culture or origin and immersion. This chapter reinforces current scholarship highlighting the importance of studying Asian American students and supporting the notion that Asian American experiences need to be disaggregated.

CHAPTER 5. IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Understanding the challenges students face while navigating divergent cultures of origin and immersion is an important element of the greater student affairs literature. The findings of this study have several important implications for future theory, practice, and research. By tying student experiences back to the theoretical framework, how students' cultures of origin and immersion influenced their adjustment will be addressed.

The outcomes of this study also have implications for institutional practice. This chapter will discuss considerations for institutions, administration, and student affairs professionals who want to better the minority student college experience, including Asian American Hawai'i residents. Finally, to address the implications for future research, this chapter identifies gaps in the existing literature that need to be filled to build upon what is already known about the adjustment experience of students of color.

Through an analysis of the data I found that cultural incongruence greatly impacts the adjustment process of Asian American Hawai'i residents attending PWIs in the Northeast; however there are steps institutions can take to mitigate the dissonance experienced. Furthermore, this study found that a Hawai'i culture of origin heavily influences students' meaning making system, leaving a lasting impression on them as they enter cultures of immersion. Regardless of students' ethnic backgrounds, they all mentioned that the unique multicultural influences of growing up in Hawai'i permeated all aspects of their college adjustment.

These experiences rooted in students' cultures of origin were broken down into five themes: Cultural Dissonance, Entering the Unknown, Challenges to Identity, Geographic Isolation, and Persistence. The unique island culture stemming from Hawai'i's plantation history

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

in conjunction with Native Hawaiian influences contributed to cultural dissonance, uncertainty associated with entering the unknown, challenges to student identity, and influenced students' feelings about persistence. Additionally, Hawai'i's geographic isolation from the rest of the continental United States contributed to adjustment challenges due to its climate, time zone, and distance from the continent.

Schein (1996) stated that culture is "one of the most powerful and stable forces operating in organizations" (p. 231). When considering the context of higher education, culture affects almost everything that occurs on college campuses (Kuh, 2001/2002). This framework provided a lens to analyze the ways Asian American Hawai'i residents' cultures of origin affected their adjustment experience at PWIs in the Northeast. Furthermore, it reinforced the importance of understanding culture and its role in the process of minority student persistence and adjustment. Although researchers have begun to offer alternative explanations of ethnic minority student persistence at PWIs, the body of literature is scarce and pales in comparison to that of their majority counterparts (Kuh & Love, 2000; Rendon, Jalomo, & Nora, 2000; Tierney, 1999).

As mentioned in Chapter Two, researchers have discussed the expected growth of AAPI students (e.g. Kim, 2011; Prescott & Bransberger, 2012; Malaney & Shively, 1995), their challenges adjusting to predominantly White settings (e.g. Museus & Quaye, 2004; Rendon et al., 2000), and the effect this adjustment has on their overall wellbeing (Museus, 2008/2009; Suyemoto et al., 2009; Yoo et al., 2010; Kam, 2013).

Some participants in this study shared these sentiments as they discussed feelings of alienation, depression, and isolation while transitioning from their precollege culture into that of their campus. Researchers have theoretically and empirically linked persistence to students' abilities to connect with a peer group and develop positive relationships on campus (Astin, 1993;

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). However, in contrast to the literature on student persistence, students in this study who experienced adjustment challenges were still persisting at the same rates as the students who experienced a positive adjustment into their campus community. In this study, a direct link between persistence and students' abilities to integrate into their campus culture was not established.

Throughout this study, a consistent finding was that the majority of participants felt that being from Hawai'i had a greater effect on their adjustment process than did being Asian American. There is a paucity of scholarly literature examining how growing up in Hawai'i affects postsecondary students college experience and sense of identity although the popular press has addressed this phenomenon (Creamer, 2012; Fassler, 2003/2004). Rather than an association with an Asian American identity, the majority of participants shared that they associated first with a Local identity, or their specific Asian American group (i.e. Chinese, Filipino, Japanese) before considering themselves Asian Americans. This mirrored Okamura's (1994) claims regarding Hawai'i residents' tendency to claim membership in an individual Asian American group as opposed to the pan-ethnic Asian American category.

In their quantitative study, Ichiyama et al. (1996) studied Hawai'i residents who relocated to the mainland to attend college by evaluating the effects of group attitudes and length of residence in the mainland on ethnic identity and affiliative behavior. Their findings indicated that students from Hawai'i became aware almost immediately upon arriving in the mainland of their reduced social status. The participants in this study also shared that they quickly realized their reduced social status in contrast to their privileged Local social status in Hawai'i. Moreover, similar to participants in Ichiyama et al.'s study (1996), participants shared that Hawai'i's unique

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

cultural atmosphere influenced by the state's majority-minority population had a greater influence on their culture of origin than their ethnic background.

One of the factors that contributes to the idiosyncrasy of the Asian American identity in Hawai'i is the significance of the pan-ethnic Local identity that many Asian American and other groups in Hawai'i affirm (Okamura, 1994). Participants explained that being Local was rooted in a mixture of Asian and Native Hawaiian values and could be traced back to Hawai'i's origins; however they had challenges explicitly conveying the definition of Local. This conundrum is also mirrored in scholarly literature as it can be nebulous (Grant & Ogawa, 1993; Ohnuma, 2008; Okamura, 1980; Trask, 2000). Okamura (1994) explains, "The structural dimension of local identity is based on the categorical opposition between groups considered local and those considered nonlocal . . . Local is essentially a relative category; groups and individuals are viewed as Local in relation to others who are not so perceived" (165).

The challenges participants faced negotiating the transition between their culture of origin and immersion mirrored the experiences of other ethnic minority college students and included feelings of alienation, cultural dissonance, and isolation (Elmers & Pike, 1997; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Museus & Jayakumar, 2012; Kuh & Love, 2000; Maramba, 2008; Museus, 2008; Museus & Quaye, 2009; Rendon et al., 2000). This study can also be related to the greater student population as it touched upon the larger implications of the struggles all students experience as they cope with conflicts between cultures of origin and immersion. Furthermore, as more students move across state lines to attend college, this study hints at the various geographical influences that affect cultures of origin.

The findings of this study reinforce the need to create more culturally responsive, inclusive, and diverse postsecondary institutions, programs, and educators. Additionally, it

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

reinforces the argument for student services programming that honors the unique cultural capital each student brings to campus. The following themes capture student voices and experiences and are discussed in the light of existing literature to convey the details of the phenomenon of moving between a Hawai‘i culture of origin to a PWI culture of immersion in the Northeast.

Theme One: Cultural Dissonance

Emerging research has focused on the relevance of a cultural lens in understanding students' college experiences. Students who come from cultures that are different from the dominant campus culture encounter the greatest challenges as they adjust to college (Museus & Maramba, 2011). Scholars have found that when cultures of origin and immersion are incongruent, students may experience high levels of uncertainty, stress, and confusion as they strive to socially fit in with the dominant group (Elmers & Pike, 1997; Lippincott & German, 2007; Kuh & Love, 2000; Museus & Quaye, 2009). Similarly, the students in this study discussed feelings of uncertainty with their decisions, stress, and confusion, as they attempted to traverse the space between the two cultures.

Originally introduced by Tinto (1975), social adjustment to college was pertinent to this study as participants faced adjustment challenges due to cultural dissonance because of the low-diversity representation in the PWI student body. This contributed to challenges to students' ability to integrate in a satisfactory manner. Scholars have found that the dominant campus cultures of PWIs can pose challenges for minority students. Participants in this study experienced challenges stemming from their minority status such having to explain their actions, be conscious of the way they spoke, and carefully approach the integration of cultural topics into daily conversations (Loo & Rolison, 1986; Lee & Ying, 2001; Museus, 2008).

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

An example of how a dominant campus culture can negatively affect self-worth and invalidate the cultural capital of a student occurred on Jocelyn's campus. At University of the North, campus administrators refused to let Hawai'i students start a Hawai'i Club because they saw it as a geographical club versus a cultural one. Campus administrators coming from the dominant culture did not understand, value, nor respect the impact that Hawai'i's precollege culture held for students from Hawai'i. Instead of learning about Hawai'i's unique culture, which the club could have shared, administration assumed that students from Hawai'i were no different from students from other states and therefore would not allow them to start a club.

Another instance occurred when Mika's advisor refused to use the Japanese pronunciation of her name, even after Mika explained the difference between the American and Japanese pronunciations. Names are important because they are entwined in a person's identity and by refusing to use the correct pronunciation of her name, Mika's advisor exhibited power and control. Refusing to learn how to correctly pronounce Mika's name sends the message that her identity is not important or worth her advisor's time and effort.

Unfortunately these situations are not isolated and can lead students to believe that their cultures of origin are not valued and that they need to adapt to the dominant campus culture to fit in and succeed. In these instances, students may feel pressured to commit what Tierney (1999) calls "cultural suicide", by assimilating into the cultural mainstream based on the actions of the campus majority (p. 82). The notion of assimilation was initially made popular by Tinto (1975) who suggested that students must assimilate and abandon their ethnic identities to succeed at PWIs. Since then, scholars like Tierney (1999) and Museus (2008) have critiqued his framework, alleging that he is suggesting students commit cultural suicide through assimilation. Scholars have since introduced models of cultural integrity, which placed value on creating programs that

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

capitalize upon student ethnic backgrounds in a positive manner. In relation to the experiences of participants, campuses that championed cultural integrity reduced cultural dissonance by providing the space for students to share their cultures of origin. This support sustained students and allowed them to persist.

Related to my findings, incongruities between students cultures of origin and immersion may have negatively contributed to participants' adjustment experience; however unlike Museus & Quaye's (2009) findings, I did not find a direct correlation between cultural incongruities and student persistence. Jasmine mentioned, "I've come to that realization, that everything I've loved about living in Hawai'i makes it harder for me to be anyplace else . . . I know that I have to be here for my own personal growth and what I want to pursue . . . I'm sure when you're happier it's easier to do better, but I did better because being alienated, the one thing I could cling to was my work." The experiences of study participants resonated with previous research that addressed the negative feelings that cultural dissonance can have on the transition and adjustment of students from racial and ethnic minority backgrounds (Guiffrida, 2002; Kuh & Love, 2000; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Hurtado et al., 1996; Museus & Maramba, 2011; Museus & Quaye, 2009; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Rendon et al., 2000; Tierney, 1999).

Theme Two: Entering the Unknown

Prior to starting college, many students have expectations about what their first semester will entail. In addition to the typical feelings of excitement tied to embarking on a new adventure, most participants experienced some level of fear and anxiety related to their transcontinental journey to start college. The literature addressing student expectations versus reality has received surprisingly little attention in the greater student persistence discourse (Bank et al., 1992). Smith and Wertlieb's (2005) research on first-year college student expectations

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

found that expectations do not always align with actual experiences. Participants in this study found this to be true as their expectations did not mirror reality in terms of social adjustment, their peers' receptiveness to learning about their culture, and being immersed in a predominantly White community.

Many of the participants formed their expectations based on the images and stories they read in online forums, college websites, and saw on television since they were not able to visit their campus before accepting their offer of admission. Their expectations regarding social engagement was heavily influenced by their cultures of origin which promoted a general acceptance and open-mindedness towards other cultures and people. However, their expectations were not met as cultures of immersion favored the dominant campus culture influenced by White majority norms. Additionally, many students indicated that their peers came from individualistic backgrounds in comparison to the collective backgrounds of most Hawai'i students, sometimes making it more challenging than expected to make friends. Some students found that stereotypes can go both ways as they mentioned that many people in Hawai'i cautioned them about the cold and rude people they may encounter in the Northeast; however they never found that to be true. In fact, a few students said they experienced the opposite, noting that people's reactions are often a reflection of how they are treated.

Braxton, Vesper, and Hossler's (1995) research on student expectations for college found that colleges and universities need to accurately portray their institutional characteristics to prospective students if they want students to persist. The findings of their study highlighted the importance of student perceptions of institutional traits and are important to this study as they validate the need to have students of colors' perspectives accurately reflected in institutional advertising. By including the views of students of color, institutions can help prospective

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

students create more realistic expectations of what their college experience may entail. This notion was hinted at by some students who said that the diversity represented on the college websites was misleading as websites always featured diverse students in their advertising; however when they arrived on campus the population did not mirror advertising materials.

Paul and Brier (2001) also found that social experiences in college often did not meet the prematriculation expectations of first-year students. This finding was true for the majority of participants as most of them had higher expectations regarding the friendships they would establish and the open-mindedness of their peers. Although most students were satisfied with the friendships they established, the majority of students mentioned that it took them longer than expected to connect with a core group of friends. Sonia shared that socially she thought life would be easier and that she would be able to make friends quickly; however she found the east coast culture to be unwelcoming-a sharp contrast to growing up in Hawai'i. Other students shared that in Hawai'i they could get along with almost anyone; however that was not the case on their campus. Jackson et al. (2000) also found that prematriculation expectations impacted adjustment, a sentiment true for these participants. Many shared that when their idealized expectations did not come to fruition, they experienced frustration and at times, feelings of isolation and alienation. Data from previous studies have also indicated that students' perceptions of campus climate can influence their achievement, self-esteem, and sense of belonging (Hurtado et al., 1996; Nunez, 2009; Reid & Radhakrishnan, 2003).

Although expectations and reality did not immediately align for participants, some found solace in institutional subcultures and cultural agents. As suggested by Kuh and Love (2000) and later reinforced by Museus and Quaye (2009), the significance of university subcultures and campus cultural agents in facilitating ethnic minority student persistence at PWIs should not be

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

underestimated. The findings of this study confirmed that cultural agents have the ability to positively impact students' adjustment, satisfaction, and cultural validation.

The results of this study were consistent with the research suggesting that fully integrating into the collegiate environment was supportive of students' academic success (Guiffrida, 2003; Hagedorn et al., 2007). Participants explained that once they found their niche in their institutional community through subcultures such as band, Greek life, theatre, sports, and ethnic and cultural organizations, they felt more accepted on campus and more comfortable in their institution. Furthermore, similar to Museus and Quaye's (2009) findings, participants who engaged with ethnic and cultural organizations mentioned that their involvement validated their culture and values and made them feel like they belonged on campus. Participants also connected with various subcultures that appealed to their passions and interests. Through participation, they were able to meet other students who shared similar interests, which contributed to feelings of acceptance and facilitated adjustment. In addition to subcultures, some students found support from individual and collective cultural agents. As Guiffrida (2003) and Museus and Quaye (2009) found, cultural agents were important not only for the individual connections they shared with students, but also for their ability to connect students with resources in the greater campus community.

Theme Three: Challenges to Identity

In the early Asian American ethnic and racial identity models, scholars asserted that individuals moved through specific stages which focused on one specific dimension of identity (Kim, 1981; Sue & Sue, 1971). More recently, scholars have created alternative progressive stage-like models to account for racial and ethnic identity (Ibrahim et al., 1997; Nadal, 2004; Museus et al., 2013). I would argue; however, that the participants in this study did not fit into

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

many of the existing Asian American racial or ethnic identity models because they assume that individuals associated with an Asian American identity and are surrounded by a dominant White culture.

Instead of the existing Asian American models of identity development, the identities of participants in this study were influenced most by the Local culture of Hawai'i. The Local culture promotes a collectivist society where the group's goals hold more importance than those of the individual. Relationships are core and in particular, value is placed on the relationship of the individual to the family, the community, the land, and the spiritual world (Brightman & Subedi, 2007).

This Local culture contributed to and influenced the identities of participants more than their ethnic backgrounds. Regardless of their ethnicity or race, participants viewed themselves as Local, a notion that caused conflict in their cultures of immersion since the Local identity does not exist outside of Hawai'i. Some students experienced discomfort and uncertainty as they transitioned into their college environment and took on a new ethnic identity. Many students realized that the privileges associated with a Local identity quickly dissipated and instead they faced the deficit of being a minority student of color. This conundrum introduced challenges to their identity as the way they saw themselves conflicted with the way that others saw them. Until arriving at college, many participants did not identify as a minority due in part to their majority status in their culture of origin.

Similar to Wooden's (1981), Miyares (2008), and Okamura's (1994) findings regarding Hawai'i residents' adoption of the Local identity to avoid being associated with becoming too American or too ethnic like their Asian American mainland counterparts, participants in this study vehemently tried to distinguish themselves from Asian American mainland students and

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

international students from Asia. All of the students mentioned the challenges they experienced as they learned to negotiate life as a minority and the lengths they went to trying to differentiate themselves from the mainland Asian Americans and international Asian students on campus.

In regards to students' cultural identities, the majority of students noted that their precollege culture differed from the dominant campus group. Scholars have identified cultural identity as referring to the specific values, ideals, and beliefs adopted from a given cultural group, as well as one's feelings about belonging to that group (Museus & Jayakumar, 2012).

Hawai'i is rated the most collectivist state in the nation, something scholars have attributed to the indigenous Native Hawaiian culture and the intentional recruitment of plantation workers (Brightman & Subedi, 2007; Petersen, 1969). Petersen (1969) explained how intentional recruitment contributed to the rich diversity and culture of Hawai'i:

This great diversity was due mainly to the effort, in the words of the US Commissioner of Labor, to create 'a population that would at the same time supply a civic and industrial need'—that is, people who would work efficiently in the fields but would also be acceptable politically and socially. (p. 866)

In this study, participants came from a culture of collectivism which was ingrained into their identity and affected the ways in which students viewed themselves and their interactions with others. In relation to this finding, Guiffrida et al. (2012) suggested that Asian American students come from cultures of collectivism and should not be expected to break away from their families and home communities in order to become part of the college community. Tierney (1999) and Museus (2008) also found that it is not necessary for students of color to abandon their precollege cultures to be successful in college. Rather, as participants highlighted, an emphasis on cultural integrity which encourages students to embrace their precollege cultures, can help students adjust to a new college environment. Researchers have found that many

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

students of color struggle with balancing their cultural identity within institutions that have minimal cultural diversity (Cerezo & Chang, 2013).

Similar to Torres' (2003) findings regarding Latino students who moved from a majority-minority culture of origin to a minority culture of immersion, participants did not see themselves as in the minority until they arrived on campus. The students' precollege environment influenced the way they self-identified; however when they arrived on campus, their self-identification was challenged and they immediately had to change the way they viewed themselves. This notion held true for all participants, surprisingly including those who were half White. All four of the students who were half White mentioned that they identified with being Asian and Local, and despite their outward majority appearance, still felt like a minority.

Much of the existing literature indicates that multiracial college students feel pressured to choose one race and at times have experienced a sense of being "misperceived, misrepresented, miscategorized, and misunderstood" by faculty, staff, and peers (Cortes, 2000, p. 10). The four mixed race participants agreed with those sentiments as they mentioned that despite looking White, they did not associate with being White. Root's (1990) biracial identity model outlines four resolutions of biracial identity which she claims lead to a healthy and integrated racial identity as long as the individual does not deny any part of their heritage. The four possible resolutions of biracial identity are: 1) Acceptance of the identity society assigns, 2) Identification with both racial groups, 3) Identification with a single racial group, and 4) Identification as a new racial group. However, I would argue that this, and other mixed race models, do not fit mixed race students who come from a Hawai'i culture of origin as they fail to address the evolution and acceptance of a Local identity over one or all of their ethnic identities. What this suggests is that Root's identity development model may not be applicable in the Hawai'i context and that this is

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

an opportunity for further research on the mixed race identity of Hawai'i students. This lack of appropriate ethnic and racial identity models also applies to single race students from Hawai'i as they too do not cleanly fit into the existing models discussed in Chapter Two.

Theme Four: Geographic Isolation

There have been numerous studies researching the countless variables associated with college student adjustment. However, one area that has received little to no attention in the literature is how Hawai'i's geographic isolation impacts culture of origin, affecting a student's college adjustment process. Very little is known, in general, about how college students from Hawai'i experience adjustment differently compared to students who come from the continental United States. In particular, participants shared challenges adjusting to a college environment that was geographically isolated from their precollege environment, specifically in terms of the time difference, physical distance, and weather.

Scholars have noted that the decision to attend college includes geographical factors, as students who live in areas with few enrollment opportunities are more likely to attend colleges far from home (Frenette, 2006; Lopez Turley, 2009; Mulder & Clark, 2002). This was true for participants in this study, as Hawai'i has few postsecondary educational institutions, especially for students seeking selective institutions.

Scholars have found that social adjustment into college is dependent in part on how similar or different students' home environment is from their college environment (Museus & Quaye, 2009; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Paul & Brier, 2001). The students in this study clearly perceived differences between their home environment and their college environment which were tied to geography. In mentioning some of the biggest challenges adjusting, all students

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

mentioned the weather and Hawai'i's physical distance from the continental United States, and the majority of them mentioned the added challenges that daylight savings time presents.

Literature surrounding the effect that geographical isolation has in regards to adjustment to college is scarce to nonexistent. However, limited research was found regarding geography in terms of rural students transitioning to urban campuses and also students from Alaska attending urban institutions. Although none of the students in this study came from rural environments, I was able to draw some similarities with students in other studies. Hamilton (2006) found that students from remote areas who leave Alaskan villages to attend college experience significant social and cultural challenges due to geographical remoteness. Although the participants from Hawai'i were not from rural villages, they too experienced significant challenges that stemmed from the geography of their culture of origin. In comparison to the rest of the dominant campus population, participants did not have the cultural capital associated with coming from a similar precollege environment. Additionally, they were at a deficit due to geographical challenges, including not having the opportunity to return home regularly or even for long weekends, something that Hamilton (2006) found to be a catalyst for successful integration into the college community.

The appeal of an environment that is different from one's home environment has been found in the limited research on rural students transitioning to an urban campus (Vollmer & Hedlund, 1994). Similar to students in this study, participants were looking for a different environment and decided to leave their cultures of origin for a new experience. The isolation from the geographically contiguous United States has a unique effect on the preparedness of college bound high school graduates and on their adjustment to college experience (Hamilton, 2006). Participants in this study mentioned that they had to worry about factors other students

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

who grew up in the contiguous United States took for granted. For example, many participants noted the five to six hour time difference as a source of struggle that affected their adjustment. Students mentioned that while their peers could just call friends or family when they were homesick or having problems, often due to the large time difference, it was not feasible to call home. Participants also mentioned the luxury of going home for long weekends and the ability to have visitors. While their peers from the contiguous United States had visitors to connect them with their cultures of origin or were able to go home when they got homesick, students from Hawai'i did not have the resources or time to do so.

Theme Five: Persistence

The decision to persist until graduation is a function of the dynamic relationship between the individual students' culture of origin and their culture of immersion (Kuh et al., 2006). In relation to this study, Nora and Cabrera (1996) found that while perceptions of prejudice and discrimination had a negative effect on minority students' adjustment, it did not have a significant impact on their ability to persist towards graduation. This finding mirrored the experiences of participants in this study, as their adjustment challenges did not stop them from persisting towards graduation. In fact, many participants viewed adjustment and persistence as separate notions.

This finding was interesting as in Chinese and Japanese cultures persistence is a trait that is valued and instilled from a young age. There is a Chinese maxim *chi ku* that translates as "eat bitter." This Chinese phrase means to endure hardships, overcome difficulties, and forge ahead (Loyalka, 2013). Eating bitterness is also explained as working hard and tolerating agony in order to achieve ones goals. Similarly, in the Japanese culture the term *ganbarei* means to do ones best and hang on to overcome adversity (Davies & Ikeno, 2002). Finally, in the Local

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Japanese culture, the motto of the highly decorated World War Two 442nd Regimental Combat Team was “go for broke,” a gambling term that means risking everything on one great effort to win big (Go For Broke National Education Center, 2015). Given the heavy influence of Chinese and Japanese values in the Local culture, it is hard to ignore these cultural norms that may have influenced the persistence of participants in this study.

Bennett and Okinaka (1990) conducted a study of undergraduate student attrition and pertinent to this study, and found that White students who complete college are more satisfied and feel less alienated than Asian students who graduate. They also found that for Asian American students persisting in their fourth year, the issues of persistence and alienation are separate and that persisters felt less satisfied and more socially alienated than their counterparts who left the university. Museus (2008) and Kam (2013) also found that Asian American students are more likely than White students to persist and graduate from college, but they are also more likely to go on medical leave in college, deal with mental health issues and to experience college dissatisfaction. These notions were true for at least one student who mentioned feelings of depression and dissatisfaction despite persisting at her institution. While other participants did not mention mental health issues, many participants indicated that despite not being fully satisfied with their institution, they continued to persist and planned to graduate.

Strayhorn (2008) claims that supportive relationships on campus increase social adjustment, which increases a greater sense of belonging which translates into improved retention rates. Furthermore, Museus (2011) asserts that the extent to which minority students feel connected to their campus culture may directly impact student success and persistence. Kuh and Love (2000) found that social integration was positively related to a student’s commitment to graduation. Although participants agreed that supportive relationships and feelings of

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

connectedness to their campus were important to their overall well-being, they did not draw relationships between those factors and persistence. Rather, students attributed their decisions to persist to financial reasons, a sense of pride, and responsibility to their family.

St. John and Noell (1989) examined the impact of different types of financial aid extended to both White and minority students and its influence on their enrollment decisions. They concluded that all forms of financial assistance have a positive influence on enrollment regardless of race or ethnicity. Studies have also established that financial aid facilitates the academic and social integration of a student on campus and enhances the student's academic performance in college while greatly influencing a student's intent to remain enrolled (Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Swail et al., 2003). These findings regarding financial aid and persistence were also noted in this study as participants drew stronger relationships between financial aid and persistence in comparison with persistence and college adjustment.

My findings regarding financial aid and persistence mirrored St. John and Noell's (1989) findings. Specifically, they found that the more funds a student received to attend college, the more likely that student would remain enrolled. This was especially true for students in this study, as many commented that it would be foolish to turn their backs on the attractive financial aid packages they were offered despite having thoughts of withdrawing or leaving their institution. This finding is especially noteworthy for campuses that award scholarships or grants to minority students. If minority students are more likely to remain enrolled at an institution due to generous financial aid packages, then it is imperative that institutions create culturally sensitive programming. Creating a campus culture that values diversity and supports students of color is integral in generating student success-academically, socially, and mentally.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Many scholars assert that the more similar one's home environment is to one's college environment, the greater the perception of fit and ultimate persistence (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Kuh & Love, 2000; Museus & Quaye, 2009; Tierney, 1999). However, the findings of this study imply that despite differences between the two environments, persistence may still occur.

Implications for Theory

Out of the eight intercultural propositions posed by Museus and Quaye (2009), five propositions demonstrated consistency with the themes identified through participant interviews, one proposition differed, and two were not addressed. *Proposition One: Minority students' college experiences are shaped by their cultural meaning-making system.* Students from different racial backgrounds may experience the same environment in different ways (Hurtado, 1992; Nora & Cabrera, 1996). Moreover, students from similar ethnic backgrounds who come from different precollege cultures may experience similar campus environments in disparate ways (Guiffrida, 2003; Torres, 2003). This was evident as the three students who attended Large College came from similar racial backgrounds, but were influenced by different precollege cultures and had varying experiences integrating into their college environment.

Furthermore, the majority of participants asserted that their cultures of origin played a significant role in shaping their college experience, much more so than their ethnic identity of being Asian American or their individual racial identities. This finding adds to the current discussion of minority students, as it introduces another type of minority to the current literature-geographic minorities. Although all students in this study were Asian American, their precollege environment played a much larger role than their ethnic identities; therefore the term geographic minorities evolved. The unique predicaments due to Hawai'i's geographic location contributed to students precollege cultures and influenced their cultural meaning-making system.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

In the traditional Native Hawaiian context, nature and culture are one; there is no division between the two (Maly, 2001). This is reflected in Hawai‘i’s state motto, Ua Mau ke Ea o ka ‘Āina i ka Pono, “the life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness.” This study also found that the values and traits of the Local culture were associated with a shared responsibility to each other and the land. Keesing (1974) argues that culture provides people with an implicit theory about how to behave and how to interpret the behavior of others and that these theories are learned through socialization. Furthermore, through socialization, individuals learn the dominant values of their particular culture and their self-identities (Keesing, 1974). Through the Local culture, participants were influenced by a strong sense of community and a deep responsibility to each other and the land. These values that shaped students cultures of origin were very specific to life in Hawai‘i and greatly affected the way that participants experienced college life.

Proposition Two: Minority students’ culture of origin moderate the meanings that they attach to college attendance, engagement, and completion was also evident in some of the interviews. This proposition manifested in the ways that interviewees discussed their relationship with members of their precollege environments, specifically their families.

Many of the students agreed that the Local culture values collectivism as opposed to individualism. The students often made references to placing the needs of society-their families or home communities-above their own needs. This was evident in the discussions surrounding college attendance and completion as many students indicated that they “didn’t want to let their families down” and were persisting at their institution out of a responsibility to their family. When asked about this sense of responsibility, many students shared that although their families supported them unconditionally, they felt like they would disappoint them if they decided to leave their institution; especially since they were so far away from home. Students also shared

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

that moving so far away from Hawai‘i was a rite of passage, one they did not take lightly, and therefore felt like they would disappoint their friends and families if they came home prematurely.

Some students also indicated that their precollege cultures influenced the type of engagement they expected to pursue in college. Because students’ came from cultures of origin that valued diversity and openness towards other cultures, they expected to be able to share their cultures with peers; however often those attempts were not well received. Scholars have found that this experience can lead to feelings of marginalization as students experience increased struggles to fit in and gain acceptance from their peers (Schlossberg, 1989).

The third proposition posits: *Knowledge of minority students’ cultures of origin and immersion are required to understand those students’ abilities to negotiate their respective campus cultural milieus.* If the characteristics, dispositions, expectations, and perceptions of undergraduates of color are, in part, a function of their cultures of origin, administrators must comprehend those cultural heritages to understand the struggles of those students in adjusting to college (Museus & Quaye, 2009). Many students echoed this sentiment as they discussed the nuances of culture shock and how it affected their ability to adjust and integrate themselves into a PWI. Some students who participated in thoughtfully designed programming illustrated how an understanding of their cultures of origin could help facilitate successful adjustment beyond the first semester. Understanding students’ cultures of origin and how they intersect with cultures of immersion was also important in understanding the challenges to identity students faced. Many students indicated that the dominant values on campus caused feelings of marginalization which they attempted to mitigate by going out of their way to prove that they were United States citizens and could speak English.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Proposition Five: Minority students who experience a substantial amount of cultural dissonance must acclimate to the dominant campus culture or establish sufficient connections with cultural agents at their institution to persist. Some students experienced pressure to acclimate to certain aspects of the dominant culture, which can be a source of conflict and tension. Participants mentioned that they avoided talking about cultural topics and altered the way they spoke to try to fit in. Kevin illustrated this point, “. . . now I’m pretty good, I know what to say and what not to say . . . back in freshman year I would say things and people would be like, ‘what?!’ and look at me weird. I know how to talk around people now . . . it’s different, but I’m aware and I can turn it (pidgin) on and off.”

Many of the students mentioned that their culture of origin was still very important to them, implying that it may be unrealistic to expect them to completely assimilate into the dominant campus culture as Tinto (1975) suggested. Cultures of origin remain the impetus for persistence, thus like Museus and Quayle (2009) found, it would be unwise to disassociate from them entirely. Rather, it was the relationships with campus cultural agents, such as a passionate teacher, the Hawai‘i college recruiter, the Hawai‘i club, fellow students from Hawai‘i, and other ethnic organizations, that helped decrease cultural dissonance and facilitate their adjustment and persistence. Many students gave credit to both individual and collective cultural agents for helping them adjust and find membership at their institution.

Finally, *Proposition Six stated: The degree to which campus cultural agents validate minority students’ cultures of origin is positively associated with reduced cultural dissonance and greater likelihood of persistence.* This proposition was confirmed by many students, especially in terms of collective cultural agents (e.g., ethnic minority communities, ethnic student organizations). Students noted that the presence of these campus cultural agents who validated

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

their cultures of origin played positive a role in their adjustment process. The opposite of this was also found to be true in the instance of Jocelyn whose campus Asian club welcomed the Hawai'i students when campus administration would not let them create a Hawai'i Club. This lack of validation from campus administration contributed to feelings of isolation and alienation, a feeling their nonminority counterparts may never experience (Elmers & Pike, 1997). However by validating Hawai'i students' need for a gathering place the Asian club helped diffuse cultural dissonance on her campus.

The findings in this study differ from *Proposition 4: Cultural dissonance is inversely related to minority students' persistence*, as despite experiencing cultural dissonance, students in this study were persisting. Many students cited financial reasons as the driving factor behind their persistence, a factor unrelated to cultural dissonance. Participants in this study also cited a responsibility to their family, an influence rooted in students' culture of origin, as a reason for persisting. Many implied that persisting at their institution, despite the cultural incongruities they experienced, would provide the greatest good for the greatest amount of people and that it was only a temporary sacrifice. These findings differ from a lot of the existing literature pointing to the lack of perceived fit between a students' culture of origin and immersion as leading to a students' decision to withdraw. Although participants in this study may have experienced cultural incongruence which affected their adjustment, it did not have a significant impact on their ability to persist towards graduation. This finding was similar to Nora and Cabrera's (1996) study that found that minority students were used to experiencing discrimination and hence, developed resilience against its potentially negative effects on college persistence.

Although participants in this study differed on this proposition, it is important to note that it is highly possible that I did not get the chance to talk to students who experienced severe

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

cultural dissonance because they withdrew from their institutions. Many students from Hawai‘i who attend college on the continental United States get extremely homesick within their first year and end of moving back home. If this study allowed the opportunity to interview students who departed, this proposition may have been validated through their experiences.

Out of the eight propositions, *Proposition Seven: the quality and quantity of minority students' connections with various cultural agents on their respective campuses is positively associated with their likelihood of persistence* and *Proposition Eight: Minority students are more likely to persist if the cultural agents to whom they are connected emphasize educational achievement, value educational attainment, and validate their traditional cultural heritages*, did not surface in this study. Proposition seven discussed the quality and quantity of students connections with cultural agents, but because most of the students I interviewed did not feel connected to their campus this correlation may not have occurred. Furthermore, although all participants were persisting, none drew the relationship between their persistence and any cultural agents they interacted with. Proposition eight may not have surfaced because I did not interview the cultural agents that students mentioned. Therefore, I was not able to say that they valued the specific characteristics identified. Finally, these propositions may not have emerged for various reasons including the nature of the interview questions or the skill of the interviewer.

Implications for Practice

Students of color arrive on college campuses with cultural values that are strikingly different from the dominant academic communities. The findings of this study have significant implications for educators and institutions who serve ethnic minority students. Understanding how students' cultures of origin shape their perceptions of and interaction with the campus environment can help administrators better create campus environments and programs to

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

facilitate successful student adjustment. Berger and Milem (1999) support this notion, indicating that the key to improving retention on campus, particularly for underrepresented groups, is to create campus environments that reflect and value the cultural norms of a more diverse body of students as opposed to a select few. To validate students' cultures of origin and create an environment in which minority students feel supported, student affairs professionals could create programming designed to help students balance the space between their cultures of origin and immersion. This could come in the form of activities, workshops, and speakers who champion cultural diversity. Furthermore, it is important that these programs have a steady presence on campus and are not just offered during diversity weeks or in one-off fashion.

If minority students' cultural meaning making systems moderate their college experiences, then it is vital for postsecondary educators to understand the precollege cultures of their students (Museus & Quaye, 2009). First and foremost, campus administrators must acknowledge and understand the cultural backgrounds of students with whom they work. The findings of this study support Museus and Quaye's (2009) assertion that this type of insight is imperative as it encourages educators to understand the cultural challenges that minority students face as they enter a new environment strikingly different from their home cultures.

This notion is especially important, as this study unearthed the concept that Asian American Hawai'i residents are not only ethnic minorities, but minorities in terms of their geographic upbringing—a factor that heavily influenced their cultural of origin. Understanding the role that a sense of place has in Hawai'i residents' culture of origin is imperative in fostering successful adjustment. This concept is atypical of the traditional minority; therefore it behooves student affairs professionals and institutional administrators to understand the unique culture of origin students from Hawai'i experience. This understanding would ensure that campus

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

administrators allow a Hawai'i Club on campus, a programming decision that would greatly contribute to the adjustment and persistence of Hawai'i residents.

In addition to understanding students' cultural backgrounds, this study confirms the importance of supporting and nourishing both collective and individual cultural agents. Many of the students cited examples of individual and collective cultural agents with whom they connected while on campus. These agents were credited with making students "feel at home," allowing them to be themselves, validating their precollege cultures, and providing encouragement and support when needed. This finding is similar to Hurtado and Carter (1997) and Museus' (2008) studies that found students who belonged to ethnic clubs or organizations exhibited a higher sense of belonging to the university. Scholars have consistently found that collective cultural agents have served as a conduit of student adjustment for ethnic and racial minority students (Bennett & Okinaka, 1990; Ichiyama et al., 1996; Maramba, 2008; Museus, 2008; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Museus & Truong, 2009; Museus & Quaye, 2009; Ying et al., 2001).

When campuses validate students' home cultures, they create an environment in which individual cultural agents create a network to support each other. Many of the students mentioned that they turn to senior Hawai'i students on their campuses for support and that often, it is those students who seek out new Hawai'i students to make sure they feel welcome and know they have someone to turn to should they ever need help.

Additionally, as institutions consider developing programs to support students of color, it is important to not only consider the execution of the program, but to consider the sustainability of the program beyond its initial period. The data collected in this study highlighted the importance of institutional support and programming in terms of facilitating student adjustment.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Students in this study positively benefited from summer bridge type programs that created and fostered a sense of community not only during the summer, but carried on throughout their first year on campus. These programmatic elements had a positive impact on student adjustment by validating their cultures of origin and matching students up with cultural agents who provided support throughout their transition period and beyond. The continued support beyond the initial program is a crucial element in the student adjustment puzzle.

In addition to implications for higher education institutions, this study's findings are also pertinent to Hawai'i's high schools and college bound students. In addition to preparing students academically for college, Hawai'i high schools should take measures to prepare students socially as well. As the state government encourages college and career readiness at Hawai'i high schools, it would be beneficial for high schools to incorporate education on social adjustment to college (Hawaii P-20, 2013). This type of module could include lessons on culture shock, the importance of getting involved, how to seek out campus cultural agents, moving from a majority-minority community, and coping mechanisms. Given the data on low student persistence and graduation rates, this type of preventative education regarding social integration could greatly benefit college bound students by introducing them to tools and concepts necessary to navigate their college environment.

Furthermore, because many high schools encourage students to apply for financial aid and attend institutions outside of state, it would be extremely beneficial for high school college counselors and teachers to consider the implications of this study. High school college counselors should take a more holistic approach to helping students prepare for college. In addition to academic preparedness and scholarship application assistance, they should also

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

introduce students to concepts regarding their overall well-being and immersion into a new cultural landscape.

Finally, to help college bound students develop a realistic view of the adjustment experiences they may encounter stemming from their cultures of origin, secondary and postsecondary institutions should recruit Local alumni to share their experiences with prospective students. As this study has found, students are not able to gain a comprehensive view of their prospective college from looking at their website and printed materials alone. Involving alumni may help college bound students develop more realistic expectations of their college environment through interactive discussions with alumni. Furthermore; like participants in this study, many students may not have the financial means to visit their prospective college campus before committing their attendance, so speaking to students who graduated from their same high school or potential college could provide them with realistic expectations.

Implications for Future Research

Although this study provides valuable insight into how institutions can support the adjustment of Asian American Hawai'i residents, it has a number of limitations. As noted earlier, the sample size was purposefully kept small; therefore the findings and conclusions must be read with caution as this was not intended to be a generalizable study. To allow conclusions based on this study to be applied on a wider scale, further studies could expand the sample to include a significant number of Asian American Hawai'i residents attending PWIs in the Northeast.

Furthermore, it is extremely rare to find the experiences of students from Hawai'i disaggregated and included in scholarly literature. Based on the findings indicating that a Hawai'i culture of origin is more influential than participants' ethnic cultures, it is my hope that scholars understand the uniqueness that growing up in Hawai'i can pose. Complex layers affect

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

the precollege environment of these students and it is important to note that layers do not exist in a silo, rather they are intertwined and impact the overall student experience. It would be noteworthy to further research these layers as Hawai‘i is a truly unique precollege environment. Further inquiries on geographical dissonance, the socioeconomic factors associated with the various ethnic groups in Hawai‘i, students’ home environment, and Hawai‘i’s culture of origin in general may help illuminate this important issue.

Moreover, future research on student adjustment should take into account heterogeneity and examine additional subpopulations of Hawai‘i residents to see if common themes emerge across other ethnic populations, including mixed race and Caucasian Hawai‘i residents. This study found that being from Hawai‘i caused greater cultural stress than did being Asian American; therefore a future study examining the differential experiences across additional subpopulations may further contribute to this body of research. Researchers may also want to consider the importance of disaggregating subpopulations by gender, class, and college student generation.

Another body of inquiry that would further illuminate the struggles of adjustment would be a study comparing and contrasting the experience of Asian American Hawai‘i residents who persisted with those that did not persist at PWIs in the Northeast. This type of study would elucidate some of the challenges students experienced and would provide insight for institutions about what could be done to better support their persistence.

One of the concepts that repeatedly emerged during the interviews was the notion that students’ Asian American counterparts who came from predominantly White cultures of origin in the mainland United States experienced lower levels of cultural dissonance because they had prior experience living in predominantly White cultural settings. Many of the participants

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

mentioned the differences between themselves and their Asian American mainland counterparts in terms of their characteristics and behaviors, including their upbringings in predominantly White neighborhoods. They also noted that these students often had an easier time adjusting than they did. Although this was frequently mentioned, it was hearsay; therefore further research on the differences between the adjustment of Asian American students from the continental United States versus students from Hawai‘i may be worth pursuing.

Relative to diversity and multicultural education literature, the Local Hawai‘i culture and those who identify with it are greatly lacking representation. This challenge was mirrored in my findings as well as the literature discussed in Chapter Two as scholars have yet to clearly pinpoint and agree upon a consistent definition of being Local in the context that people living in Hawai‘i use the term. Many of the descriptions that participants shared lacked specific qualities, but rather associated Localness with unspoken behaviors and traits learned over time and rooted in Hawai‘i’s plantation history. The Local culture is unsubstantiated by genealogy or nationality, yet is the pervasive identity that a large population of people identify with throughout Hawai‘i (Okumura, 1980; Trask, 2000). There is a dearth of literature on this subject; however further research in this area could help postsecondary educators better understand the struggles Hawai‘i residents in particular face when trying to integrate into the societal values and norms present on their campuses and in the continental United States in general.

Finally, this study echoes previous calls to explore the ways culture shapes the experiences of students in postsecondary institutions (Kuh & Love, 2000; Museus & Quaye, 2009). Many of the existing studies on minority student adjustment to college are quantitative, thus lacking the voices and stories of the different students on which these studies report (e.g.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Cerezo & Chang, 2013; Johnson et al., 2007; Kalsner, 2003; Roberts et al., 1999; Wei et al., 2011).

Summary

College campuses will become increasingly more diverse over the next decade as the number of minority public high school graduates increases and postsecondary institutions increase their recruitment of students of color (Elmers & Pike, 1997; Kim, 2011; Prescott & Bransberger, 2012). To help students navigate the transition between cultures of origin and immersion, it is imperative that college administrators and student affairs professionals understand the value of minority students' culture of origin. Furthermore, to best support student persistence, they must recognize strategies that may be helpful in facilitating a smooth transition into the institutional culture of immersion.

This study examined how cultural incongruence affected the adjustment process of Asian American Hawai'i residents attending PWIs in the Northeast. The findings of this study provide valuable insight for postsecondary educators, administrators, and staff as well as prospective students and their families from Hawai'i. The results of this study reinforced the need for postsecondary institutions to allocate resources towards the support of cultural agents, cultural programming, and multicultural awareness. The findings of this inquiry provide valuable insight into the steps postsecondary institutions may take to foster success amongst the increasingly diverse students arriving on their campuses.

An interesting outcome of this study was the strong association participants felt to the Local culture compared to the Asian American culture. The participants in this study all embodied a strong sense of Local cultural pride and it important to note how this sense of pride contributed to their adjustment. The students in this study were able to negotiate cultural

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

dissonance, the uncertainty of entering the unknown, challenges to their identity, and overcome the challenges of coming from a state geographically isolated from the continental United States. Additionally, they were all able to persist, despite the incongruities between their precollege and college cultures.

Finally, the results of this study added to the body of literature concerning the adjustment and persistence experience of students of color. Specifically, this study adds to the small, but growing body of research on Asian American students. Understanding the experiences of underrepresented groups is an important step in making higher education more inclusive and representative of the diversity experienced in the greater United States.

REFERENCES

- Accapadi, M. M. (2012). Asian American identity consciousness: A polycultural model. In D. Ching & A. Agbayani (Eds.), *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education: Research and perspectives on identity, leadership, and success* (pp. 57-94). Washington, DC: NASPA-Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education.
- Alvarez, A. N., Blume, A. W., Cervantes, J. M., & Thomas, L. R. (2009). Tapping the wisdom tradition: Essential elements to mentoring students of color. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 40*(2), 181-188.
- Anderson, R. N. (1984). *Filipinos in rural Hawai'i*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence (APIIDV). (2013). *Census data and API Identities*. Retrieved from: <http://www.apiidv.org/resources/census-data-api-identities.php>
- Askham, P. (2008). Context and identity: Exploring adult learners' experiences of higher education. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 32*(1), 85-97.
- Astin, A. W. (1993). *What matters in college? Four critical years revisited*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bank, B., Slavings, R., & Biddle, R. (1990). Effects of Peer, Faculty, and Parental Influences on Students' Persistence. *Sociology of Education, 63*(3): 209-225.
- Bascara, V. (2008). Model minority. In R. Schaefer (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of race, ethnicity, and society*. (pp. 911-913). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Bean, J. P. (1980). Dropouts and turnover. A synthesis and test of a casual model of student attrition. *Research in Higher Education, 12*, 155-187.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Bean, J. P. (1983). The application of a model of turnover in work organizations to the student attrition process. *Research in Higher Education*, 6, 129-148.
- Bean, J. P. & Metzner, B.S. (1985). A conceptual model of nontraditional undergraduate student attrition. *Review of Educational Research*, 55(4), 485-540.
- Bennett, C. (2001) Genres of research in multicultural education. *Review of Educational Research*, 71(2), 171-217.
- Bennett, C., & Okinaka, A. M. (1990). Factors related to persistence among Asian, black, Hispanic, and white undergraduates at a predominantly white university: Comparison between first and fourth year cohorts. *Urban Review*, 22(1), 33-60.
- Bernstein, R. (2012). *Most children younger than age 1 are minorities, census bureau reports*. United States Census Bureau. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb12-90.html>
- Berger, J. B., & Milem, J. F. (1999). The role of student involvement and perceptions of integration in a causal model of student persistence. *Research in Higher Education*, 40(6), 641-646.
- Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29(6), 697-712.
- Berry, J. W. (2009). A critique of cultural acculturation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33(5), 362-371.
- Bickerton, D. (1998). Catastrophic evolution: the case for a single step from protolanguage to full human language. In: Hurford, J., et al. (Eds.), pp. 341-358.
- Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (2010). The promise of qualitative research in education. In W. Luttrell (Ed.), *Qualitative educational research*. New York: Routledge.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Bordes, V., & Arredondo, P. (2005). Mentoring and 1st-year Latina/o college students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 4*, 114-133.
- Brainard, J. (2010). [Graphic illustration of undergraduate minority students]. Undergraduate diversity: More minorities, more women. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/Undergraduate-Diversity-More/124495/>
- Braxton, J. M. (2000). Introduction. In J. M. Braxton (Ed.), *Reworking the student departure puzzle*. (pp. 1-8). Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Braxton, J. M., Sullivan, A. V. S., & Johnson, R. M. (1997). Appraising Tinto's theory of college student departure. In J. C. Smart (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. 12, pp. 107–164). New York, NY: Agathon Press.
- Braxton, J. M., Vesper, N., & Hossler, D. (1995). Expectations for college and student persistence. *Research in Higher Education, 36*, 595-612.
- Brightman, J. D. & Subedi, L. A. (2007). *AAPI culture brief: Hawaii*. Retrieved from <http://www.ntac.hawaii.edu/downloads/products/briefs/culture/pdf/ACB-Vol2-Iss7-Hawaii.pdf>
- Brown, C. M., & Dancy, E. T. (2010). Predominantly white institutions. In K. Lomotey (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of African American education*. (pp. 524-527). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). (2013). College enrollment and work activity of high school graduates [News release]. Retrieved from http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/hsgec_04172013.htm

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Cabrera, A. F., Nora, A., & Castañeda, M. B. (1993). College persistence: Structural equations modeling test of an integrated model of student retention. *Journal of Higher Education*, 64(2), 123-139.
- Cabrera, A. F., Nora, A., & Castañeda, M. B. (1992). The role of finances in the persistence process: A structural model. *Research in Higher Education*, 33(5), 571-93.
- Carrasco, M. & Weiss, J. (2005). *National Alliance on Mental Illnesses Asian American & Pacific Islander Outreach Resource Manual*. Retrieved from http://www.nami.org/Content/ContentGroups/Multicultural_Support1/AAPIManual.pdf
- Carter, R. T., & Goodwin, A. L. (1994). Racial identity and education. *Review of Research in Education*, 20(4), 291-336.
- Chang, M. J. (2008). Asian Evasion: A recipe for flawed solution. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 25(7), 26.
- Chartrand, J. M. (1992). An empirical test of a model of nontraditional student adjustment. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 39(2), 193-202.
- Cheng, C. (1953). A study of Chinese assimilation in Hawai'i. *Social Forces*, 32(2), 163-167.
- Cheng, D. X. (2004). Students' sense of campus community: What it means, and what to do about it. *NASPA Journal*, 41(2), 216-234.
- Ch'oe, Y. (2006). *From the land of hibiscus: Koreans in Hawai'i, 1903-1950*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Cerezo, A. & Chang, T. (2013) Latina/o achievement at predominantly white universities: The importance of culture and ethnic community. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 12(72), 72-85.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Charmaz, K. (2005) Grounded theory in the 21st Century: A qualitative method for advancing social justice research, in N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook Of Qualitative Research (3rd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Chartrand, J. M. (1992). An empirical test of a model of nontraditional student adjustment. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 39*(2), 193-202.
- Chickering, A. W. & Reisser, L. (1993). *Education and identity*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Coan, T. M. (1889). The Hawaiian islands, their geography, their volcanoes, and their people. *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York, 21*, 149-166.
- Coan, T. M. (1899). Hawaiian ethnography. *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York, 31*(1), 24-30.
- Cortes, C. E. (2000). The diversity within: Intermarriage, identity and campus community. *About Campus, 5*(1), 5-10.
- Creamer, B. (2012). Hawaii 2011: The way we live. *Hawaii Business Magazine*.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches. 3rd Edition*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Daniels, R. (1997). No lamps were lit for them: Angel island and the historiography of Asian American immigration, *Journal of American Ethnic History, 17*(1), 3-18.
- Davies, R. & Ikeno, O. (2002) *The Japanese mind: Understanding contemporary Japanese culture*. VT: Tuttle Publishing.
- Daws, G. (1968). *Shoal of time: A history of Hawaiian islands*. Toronto, Ontario: The Macmillan Company.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- DeWitz, S. J., Woolsey, M. L. & Walsh, W. B. (2009) College student retention: An exploration of the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and purpose in life among college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50(1), 19-34.
- Edles, L. (2004). Rethinking 'race', 'ethnicity' and 'culture': Is Hawai'i the 'model minority' state? *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 27(1), 37-68.
- Edman, J. L. & Brazil, B. (2009). Perceptions of campus climate, academic efficacy and academic success among community college students: An ethnic comparison. *Social Psychology of Education: An International Journal*, 12(3), 371-383.
- Elmers, M. T., & Pike, G. R. (1997). Minority and non-minority adjustment to college: Differences or similarities? *Research in Higher Education*, 38, 77-97.
- Evans, N. J., Forney, D. S. & Guido-DiBrito, F. (1998). *Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Farber, D., & Bailey, B. (1996). The fighting man as tourist: The politics of tourist culture in Hawai'i during World War II. *Pacific Historical Review*, 65(4), 641-660.
- Fassler, C. R. (2003, November 30). Do your homework before picking a college. *Honolulu Star Bulletin*. Retrieved from <http://archives.starbulletin.com/2003/11/30/editorial/special.html>
- Fassler, C. R. (2004, November 14). To go or not to go? *Honolulu Star Bulletin*. Retrieved from <http://archives.starbulletin.com/2004/11/14/editorial/special.html>
- Feagin, J. R., Vera, H., & Imani, N. (1996). *The agony of education: Black students at White colleges and universities*. New York: Routledge.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Fiske, S. T., Cuddy, A. J., Glick, P., & Xu, J. (2002). A model of (often mixed) stereotype content: Competence and warmth respectively follow from perceived status and competition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82*, 878–902.
- Fornander, A. (1880). *An account of the Polynesian race its origin and migrations and the ancient history of the Hawaiian people to the times of Kamehameha I*. Ludgate Hill, London: Trubner & Co.
- Frisbie, W., Cho, Y., & Hummer, R. (2001). Immigration and the health of Asian and Pacific Islander adults in the U.S. *American Journal of Epidemiology, 153* (4), 372–380.
- Fraenkel, J. R., & Wallen, N. E. (2008). *How to design and evaluate research in education*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- Frenette, M. (2006). Too Far to Go On? Distance to School and University Participation. *Education Economics, 14*(1), 31-58.
- Gans, H. (1997). Toward a reconciliation of assimilation and pluralism: The interplay of acculturation and ethnic retention. *International Migration Review, (31)*, 4, 875-892.
- Gee, G. C., Ro, A., Shariff-Marco, S., & Chae, D. Racial discrimination and health among Asian Americans: Evidence, assessment, and directions for future research. *Epidemiologic Reviews, 31*, 130-151.
- Geschwender, J. A., Carroll-Seguin, R., & Brill, H. (1988). The Portuguese and Haoles of Hawaii: Implications for the Origin of Ethnicity. *American Sociological Review, 53*, 515-527.
- Glick, C. (1938). Transition from familism to nationalism among Chinese in Hawai‘i. *The American Journal of Sociology, 43*(5), 734-743.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Gloria, A. M., & Robinson-Kurpius, S. E. (1996). The validation of the Cultural Congruity Scale and the University Environment Scale with Chicano/a students. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 18*, 533-549.
- Go for Broke National Education Center. (2015). *Historical Information*. Retrieved from http://www.goforbroke.org/history/history_historical_veterans_442nd.php
- Gonzales, K. P. (2003). Campus culture and the experiences of Chicano students in a predominantly White university. *Urban Education, 37*(2), 193-218.
- Grant, G., & Ogawa, D. M. (1993). Living Proof: Is Hawaii the answer? *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 530*, 137–154.
- Guiffrida, D. A. (2003). African American student organizations as agents of social integration. *Journal of College Student Development, 44*(3), 304–319.
- Guiffrida, D. A. (2006). Toward a cultural advancement of Tinto's theory. *Review of Higher Education, 29*, 451-472.
- Hall, W. D., Cabrera, A. F., & Milem, J. F. (2010) A tale of two groups: Differences between minority students and non-minority students in their predispositions to and engagement with diverse peers at predominantly white institution. *Research in Higher Education, 52*(4), 420-439.
- Hagedorn, L. S., Chi, Y., Cepeda, R. M., & McLain, M. (2007). An investigation of critical mass: The role of Latino representation in the success of urban community college students. *Research in Higher Education, 42*(1), 73-91.
- Haggis, T. (2006). Pedagogies for diversity: Retaining critical challenge amidst fears of 'dumbing down.' *Studies in Higher Education, 31*(5), 521-535.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Hamilton, M. (2006, November 3). Rural students: Common obstacles, different settings.

Chronicle of Higher Education, pp B14-15.

Hawaii P-20. (2013). *College and career readiness indicators reports*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.p20hawaii.org/resources/college-and-career-readiness-indicators-reports>

Hendricks, A., Smith, K., Caplow, J., and Donaldson, J. (1996). A grounded approach to determining the factors related to the persistence of minority students in professional programs. *Innovative Higher Education*, (21), 113-126.

Ho, C., & Jackson, J. W. (2001). Attitudes toward Asian Americans: Theory and measurement.

Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 31, 1553–1581.

Hofstede, G. (1993). Cultural constraints in management theories. *The Executive*, 7(1), 81.

Hune, S. (2002). *Demographics and diversity of Asian American college students*. Working with

Asian American college students. New Directions for Student Services (No. 97, pp. 11–20). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Hunt, T. L. & Lipo, C. P. (2006). Rethinking the fall of Easter Island: New evidence points to an

alternative explanation for a civilization's collapse. *American Scientist*, 94, 412-419.

Hurtado, S. & Carter, D. F. (1997). Effects of college transition and perceptions of the campus

racial climate on Latino college students' sense of belonging. *Sociology of Education*, 70(4), 324-345.

Hurtado, S., Carter, D. F., & Spuler, A. (1996) Latino student transition to college: Assessing

difficulties and factors in successful college adjustment. *Research in Higher Education*, 37(2), 135-157.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Ibrahim, F., Ohnishi, H., & Sandhu, D. S. (1997). Asian American identity development: A culture specific model for South Asian Americans. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development, 25*(1), 34-50.
- Ichiyama, M. A., McQuarrie, E. F. & Ching, K. (1996) Contextual influences on ethnic identity among Hawaiian students in the mainland United States. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology (27)*4, 458-475.
- Jackson, L., Pancer, S., Pratt, M., & Hunsberger, B. (2000). Great expectations: The relation between expectancies and adjustment during the transition to university. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 30*, 2100-2125.
- Johnson, D. R., Soldner, M., Leonard, J. B., Alvarez, P., Inkelas, K. K., Rowan-Kenyon, H., & Longerbearm, S. (2007). Examining Sense of Belonging Among First-Year Undergraduates from Different Racial/Ethnic Groups. *Journal of College Student Development, 48*(5), 525-542.
- Jones, S. R., Torres, V., & Arminio, J. (2006) *Negotiating the complexities of qualitative research in higher education: Fundamental elements and issues*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kalsner, L. & Pistole, M. C. (2003). College adjustment in a multiethnic sample: Attachment, separation-individuation, and ethnic identity. *Journal of College Student Development, 44*(1), 92-109.
- Kam, K. (2013). On some college campuses, a focus on Asian American mental health. *New American Media*. Retrieved from <http://newamericamedia.org/2013/09/on-some-college-campus-a-focus-on-asian-american-mental-health.php>

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Kawai, Y. (2005). Stereotyping Asian Americans: the dialectic of the model minority and the yellow peril. *The Howard Journal of Communication*, 16(2), 109-130.
- Keesing, R. M. (1974). Theories of culture. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 3, 73-97.
- Kiang, P (2002). Stories and structures of persistence: Ethnographic learning through research and practice in Asian American Studies. In Y. Zou & H. T. Trueba (Eds.), *Advances in ethnographic research: From our theoretical and methodological roots to post-modern critical ethnography*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Kim, J. (1981). *The process of Asian American identity development: A study of Japanese American women's perceptions of their struggle to achieve positive identities* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Scholarworks @UMassAmherst. (AAI8118010).
- Kim, Y. (2011). *Minorities in Higher Education*. Washington, DC: American Council on Education.
- Kodama, C., McEwen, M. K., Liang, C. T. H., & Lee, S. (2002). An Asian American perspective on psychosocial student development theory. *New Directions for Student Services*, 97, 45-60.
- Kristof, N.D. (2006, May 14). The Model Students. *The New York Times*.
- Kuh, G. D. (2001/2002). Organizational culture and student persistence: Prospects and puzzles. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, theory & Practice*, 3(1), 23-39.
- Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Buckley, J. A., Bridges, B. K., & Hayek, J. C. (2006). *What matters to student success: A review of the literature*. Bloomington: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research.
- Kuh, G. D. & Love, P. (2000). A cultural perspective on student departure. J. Braxton, (Ed.), *Rethinking the student departure puzzle*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Kwon, B. L. (1999). *Beyond Ke 'eaumoku: Koreans, nationalism, and local culture in Hawai'i*. New York: Garland.
- Lee, R. M., & Davis, C. (2000). Cultural orientation, past multicultural experience, and a sense of belonging on campus for Asian American college students. *Journal of College Student Development, 41*(1), 110–115.
- Lee, J. J., Sax, L. J., Kim, K., & Hagedorn, L. S. (2004). Understanding differences among community college students across varying levels of parental education. *Community College Review, 32*(1), 1-20.
- Lee, P. A., & Ying, Y. (2001). Asian American adolescents' academic achievement: A look behind the model minority image. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 3*, 35–48.
- Lester, S. (1999) *An introduction to phenomenological research*. Taunton UK: Stan Lester Developments: Retrieved from www.sld.demon.co.uk/resmethy.pdf
- Lewis, A. E., Chesler, M., & Forman, T. A. (2000). The impact of “colorblind” ideologies on students of color: Intergroup relations at a predominantly White university. *The Journal of Negro Education, 69*(1–2), 74–91.
- Li, G. & Wang, L. (Eds.). (2008). *Model minority myth revisited*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Lincoln, YS. & Guba, EG. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Lippincott, J. A., & German, N. (2007). From blue collar to ivory tower: Counseling first-generation working-class students. In J. A. Lippincott & R. B. Lippincott (Eds.), *Special*

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- populations in college counseling: A handbook for mental health professionals* (pp. 89–98). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Loo, C. M., & Rolison, G. (1986). Alienation of ethnic minority students at a predominantly White university. *Journal of Higher Education*, 57, 58-77.
- Lopez Turley, R. N. (2009). College Proximity: Mapping Access to Opportunity. *Sociology of Education*, 82(2), 126-146.
- Loyalka, M. (2013). *Eating bitterness: Stories from the front lines of China's great urban migration*. CA: University of California Press.
- Luttrell, W. (2010). The promise of qualitative research in education. In W. Luttrell (Ed.), *Qualitative educational research* (p. 1). New York: Routledge.
- Maddux, W., Galinsky, A., Cuddy, A., & Polifroni, M. (2008). When being a model minority is good . . . and bad: Realistic threat explains negativity toward Asian Americans. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34 (1), 74–89
- Maly, K. (2001). *Mālama pono I ka 'āina-An overview of the Hawaiian cultural landscape*. Retrieved from <http://www.kumupono.com/Hawaiian%20Cultural%20Landscape.pdf>
- Masuoka, J. (1940). The structure of the Japanese family in Hawai'i. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 43(2), 168-178.
- Maramba, D. (2008). Immigrant families and the college experience: Perspective of Filipina Americans. *Journal of College Student Development*, 49(4), 336-350.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2010). Validity: How you might be wrong. In W. Luttrell (Ed.), *Qualitative educational research*. New York: Routledge.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

McDonald, W. M. (2002). Absent voices: Assessing students' perception of campus community.

In W. M. McDonald and associates (Eds.), *Creating campus community: In search of Ernest Boyer's Legacy* (pp.145-178). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Miller, M. J., Yang, M., Hui, K., Choi, N. Y., & Lim, R. H. (2011). Acculturation, enculturation, and Asian American college students' mental health and attitudes toward seeking professional psychological help. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 58*(3), 346-357.

Miyares, I. M. (2008). Expressing "local culture" in Hawaii. *The Geographical Review, 98*(4), 513-531.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Mulder, C. H., & Clark, W. A. (2002). Leaving home for college and gaining independence. *Environment and Planning A, 34*(6), 981-999.

Murguia, E., Padilla, R. V., & Pavel, M. (1991). Ethnicity and the concept of social integration in Tinto's model of institutional departure. *Journal of College Student Development, 32*, 433-439.

Museus, S. D. (2008). The role of ethnic student organizations in fostering African American and Asian American students cultural adjustment and membership at predominantly White institutions. *Journal or College Student Development, 49*(6), 568-586.

Museus, S. D. (2009). A critical analysis of the exclusion of Asian Americans from higher education research and discourse. In L. Zhan (Ed.), *Asian American voices: Engaging, empowering, enabling* (pp. 59–76). New York: NLN Press.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Museus, S.D., & Jayakumar, U. M. (Eds.) (2012). *Creating campus cultures: Fostering success among racially diverse student populations*. New York: Routledge.

Museus, S. D. & Kiang, P. (2009) Deconstructing the model minority myth and how it contributes to the invisible minority reality in higher education research. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 142, 5-15.

Museus, S. D., Lam, S., Huang, C., Kem, P., & Tan, K. (2012). Cultural integration in campus subcultures: Where the cultural, academic, and social spheres of college life collide. In S. D. Museus & U. M. Jayakumar (Eds.). *Creating campus cultures: Fostering success among racially diverse student populations* (pp. 106-129). New York: Routledge

Museus, S. D. & Maramba, D. C. (2011) The impact of culture on Filipino American Students' sense of belonging. *The Review of Higher Education*, 34(2), 251-258.

Museus, S. D., Ravello, J. N., & Vega, B. E. (2012). The campus racial culture: A critical race counterstory. In S. D. Museus & U. M. Jayakumar (Eds.), *Creating campus cultures: Fostering success among racially diverse student populations* (pp. 28-45). New York: Routledge.

Museus, S. D., & Truong, K. A. (2009). Disaggregating qualitative data on Asian Americans in campus climate research and assessment. In S. D. Museus (Ed.), *Conducting research on Asian Americans in higher education*. New Directions for Institutional Research (No. 142, pp. 17–26). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Museus, S. D. & Quaye, S. J. (2009). Toward an intercultural perspective of racial and ethnic minority college student persistence. *The Review of Higher Education*, 33(1), 67-94.

Museus, S. D., Vue, R., Nguyen, T., & Yeung, F. (2013). A Southeast Asian American identity model: Merging theoretical perspectives and considering intersectional identities. In

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Museus, S. D., Maramba, D. C. & Teranishi, R. T. (Eds.), *The minority within the minority: Asian Americans in higher education*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Nadal, K. L. (2004). Pilipino American identity development model. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 32(1), 45-62.
- Nagel, J. (1994). Construction Ethnicity: Creating and recreating ethnic identity and culture, *Social Problems*, 41(1), 152-176.
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2010). 1996-2008 *Status and trends in the education of racial and ethnic minorities*. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/2010015/tables/table_27a.asp
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2012). *Fast facts: Graduation rates*. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=40>
- National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education (CARE). (2008). *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders: Facts, not fiction: Setting the record straight*. (CARE Report 2008). Retrieved from http://www.nyu.edu/projects/care/docs/2008_CARE_Report.pdf
- National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education (CARE). (2011). *The Relevance of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the College Completion Agenda*. (CARE Report 2011). Retrieved from http://www.nyu.edu/projects/care/docs/2011_CARE_Report.pdf
- National Technical Assistance Center (NTAC). (2007). AAPI Culture Brief: Hawaii. Honolulu, HI.
- Neuliep, J. W. (2013). *Intercultural Communication* (5th ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Newbaker, P. (2014). First-year persistence rate of college students declines [Press release].

Retrieved from

http://www.studentclearinghouse.org/about/media_center/press_releases/files/release_2014-07-10.pdf

Nora, A., & Cabrera, A. F. (1996). The role of perceptions of prejudice and discrimination on the adjustment of minority students to college. *The Journal of Higher Education, 67*(2), 119–148.

Nunez, A. (2009). Latino students' transitions to college: A social and intercultural capital perspective. *Harvard Educational Review, 79*(1), 22-48.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Collins, K. M. T. (2007). A typology of mixed methods sampling designs in social science research. *The Qualitative Report, 12*(2), 281-316.

Okamura, J. (1980). Aloha kanaka me ke aloha 'aina: Local culture and society in Hawai'i. *Amerasia, 7*(2), 119-137.

Okamura, J. (1994). Why there are no Asian Americans in Hawaii: The continuing significance of local identity. *Social Process in Hawaii, 35*, 161-178.

Okamura, J. (2008). *Ethnicity and Inequality in Hawaii*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Paul, E. L., & Brier, S. (2001). Friendsickness in the transition to college: College predictors and college adjustment correlates. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 79*, 77-89.

Pascarella, E., & Terenzini, P. (2005). How college affects students (Vol. 2): A third decade of research. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Pearce, J., Down, B., & Moore, E. (2008). Social class, identity and the good student: negotiating university culture. *Australian Journal of Education*, 52(3), 257-271.
- Petersen, W. (1969). The classification of subnations in Hawai'i: An essay in the sociology of knowledge. *American Sociological Review*, 34(6), 863-877.
- Porter, O. F. (1989, March 27). *The influence of institutional control and the persistence of minority students: A descriptive analysis*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No.ED306340). Retrieved January 23, 2013 from ERIC database.
- Prescott, B. T. & Bransberger, P. (2012) *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates (eighth edition)*. Boulder, CO: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.
- Reed, G. G. (2005). Fastening and unfastening identities: Negotiating identity in Hawai'i. *Studies in Cultural Politics of Education*, 22(3), 327-339.
- Reid, L., & Radhakrishnan, P. (2003). Race matters: The relation between race and general campus climate. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 9(3), 263-275.
- Rendon, L. I. (1994). Validating culturally diverse students: Toward a new model of learning student development. *Innovative Higher Education*, 19(1), 33-51.
- Rendon, L. I., Jalomo, R. E., & Nora, A. (2000). Theoretical considerations in the study of minority student retention in higher education. In John M. Braxton (Ed.) *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp. 127-156). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Richards, T. (1912). The future of the Japanese in Hawai'i: Things problematic, things probable, things potential. *The Journal of Race Development*, 2(4), 399-423.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Roberts, R., Phinney, J. S.; Masse, L. C.; Chen, Y. R.; Roberts, C. R.; and Romero, A. (1999). The structure of ethnic identity of young adolescents from diverse ethnocultural groups. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 19(3), 301-322.
- Rohrer, J. (2008). Disrupting the 'melting pot': Racial discourse in Hawai'i and the naturalization of haole." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 31(6), 1110-1125.
- Root, M. P. P. (1990) Resolving "other" status: Identity development of biracial individuals. *Women & Therapy*, 9(1-2), 185-205.
- Saffu, K. (2003) The role and impact of culture on South Pacific island entrepreneurs. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research*, 9(2), 55-73.
- Sai, D. K. (2011). *Ua mau ke ea sovereignty endures: An overview of the political and legal history of the Hawaiian islands*. Honolulu, HI: Pu'a Foundation.
- Samuels, F. (1970). The oriental in-group in Hawai'i. *Phylon*, 31(2), 148-156.
- Schein, E. H. (1996). Culture: The missing concept in organization studies. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 41(2), 229-240.
- Schlossberg, N. K. (1984). *Counseling adults in transition: Linking Practice with Theory*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing.
- Silva, N. K. (2004). *Aloha betrayed: Native Hawaiian resistance to American colonialism*. London: Duke University Press.
- Smith, J. S., & Wertlieb, E. C. (2005). Do first-year college students' expectations align with their first-year experiences? *NASPA Journal*, 42(2), 153-175.
- Spady, W. (1970). Dropouts from higher education: An interdisciplinary review and synthesis. *Interchange*, 1, 64-85.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Spady, W. (1971). Dropouts from higher education: Toward an empirical model. *Interchange*, 2, 38-62.
- Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Wakhungu, P., Yuan, X., & Harrell, A. (2015). *Completing College: A State-level view of student attainment rates (Signature Report No. 8a)*. Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. Retrieved from http://research.studentclearinghouse.org/our_projects.php
- Spickard, P. (2007). Wither the Asian American Coalition? *Pacific historical review*, 74(4), 585-604.
- St. John, P., and Noell, J. (1989). The effects of student financial aid on access to higher education: An analysis of progress with special consideration of minority enrollment. *Research in Higher Education*, 30(6), 563-581.
- Stage, F. K., & Hossler, D. (2000). Where is the student? Linking student behaviors, college choice and college persistence. In J. M. Braxton (Ed.), *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp. 170–194). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Stake, R. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Stokes, J. F. G. (1930). Origin of the condemnation of Captain Cook in Hawai'i: A study in cause and effect. In the 39th *Report of the Hawaiian Historical Society For the Year 1930 with Papers Read at the Annual Meeting*, February 10, 1931 (pp. 68-104). Honolulu, HI: Hawaiian Historical Society.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Strayhorn, T. L. (2008). The role of supportive relationships in facilitating African American males' success in college. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 45(1), 26-48.
- Sue, S. & Sue, D. W. (1971). Chinese-American personality and mental health. *Amerasia Journal*, 2, 39-49.
- Suyemoto, K. L., Kim, G. S., Tanabe, M., Tawa, J., & Day, S. C. (2009). Challenging the model minority myth: Engaging Asian American students in research on Asian American college student experiences. *New directions for institutional research*, 142, 41-55. Doi: 10.1002/ir
- Suzuki, B. H. (2002) Revisiting the model minority stereotype: Implications for student affairs practice and higher education. *New directions for student services*, 97, 21-32.
- Suzuki, B. H. (1989) Asian Americans as the 'Model Minority': Outdoing Whites? Or Media Hype? *Change*, 21(6) 13–19.
- Swail, W. S., Redd, K. E., & Perna, L. W. (2003). *Retaining Minority Students in Higher Education: A Framework for Success*. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 2. Washington, DC: The George Washington University, School of Education and Human Development.
- Tamura, E. (2001). Asian Americans in the history of education: An historiographical essay. *History of education quarterly*, 41(1), 58-71.
- Terenzini, P., Rendon, L., Upcraft, L., Miller, S., Allison, K., Gregg, P., and Jalomo, R. (1994). The transition to college: Diverse students, diverse stories. *Research in Higher Education*, (35), 57-73.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Terenzini, P. T. & Reason, R. D. (2005, November 19). Passing the first year of college: rethinking the effects of college on students. Paper presented at the 2005 Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference, Philadelphia, PA.
- Tierney, W. G. (1999). Models of minority college-going and retention: Cultural integrity versus cultural suicide. *Journal of Negro Education, 68*(1), 80-91.
- Tierney, W. G. (2000). Power, identity, and the dilemma of college student departure. In J. M. Braxton (Ed.), *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp. 213–234). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Tinto, V. (1975). Dropouts from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research. *Review of Educational Research, (45)*, 89-125.
- Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition* (2nd ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Tinto, V. (2006). Research and practice of student retention: What next? *Journal of College Student Retention, 8*(1), 1-19.
- Toth, C. (2008, August 11). Obama: Local-or trying to be? *The Honolulu Advertiser*. Retrieved from: <http://dailydish.staradvertiserblogs.com/2008/08/11/obama-local-%E2%80%94-or-trying-to-be/>
- Torres, V. (2003). Mi casa is not exactly like your house. *About Campus, 8*(2), 2–7.
- Trask, H. (2000). Settles of color and “immigrant” hegemony: “Locals” in Hawai‘i. *Amerasia Journal, 26*(2), 1-24.
- U.S. Army. (1942). *A pocket guide to Hawai‘i (613389)* [Brochure]. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

United States Census Bureau (USCB). (2012a). *Educational attainment – People 25 years old and over by median income and sex*. Retrieved from

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/people/>

United States Census Bureau (USCB). (2012b). *Most children younger than age 1 are minorities, census bureau reports*. Retrieved from

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb12-90.html>

United States Census Bureau (USCB). (2013a). *Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month: May 2013*. Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/pdf/cb13ff-09_asian.pdf

United States Census Bureau (USCB). (2013b.). *About Race*. Retrieved from

<http://www.census.gov/population/race/about/>

United States Census Bureau (USCB). (n.d.). *Census regions and divisions of the United States*.

Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/geo/www/us_regdiv.pdf

University of Hawaii Committee on Human Studies (2013). Retrieved June 17, 2013 from

<http://hawaii.edu/irb/html/categories.php#exempt>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2001). *Mental health: Culture, race and ethnicity—A supplement to mental health: A report of the Surgeon General*. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Office of the Surgeon General.

Vandello, J. A. & Cohen, D. (1999). Patterns of individualism and collectivism across the United States. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, (77)2, 270-292.

Veroff, J. B. & Goldberger, N. R. (1995). What's in a Name? The case for "Intercultural" psychology. In N. R. Goldberger & J. B. Veroff (Eds.). *The culture and psychology reader* (pp. 3-21). New York: New York University Press.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- Vollmer, M. A., & Hedlund, D. E. (1994, October). *Change in the perceptions of rural adolescents after exposure to the outside world*. Paper presented at the National Rural Education Association Research Forum, Tuscaloosa, AL.
- Wei, M., Ku, T. Y., & Liao, K. Y. (2011). Minority stress and college persistence attitudes among African American, Asian American, and Latino students: Perception of University Environment as a mediator. *Cultural diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 17*(2), 195-203.
- Wei, W. (1993). *The Asian American movement*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Welch, W. M. (2011, February 25). More Hawai'i residents identify as mixed race. *USA Today*. Retrieved from http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/census/2011-02-24-hawaii-census_N.htm
- Wooden, W. S. (1981). *What price paradise? Changing social patterns in Hawaii*. Washington, D. C.: University Press of America, Inc.
- Yau, H. K., Sun, H. & Cheng, A. L. F. (2012). Relationships among academic, social and psychological adjustments to university life: Comparisons across gender. *Tertiary education and management, 18*(2), 97-113.
- Ying, Y., Lee, P. A., Tsai, J. L., Hung, Y., Lin, M., & Wan, C. (2001). Asian American college students as model minorities: An examination of their overall competence. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 7*, 59–74.
- Yoo, H. C., Burrola, K. S., & Steger, M. F. (2010). A preliminary report on a new measure: Internalization of the Model Minority Myth Measure (IM-4) and its psychological correlates among Asian American college students. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 57*, 114–127. doi:10.1037/a0017871

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Young, M. (2004). Native claims: Cultural citizenship, ethnic expressions, and the rhetorics of “Hawaiianness.” *College English*, 67(1), 83-101.

Zelinsky, W. (2001). *The enigma of ethnicity: Another American dilemma*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press.

APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Aloha,

I am a doctoral student at the University of Hawai‘i and Mānoa in the department of Educational Administration. I am attempting to complete a research project as part of my requirements. The purpose of this project is to explore the how cultural incongruencies affect the adjustment process of Asian American Hawai‘i residents attending predominantly White institutions (PWIs) in the Northeast. Recommendations from the results of this study may help institutions better help Asian American Hawai‘i residents with their adjustment.

I am writing to see if you would be interested in participating in this study. If so, I would like to interview you online (via Skype, Facetime, Google Hangouts) at a time convenient for you. The interview will consist of a variety of open ended questions, and should take about an hour. Interview questions will include questions like, “How would you describe your college experience so far?” and “What has been the greatest challenges to adjusting to college?” Only you and I will be present during the interview. I will record the interview so that I can later transcribe the interview and analyze the responses. These recordings will only be accessible by me and the chair of my dissertation committee. Your identity will be kept confidential throughout the process and the recordings will be destroyed upon completion of my dissertation. I would also be interested to know of other people on your campus that you feel would have unique insights on the impact that international students have had on your campus. If you and they are willing, I would appreciate it if you could provide me with their name and contact information or forward this email on to them.

*If you are willing to participate, please complete this survey:
https://docs.google.com/a/hawaii.edu/forms/d/1En2eIiV8aUnvYqscyf-hBG_3AtqAd-oDb3YbVCq0jTA/viewform and I will be in touch if you are eligible.*

If you are selected as one of at least ten students that I interview for this study, compensation for your time, I will provide you with a \$10 gift certificate to Starbucks.

If you have any questions about this research project, please call me at 808-734-9251 or email me at cyhonda@hawaii.edu. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the UH Human Studies Program, by phone at (808) 956-5007, or uhirb@hawaii.edu.

Your help and contribution to the completion of my degree will be deeply appreciated!

Mahalo!

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**University of Hawai'i
Consent to Participate in Research Project:**

Majority to Minority: The adjustment of Asian American Hawai'i residents at predominantly white institutions

My name is Cheri Souza and I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UH) in the Department of Educational Administration. As part of the requirements for earning my doctoral degree, I am doing a research project. The purpose of my project is to examine how cultural incongruencies affect the adjustment process of Asian American Hawai'i residents attending predominantly White institutions (PWI's) in the Northeast. I am asking you to participate because you are an Asian American Hawai'i resident attending a predominantly white institution.

If you are selected for this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview consisting of a variety of open ended questions, and should take about an hour. Interview questions will include questions like, "How would you describe your college experience so far?"; "What has been the greatest challenges to adjusting to college?"; and "Would you say that your surroundings of your childhood are similar or different to your college surroundings?"

Activities and Time Commitment: If you choose to participate in this project, I will first ask you to complete a preliminary demographic questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire will take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. If you meet my criteria, I will then conduct an interview you via Skype or Facetime at a time and date convenient for you. The interview will consist of 10-15 open-ended questions, and will take one hour to one and a half hours. The interview will include questions like, "What factors (programs/people) have been instrumental in your adjustment to college?" and "Would you say that your surroundings of your childhood are similar or different to your college surroundings? How, please explain." Only you and I will be present during the interview and I will be recording the interview so that I can later transcribe the interview to analyze and document your responses. You will be one of approximately ten students whom I will interview for this study.

Benefits and Risks: There may be a direct benefit to you for participating in this interview if you will be continuing at your institution another semester or longer. As the results of this study will be turned into a dissertation and available for review. If you are graduating this semester, there are no direct benefits to you for participating in this interview. I hope; however, that the results of this project will help PWI's improve their services offered to benefit future students. I believe there is little risk to you in participating in this research project. If however, you become stressed or uncomfortable answering any of the interview questions or discussing topics with me during the interview, we can skip the question, take a break, stop the interview, or you may withdraw from the project altogether.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Privacy and Confidentiality: During this research project, I will keep all data in a secure location. Only my University of Hawai'i advisor and I will have access to the data, although legally authorized agencies, including the UH Committee on Human Studies, can review research records. After I transcribe the interviews, I will erase/destroy the recordings. When I type and report the results of my research project, I will not use your name or any other personally identifying information. Rather I will use pseudonyms (fake names) and report my findings in a way that protects your privacy and confidentiality to the extent allowed by law.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits. Your participation or non-participation will not impact your rights to future services at KCC.

As compensation for time spent participating in the research project, I will provide you with a \$10 gift card to Starbucks.

Questions: If you have any questions about this project, please contact me at via phone (808) 734-9251 or e-mail (cyhonda@hawaii.edu). You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

If you have any questions about your rights in this project, you can contact the University of Hawaii, Human Studies Program, by phone at (808) 956-5007 or by e-mail at uhirb@hawaii.edu.

Please keep the section above for your records.

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign the following signature portion of this consent form and return it to me at cyhonda@hawaii.edu.

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Tear or cut here

Signature(s) for Consent:

I agree to join in the research project entitled, “*Majority to Minority: The adjustment of Asian American Hawai‘i residents at predominantly white institutions.*” I understand that I can change my mind about being in this project, at any time, by notifying the researcher.

Your Name (Print): _____

Your Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C: PREQUALIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE

[Edit this form](#)

Interest Questionnaire

Thank you for your interest in participating in the my study examining the adjustment process of Asian American (specifically Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Filipino) Hawaii residents who are undergraduates at Predominantly White Institutions in the Northeast. Please complete this simple questionnaire and I will be in contact with you if you meet study criteria. Mahalo! Cheri

*** Required**

First Name *

Last Name *

Age: *

Gender *

Male

Female

What college are you currently attending? *

Do you identify as Local? *

Yes

No

Are you currently a resident of Hawaii? *
(example: You or your parents pay Hawaii State Taxes, you are currently paying out-of-state tuition at your college/university outside of Hawaii, you have a Hawaii driver's license)

Yes

No

What is your current class level? *

Freshman

cs.google.com/a/hawaii.edu/forms/d/1En2eliV8aUnvYqscyf-hBG_3AtqAd-oDb3YbVCq0jTA/viewform

- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Other:

How many years have you been at your current college/university? *

- 0-1 years
- 1-2 years
- 2-3 years
- 3-4 years
- 4-5 years
- Other:

Before attending your current institution, how long did you live in Hawaii? *

Which definition do you most identify with? *

- You immigrated to Hawaii
- Your parents immigrated to Hawaii
- Your grandparents immigrated to Hawaii
- Your great grandparents immigrated to Hawaii
- Your great great grandparents (or older) immigrated to Hawaii
- Other:

Do you identify as Japanese? *

- Yes
- No

Do you identify as Chinese? *

- Yes
- No

Do you identify as Korean? *

- Yes
- No

Do you identify as Filipino? *

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

7/6/2015

Interest Questionnaire

- Yes
- No

Birthplace (City, State) *

Please list all high schools you have attended. *

Year of your high school graduation *

Preferred email address *

Preferred phone number *

Please contact me by: *

Email

Phone

Either

Other:

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

100%: You made it.

Powered by

This form was created inside of University of Hawaii.

[Report Abuse](#) - [Terms of Service](#) - [Additional Terms](#)

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

APPENDIX D: IRB APPROVAL LETTER



UNIVERSITY
of HAWAII
MĀNOA

Office of Research Compliance
Human Studies Program

February 18, 2014

TO: Cheri Souza
Principal Investigator
Educational Admin

FROM: Denise A. Lin-DeShetler, MPH, MA
Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Denise A. Lin-DeShetler".

SUBJECT: CHS #21902- "Majority to Minority: The Adjustment of Asian American Hawaii Residents at Predominantly White Institutions"

This letter is your record of the Human Studies Program approval of this study as exempt.

On Feb 18, 2014, the University of Hawaii'i (UH) Human Studies Program approved this study as exempt from federal regulations pertaining to the protection of human research participants. The authority for the exemption applicable to your study is documented in the Code of Federal Regulations at 45CFR 46.101(b)(Exempt Category 2).

Exempt studies are subject to the ethical principles articulated in The Belmont Report, found at <http://www.hawaii.edu/irb/html/manual/appendices/A/belmont.html>.

Exempt studies do not require regular continuing review by the Human Studies Program. However, if you propose to modify your study, you must receive approval from the Human Studies Program prior to implementing any changes. You can submit your proposed changes via email at uhirb@hawaii.edu. (The subject line should read: Exempt Study Modification.) The Human Studies Program may review the exempt status at that time and request an application for approval as non-exempt research.

In order to protect the confidentiality of research participants, we encourage you to destroy private information which can be linked to the identities of individuals as soon as it is reasonable to do so. Signed consent forms, as applicable to your study, should be maintained for at least the duration of your project.

This approval does not expire. However, please notify the Human Studies Program when your study is complete. Upon notification, we will close our files pertaining to your study.

If you have any questions relating to the protection of human research participants, please contact the Human Studies Program at 956-5007 or uhirb@hawaii.edu. We wish you success in carrying out your research project.

1960 East-West Road
Biomedical Sciences Building B104
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
Telephone: (808) 956-5007
Fax: (808) 956-8683

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Please clarify things that you think are obvious to me since this is a study and I cannot have assumptions.

If you ever don't want to answer a question or want to skip a question, just let me know and we can either skip the question or come back to it. Also, if you ever want to stop the interview, just let me know.

All of your answers will be kept confidential, I am recording this interview with a digital voice recorder; however only myself and my advisor will have access to it. I will also be changing your name for privacy purposes.

How does cultural incongruence affect the adjustment process of Asian American Hawaii residents attending predominantly White institutions in the Northeast? Subordinate, but related questions were:

1. Can you tell me about
 - a. Family Structure and its characteristics
 - b. College student generation
 - c. The different ethnicities that were typically represented in the community you grew up in
 - d. The different ethnicities that were typically represented in the K-12 schools you attended
2. When thinking about your childhood values, are those values similar or different to the values of your college community?
 - a. How, please explain.
 - b. Which ones are most similar/different
 - c. How do you deal with living in a place where the community values may be different from what you're used to.
3. Do you ever feel like you need to explain your actions or behaviors? In the prequalification survey, you mentioned that you identified as Local. Could you tell me more about that? What does it mean to be Local?
4. When thinking about what you expected college to be like and when thinking about what college is really like, can you discuss similarities and differences between the two.
 - a. Can you give me an example of a time in college when you realized college was different from what you expected? How did you handle that?
 - b. What influenced your idea of what college would be like?
5. Tell me about your transition into college life.
 - a. Have you experienced any issues adjusting to college?
 - b. What has been your greatest challenges adjusting to college?

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

- c. Do you feel that you had an easier/harder time adjusting being from Hawaii?
 - d. Has technology influenced your adjustment to college?
 6. When thinking about your first semester/year, how would you compare your actual experience to your expectations?
 - a. Do you have other friends from Hawaii who went to the mainland for college?
 - b. When hearing about their experiences, do you feel that your adjustment process has been similar to theirs? (Find out where they are and how long they've been away)
 7. How would you describe your college experience so far?
 - a. Academically
 - b. Socially
 - c. Personally
 8. Were there specific people or programs have helped you adjust to college?
 9. Do you think the issues you experienced are similar to those of other students at your college?
 10. Can you tell me about the different groups of Asian students (International, mainland, Hawaii) and what's different between the groups?
 - a. Aside from being Asian, do you see any commonalities? Differences?
 11. Have you ever considered withdrawing from your college?
 - a. If yes, which factors made you want to withdraw?
 - b. Which factors made you want to stay?
 12. Prior to coming to college, did you consider yourself a minority? Please explain.
 13. Do you feel that being from Hawaii has impacted your adjustment to college?
 14. Do you feel that being an Asian American has impacted your adjustment to college?
 15. Do you feel that growing up in Hawaii and being Asian American influenced your childhood?
 16. How is being an Asian American in the Northeast is different or similar to being an Asian American in Hawaii?
 17. I've asked you a lot of questions, is there anything that I didn't ask you that I should have?
 18. Is there anything else you'd like to share.
 19. Do you have peeps contact and if so, would it be ok if I told them that you recommended I reach out to them (since I ?
- I'm still collecting data, would it be okay if I contacted you if I have further questions.

APPENDIX F: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographic Questionnaire

First Name

Last Name

What is your current enrollment status:

- Full-time student
- Part-time student
- Other:

As it relates to your experience at your college/university, how satisfied are you with:

| | Not satisfied | Somewhat satisfied | Satisfied | Very satisfied |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| The friendships you've made | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Your opportunity to meet new people | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| The diversity on campus | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| The diversity within the | | | | |

MAJORITY TO MINORITY

Demographic Questionnaire

community
surrounding
campus

Your overall
campus
experience

Your decision
to attend this
institution

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google
Forms.

100%: You made it.

Powered by

This form was created inside of University of Hawaii.
[Report Abuse](#) - [Terms of Service](#) - [Additional Terms](#)