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THE FORMATION OF SCHOLARS: CRITICAL NARRATIVES OF ASIAN  
AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION

A Dissertation Presented

by

LIZA A. TALUSAN

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies,  
University of Massachusetts Boston  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2016

Leadership in Education

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AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN HIGHER  
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LIZA A. TALUSAN

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## ABSTRACT

# THE FORMATION OF SCHOLARS: CRITICAL NARRATIVES OF ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

May 2016

Liza A. Talusan, B.A., Connecticut College  
M.A., New York University  
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Directed by Dr. Dwight Giles, Jr.

This dissertation addresses the formation of scholar identity as informed by an identity-conscious approach to doctoral student socialization, doctoral student development, and racial identity as expressed through the critical narratives of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in the field of higher education. The study explored the intersections of race, doctoral student socialization, and doctoral student development – three areas that have been approached as separate entities in existing literature. By using life history methodology and narrative inquiry, this study contributed to a more thorough understanding of racialized experiences in doctoral studies. Critical narrative was used as a methodological approach concerned with power and language in society where individuals can concretely question their own realities and identify the socio-ideological influence of systems on their practices and beliefs (Souto-Manning, 2012). Rather than

use terminology of counter-narrative, which positions a narrative as counter to an existing dominant narrative, the use of critical narrative is highlighted as a way to position the stories of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders as their own central story. This inquiry advances our understanding of ways to create and sustain more inclusive and engaging learning environments that support racial diversity in higher education and to better understand the barriers that have socially and historically marginalized Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders both in general and in doctoral education. Recommendations for practice include developing identity-conscious approaches to scholar formation, including but not limited to inclusive pedagogy and curriculum; mentoring and advising; culturally affirming networks; program and organizational orientation; and doctoral student support. A model of identity-conscious scholar formation is presented in which socialization, development, and racial identity must be operationalized as bidirectional and interactional processes.

This dissertation is dedicated to my family.

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I am thankful for the support and encouragement from my husband, Jorge Luis Vega III, who created space for me to focus on my studies by being an incredible parent. Thank you for supporting my journey.

I have learned that generations tend to exceed the educational achievements of the ones before them, and I have been blessed with two parents who had set the bar so high even given personal and professional challenges of immigrating to a new country and building a life for their family. Mom and Dad, I am forever grateful to you for expecting so much of my siblings and me. Thank you for all the babysitting nights and for letting me write at your dining room table. Yes, I am a “real doctor”, too. Thank you to my sisters, *Ate* Mary and *Ate* Grace who served as editors and who gave feedback on the thematic coding of this dissertation. Thank you to my brothers, Paul and Jonathan. Thank you to my in-laws John Patrick, Alonso, Kirsten and Jenny; and to my beautiful nieces and nephews who are the future of education. Thank you to Pastors Eva and Jorge Vega, Jr.; Andre, Marie, Pedro and Demisha for all of your encouragement over the years. To my entire family, this is truly a life history dissertation because of all of you.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

*My research is a part of my life and my life is a part of my research.*

*-- Gloria Ladson-Billings (2003)*

As a second generation Filipina American, I grew up straddling two cultural identities. I am the daughter of immigrant parents who came to the United States from the Philippines in order to seek a better life for themselves and their children. Though they were thousands of miles from home and newly rooted in the United States, my parents made sure that their home they created in Boston, Massachusetts reminded them as much as possible of the Philippines; however, a different world, land, and culture existed just outside of our front doors.

I experienced life as a young person with brown skin who stood out in a predominantly White school, suburban town, culturally Irish and Italian neighborhood, and all-White peer group. Within my family home, my parents spoke *Tagalog*, the language of their families and the language they shared with each other when they did not want my siblings or me to know what they were saying. Every meal, including breakfast, always included a small scoop of steamed white rice on our plates. And, on many occasions, the smell of fried fish, sweet and spicy *longanisa* sausages, or chicken *adobo* made with vinegar, soy sauce and a splash of coconut milk would hover in the air and make its way throughout the rooms of our gray-colored raised ranch. Though we lived in

a neighborhood where most children addressed adults by their first names or readily articulated what they liked or did not like, my four siblings and I were raised to respect our elders, to be obedient to authority, and not to challenge any rules. After disembarking from the yellow bus that took us back and forth from home to school, we removed our shoes upon entering the house and lined them along the side of the wall, toes facing in, heels facing out, and placed neatly on top of the faded woven mat. Each evening after dinner, we swept our bedrooms and common rooms with a *walis tambo*, a wispy, fan-like broom from the Philippines. Whenever the straw began to unravel from the handle, my job, even as a young adolescent, was to wind strips of gray duct tape around the broom, reinforcing it for another month's use. My other chore was to dust the mantle that held the picture of President Cory Aquino smiling in her yellow shirt, a statue of the Virgin Mary draped in light blue and white cloth, a wooden crucifix, and a small bottle of Holy water that a relative had brought back from the Philippines on a recent trip.

Culturally, my parents had created a simulacrum of the home they had left behind in the Philippines. Outside of our suburban house, however, my parents encouraged us to assimilate and blend in with the Americans. We understood that the America outside of our home worked differently from the kinship networks and collectivist communities that my parents tapped into in the Philippines. They encouraged us to build friendships outside of our home. For example, my two older sisters, two younger brothers and I were enrolled in leadership groups like Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts; we played recreational sports like church-league basketball and Little League; and we kept up with the latest trends in video games, movies and fashion. I was surprised to learn, when I met other

children of Filipino immigrants, that our peers thought my parents were “the cool parents” because of their acceptance of American ways and values. My parents allowed my sisters and me to perm our straight, black hair into spiral curls or bouncy waves, whatever was most in-style. We were allowed to wear makeup, shave our legs, and sleep over our friends’ houses. And, we learned this was not the case for many of our other Filipino American friends. Their immigrant parents kept strict parameters around their behaviors and interests. My parents’ hope for us is that we would fit in at school, in the neighborhood, and in our lives as New Americans, and they did not insist on raising us with the same expectations their parents had of them.

My parents immigrated to the United States for the same reason that many people come to America: opportunity. In the mid-1970s, they boarded a plane and left the warmth of the Philippines and the comfort of their large families to arrive in Boston to a cold, unfriendly, and unfamiliar new environment. For years, they yearned for the freedom that an American life promised them and, as medical school graduates, they were given the opportunity to pursue advanced training at one of Boston’s top hospitals.

Life as new immigrants was not easy. My parents worked multiple jobs, often moonlighting in hospitals, prisons and medical clinics and working opposite shifts so that one parent would be home for my sisters and me. After a few years, they saved enough money to move their young family out of a crowded apartment in Boston into a single-family home in the suburbs. We had a flower garden in the front yard, a white fence, and neighbors who rode bikes up and down the street from one house to the next. This was the American dream.



With the advantages of moving to a suburban community also came many sacrifices – ones that my siblings and I would only understand as we grew older. We had moved from a predominantly Black, Latino and Asian community in Boston to a homogenous, mostly White (Irish and Italian), mostly Catholic suburb. After the age of three, I grew up isolated from communities of color. Throughout adolescence and my teenage years, I assimilated and embraced the culture of Whiteness. At times, I wished I were White. Most times, I just pretended that I was White. I envied the blue eyes of my friends, their curly brown and blond hair, and their freckles that multiplied across their cheeks and noses during the summer. Though I had developed close social relationships, I rarely invited friends to my house out of fear that the odor of *patis*, a fermented fish sauce that salted many Filipino dishes, would give them something to tease me about or, worse, alienate me. I was afraid that my friends would laugh at me if I asked them to remove their shoes when they walked into the house. But, I was more afraid of what my parents would do if they saw my friends wearing shoes on their plush white carpet.

I wanted to be just like my White friends, but my dark hair, almond eyes, brown skin, and cultural traditions kept me on the margins of this White ideal. I simply hated being different. I simply hated being Asian. And, there was nothing around me to make me feel otherwise.

In an effort to not be noticed for my difference, I yearned to be invisible. I tried to ignore my Asian identity, and I struggled to keep it compartmentalized only to my home life. And, as I reflect on my early childhood experiences, this theme of invisibility was easy in the absence of formal education, curriculum, and mentoring related to my Asian

American identity. When I was at school, Whiteness and White culture was privileged and made central to my experiences: my teachers and nearly all of my classmates from kindergarten through high school were all White; my academic courses centered around the contributions and successes of Europeans and White Americans; and some of my classmates could trace their ancestry to the early settlers of New England.

In my entire educational experience, I remember only one time when the word “Philippines” was brought up in class. When studying the topic of war in my eighth grade history class, my teacher mentioned that the Philippines was an ally to the United States. I remember feeling a sense of pride that my cultural homeland was a part of our lesson plan. But, then, my teacher asked me to talk about the Philippines and what I knew about it. My teacher turned to me and asked, “So, Liza. Does your family speak TAG-a-long?” I felt everyone staring at me. I felt my difference. I was too embarrassed to correct his pronunciation of my parents’ language as *tah-GAH-lug*. I shook my head, sunk lower into my chair, and whispered, “Yes.” I secretly hoped he, nor any other teacher, would ever bring up the Philippines ever again.

Throughout my kindergarten through twelfth grade education, I never had any Asian or Asian American teachers or coaches. I did not have any Asian American mentors or role models – outside of my own family. And, I certainly did not learn about Asians or Asian Americans in my formal schooling. Growing up in the 1980s and 1990s, my limited understanding of Asian Americans was that they -- we -- were successful professionals, and that they achieved unbridled success in higher education. I, myself, honored discipline, obedience, and academic achievement and believed that my

experience was one shared by all Asian Americans. So, when I had first learned about the term *model minority*, I was proud to be one. I was one. I felt a sense of belonging that my achievements reflected this term.

The end of my K-12 schooling should have signaled changes in my environment; however, I left the homogenous, small town community where I grew up only to attend a college that was not much different. Though the student body was more racially diverse than at my elementary and high school, I felt comfortable being in predominantly White groups of students. In fact, in my first few years of college, I avoided student of color groups, organizations, and the multicultural center that kept sending me email invitations to an open house or a coffee hour. Around other students of color, I felt nervous because I did not have much in common with them. Once, I was approached by an Asian American student who, upon finding out I was Filipina, enthusiastically spoke to me in *Tagalog*. I responded rudely, “Yeah, I only speak English.” My sharp response embarrassed my peer, but I knew that I was feeling embarrassed as well. I felt embarrassed for not knowing the language of my people. I felt angry that I was so different from this person standing across from me. Upon reflection, I know this experience was my first introduction to internalized racism. But, at that moment, it was just another confirmation that I was embarrassed to be Asian.

In my four years at a prestigious liberal arts college, I did not seek out Asian American professors or professional staff. I did not seek out role models, teachers or even upper-class students who were Asian American. But, it was during my undergraduate years that seeds of my interest in diversity, equity, and justice both as an area of academic

and personal interest were sown. As a psychology and human development major, I had the opportunity to learn from Black and Latino professors and, together, they became my first introduction to people of color as educators. It was during my undergraduate years that I developed a deep commitment to improving the social conditions for Black and Latino students through leadership and peer mentoring. My social circle became more diverse, shifting from my mostly White friends to predominantly Black and Latino friends. Though I became more involved in multicultural clubs and organizations, I continued to decline invitations from the Asian American Student Association to attend their meetings and program dinners.

After graduating from college, I pursued a Master's degree in Higher Education Administration. I attended a large, urban, research university with a cohort of approximately 20 full-time students and, quickly, my strong social connections were with fellow students who identified as Black, Latino, and individuals who identified as lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB). While one other Asian American student often socialized with the same group of peers, I took great lengths to avoid conversations or work on projects with her. I was afraid that she would know more about being Asian American than I did, or that if we did start talking, that she would ask me about how I felt about certain issues impacting the Asian American community. I had no opinion. I had no information. All I had was fear that she would expose me as not Asian enough.

Though the university was in a large, urban community, the faculty in the Higher Education program were not from racially diverse backgrounds. Only two faculty members identified as people of color, and none of the professors in the Higher

Education Administration program were Asian American. Further, our coursework and curriculum did not include the experiences of Asian American students. Though I had deepened my understanding of the experiences of racialization, oppression, and marginalization of other communities of color through my academic studies, I continued to experience socialization to higher education devoid of Asian American scholars, practitioners, mentors, or curriculum in my schooling. Unaware of this dynamic at the time, I was receiving powerful messages about belonging, about my identity, and about my place as a scholar and practitioner in higher education.

Looking back, I reflect on these experiences and observations as contributing to deep internalized oppression and internalized racism. Throughout my post-secondary education, I was surrounded by news stories and media that kept telling me that Asian Americans were overrepresented in higher education. I heard about Asian American students quickly becoming the majority in some universities, and I internalized the backlash and anti-Asian sentiments. With an absence of Asian American professors, teachers, mentors, advisers and friends, I had no one to affirm my discomfort or contradict the stories that all Asian Americans were hardworking, whiz kids who made it to the top because of their commitment to education, discipline, and good genetics. Quickly, I embraced the identity as a model minority and felt proud of my membership in an identity that was hailed as being studious, driven, motivated, and successful.

Throughout my life, I was personally impacted by powerful stereotypes that were socially constructed and reinforced around Asian American identity, particularly the model minority myth and the perpetual foreigner myth (Ng, Lee & Pak, 2007). Though I

only knew myself as an American, I was constantly asked, “Where are you really from?” or “Do your parents speak English?” On more than one occasion in school, I was told that I was “so Americanized” and that I “spoke English really well.” These comments, which I heard often, continued to make me feel like I just did not belong.

As a practitioner in higher education, I focused my commitment to diversity, inclusion, access and equity to students and communities that experienced marginalization and oppression in higher education. During my career in higher education admissions, career services, student activities and institutional diversity, many of the students I worked with were from predominantly Black and Latino communities. Very few of the students I worked with were Asian or Asian American. I recall being on different institutional committees during my career where issues were raised related to Asian American communities, but comments came only in the context of praise, aspiration, and admiration. For example, when conversations in enrollment management meetings focused on diversity, it was common for someone to remark that we needed to recruit more Asian American students because they were “good students” or “full pay students.” Each time I heard these types of comments, I felt a knot in my stomach tighten; yet, I lacked the tools to address these remarks. I did not even have the confidence to understand why I was feeling so uncomfortable. I knew that these comments were based on stereotypes and exaggerations of the truth, but I had not fully understood why.

In an effort to understand more about higher education, about the systems and organizations of governance, policy, curriculum, and politics, I enrolled in a doctoral program at a public, urban university. I had so many questions about the nature of higher

education, but truly, I had so many questions about myself. I had questions about my beliefs, my earliest messages about education, and about the people that higher education both employs and serves. My admission essay, asking me to reflect on what I would contribute to the program, focused on my work in diversity and equity. At that time, I believed that my research interests would focus broadly on students of color and how to best support their success in college.

Within the first week of the doctoral program, I knew something was different about me. As I stayed up late at night reading about policies, governance, leadership, and identity, I began to question all that I had learned as a student. As I took notes on articles and read through journals, I kept writing in the margins, “Where am I in all of this research? Who is asking questions about Asian Americans? What do I even understand about being Asian American?” Unfortunately, the answers were not in the syllabus. The answers were not in the assigned readings. The answers were not in our class discussions. The answers were not in my peer group or in the cohorts who had come before me. But, the questions continued to keep me up at night.

As I progressed in my doctoral studies and strengthened my identity as a scholar, I grew more passionate about uncovering experiences of Asian American students, identity development, access and equity, and policies that impact the lives of Asian American students. I began to ask questions about pervasive myths and stereotypes that had strongly shaped who I was as a person. I began to learn about ethnic studies and the role of ethnic studies in Asian American movements in California. I began to read more about the communities of Asian Americans who did not inhabit the same spaces that I

had lived in growing up in a wealthy, suburban, predominantly White environment. I was motivated to read more and learn more about the many communities and individuals who have been marginalized in higher education. I needed to learn more about the harmful and damaging effects of the model minority stereotype and how those perceptions informed policies, procedures, programs and experiences. I needed to do this, while concurrently learning the culture of graduate school, in an effort to survive and thrive in a doctoral program: how to learn the rules, behaviors, and expectations of being a student, graduate assistant, and advisee.

While I felt passionate about pursuing research on the disparate educational experiences of Asian American students, I felt alone in this journey. I realized I had been alone all throughout my education. In order to face the challenges and support as a doctoral student, I needed to interrogate my own socialization to education, to being Asian American, and explore my own life history. But, when it was time for me to make connections, I found that I had only a few Asian American scholars and mentors. When I did attend my first Asian American Support Network group, a gathering of scholars and practitioners at an annual conference, I felt like a stranger. I was uncomfortable in this space of other Asian Americans, and I left almost as soon as I had arrived. Back in the classroom, I lacked access to examples of scholarship on Asian American students in my formal studies; and my internalized oppression placed me just outside of the margins of the Asian American community. On those days when internalized racism took hold, I questioned whether or not Asian American issues were valued in the scholarship of higher education and whether my own opinions, findings, and motivation even mattered.



While my feelings of authenticity as an Asian American scholar and practitioner were in flux, I looked to the existing organizational structures and characteristics of my doctoral program to help me understand why I felt so invisible in the curriculum and in the research. Within the formal experiences of my doctoral program, there was very little content or discussion on the experiences of Asian American students. Like my experience as a young student, it was difficult to find myself in the literature. The history textbook we used in class only contained one article on Asian American students; our policy class never addressed issues impacting the Asian American community such as the de-minoritization of Asian Americans in higher education; our access and equity class focused more on Black, Latino, first-generation and Pell-eligible students; and we rarely discussed the experiences or development of Asian American students in any of our other classes.

With each passing semester in my doctoral program, I began to use the writing process as a way to get closer to understanding my Asian American identity and experience. I chose to write my papers on the issues impacting Asian American students in order to understand my own socialization to the field of education. I devoured articles, books, narratives, and attended conferences that focused on my community. I felt like I had a lifetime of work to do in order to understand my own history, the experiences of my community, and the issues that I previously had ignored.

Because of the ways in which my Asian American identity was rendered invisible in conversations related to higher education, my formation as a scholar and practitioner took place in spaces, groups, dialogues, or social circles largely devoid of Asian

Americans. At the same time, I was not yet fully comfortable in Asian American groups. I existed in border spaces – I did not belong in predominantly White spaces, and I felt like an outsider in predominantly Asian American spaces. The further I dove into studying the experiences of Asian Americans and engaged in social and academic spaces, these conflicting feelings intensified. I wanted to be a part of the Asian American community, but I had developed strong feelings of outsidership. I began to question my own experiences, my own motivation, and my own qualifications for engaging within the Asian American community. In my coursework, when these feelings of tensions and conflict arose, I stepped back and wrote papers about communities other than my own. And when I felt supported, affirmed, and brave, I opened the door once again into exploring my identity as an Asian American scholar-practitioner.

My early and powerful socialization to the model minority myth continues to have its hold on how I think, feel, and move forward in my work. During this research study, there were many times when I questioned whether or not anyone would care about the struggles, experiences, stories, and socialization of Asian Americans. There were many times when I questioned the purpose of telling the stories of Asian American doctoral students. When I worried that my research and the privileging of Asian American voices would be dismissed, I found myself shying away from the work and questioning my ability to tell these stories. I told myself that I should find another topic that I knew was institutionally valued: multiculturalism and diversity, institutional change, strategic planning. When I began to question whether or not the voices of Asian Americans had value, I knew that I was, in fact, living the problem statement. Both my fears of

negotiating my insider-outsider identity and my own life history as an Asian American, which was narrowly informed, often kept me from furthering this knowledge. I questioned whether or not this work was important, whether the voices of Asian Americans mattered in the larger discourse on socialization, and whether or not the work would be validated and valued. Thankfully, there were also days when I was driven to move forward, to challenge existing beliefs, and to provide a more critical narrative to experiences made invisible.

When researchers challenge the dominant narrative, they often use the term “counter-narrative” to provide critical discourse to what has been historically privileged and valued. However, I believe that the stories and lives of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are not a counter-narrative to a dominant story but rather a critical narrative on their own. My voice and the voices of so many other Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have always been here, but too often have been rendered inaudible. For me, this influence is why I started my journey as a doctoral student. I wanted to change the landscape of education, who we learned about, and how we informed and influenced identities of our students, our faculty, and our communities. In education, my experiences of being Asian American were often subordinated and pushed to the margins. The intent of this journey is to bring Asian American identities towards visibility and to provide critical narratives of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students to better understand their formation as scholars.

## **Background**

The Council of Graduate Schools (2005) stated that the purpose of the doctoral program is to prepare a student “to become a scholar; that is, to discover, integrate and apply knowledge, as well as to communicate and disseminate it” (p. 1). In the last decade, doctoral education has become an increased focus of inquiry (e.g., Gardner 2008; Gardner 2010; Golde 1998, 2006; Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). Research, however, is no longer simply focused on time to degree completion or persistence – two still very relevant areas. Increasingly, the focus has shifted to examine the experiences of doctoral students, the role of organizational socialization, and the experiences of underrepresented populations.

Walker, Golde, Jones, Bueschel and Hutchings (2008) noted that the formation of scholars refers to “the development of intellectual expertise and to the growth of personality, character, habits of heart and mind, and the role that a given discipline is capable of and meant to play in academe and society at large” (p.8). The development of a professional identity as a scholar is one that students shape; however socialization processes of the organization and profession also influence the development of this professional identity. For example, existing socialization research has focused attention on the role of newcomers as proactive agents who affect their own organizational adjustment (Antony, 2002; Gardner, 2008; Major, Kozlowski, Chao & Gardner, 1995). Through the socialization process, doctoral students internalize the expectations, standards and norms of the profession, institution and academic discipline. As doctoral students engage in the academic environment, they are socialized to the skills they must

demonstrate, the behaviors and social norms of the profession, and their own influence within the academic landscape as they negotiate their roles as emerging scholars, faculty, and practitioners (Austin & McDaniels, 2006; Gardner, 2008).

Not all newcomers, however, have the same amount of influence in this role negotiation process. Doctoral students and scholars of color, for example, have experienced socialization processes that have marginalized and devalued their identities, experiences and interests (Mendoza, 2007; Weidman, Twale & Stein, 2001). In particular, scholars of color have found themselves at a disadvantage as a result of organizational cultures that have marginalized teaching, research and service in and about communities of color (Antonio, 2002; Austin, 2002; Bess & Dee, 2008; Ellis, 2001; Mendoza, 2007; Weidman, Twale & Stein, 2001). Further, scholars from underrepresented communities lack role models of the same racial and ethnic identity who can assist in the socialization process to the discipline, institution and organization.

Altbach, Lomotey and Rivers (2002) state that “the racial and social class composition of the academic profession puts it at some disadvantage in dealing with students from different racial and cultural backgrounds since the professoriate is overwhelmingly White, male and middle class” (p. 30). To this point, researchers have demonstrated that there is value in a diverse faculty (Chang, 2002; Hurtado, 2001; Milem & Astin, 1993; Milem, Chang & Antonio, 2005). Faculty of color are more likely than other faculty to include diversity related content in their courses (Antonio, Astin, & Cress 2000); to teach courses in women’s studies and ethnic studies (Milem & Astin, 1993); to teach from a student-centered framework (Astin et al., 1997; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-

Pederson, & Allen, 1999); to have conducted research on racial and ethnic minorities (Milem & Astin, 1993); to participate in mentoring relationships with underrepresented students (Baez, 2000); to engage in community based organizations (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Boyer 1991) and to get involved in diversity related committees (Banks, 1984; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996; Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). These contributions reflect the goals of higher education in preparing students for an increasingly diverse society (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Green, 1989).

Though researchers have demonstrated that there is value in having a diverse faculty, the population of diverse faculty in higher education has changed very little in the last 30 years (Cole & Barber, 2003; Hurtado, 2001; Perna, 2001; Trower & Chait, 2002; Umbach, 2006). Despite growing representation in higher education, faculty of color still represent only 16-18% of all faculty while students of color represent 36-38% (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2011). This discrepancy may partially be a result of racial representation at the doctoral level with Whites representing approximately 80% of all doctoral degrees conferred in the United States and doctoral students of color representing approximately 20% of these degrees (Hoffer, Hess, Welch & Williams, 2007).

Doctoral students of color are the pipeline for faculty diversity in higher education. As faculty, their participation positively contributes to higher education by focusing on inclusive campus climate, research in higher education, engagement in marginalized communities, and pedagogy through inclusive frameworks (Fries-Britt, Rowan-Kenyon, Perna, Milem & Howard, 2011; Umbach, 2006). Although the number

of scholars of color is increasing in higher education, many experience academic environments that are unwelcoming, uninviting, unaccommodating and unappealing (Trower & Chait, 2002) and experience racialized structures of underrepresentation and marginalization (Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002).

Existing research has highlighted that doctoral students of color may experience socialization that is impacted by negative social and professional factors. These factors include lack of representation in the professoriate (Fries-Britt et al., 2011); lack of access to effective mentoring and support (Davis, 2008; Gay, 2004; Howard-Hamilton, Morelon-Quainoo, Johnson, Winkle-Wagner & Santiague, 2009; Taylor & Antony, 2000); hostile campus climate (Harlow, 2003; Hurtado et al., 1999; Stanley, 2006); and racial and ethnic bias (Jayakumar, Howard, Allen, & Han, 2009). These experiences complicate the socialization processes by often leaving scholars of color feeling discouraged and isolated (García, 2000; Turner, González, & Wood, 2008; Turner, Myers, & Creswell, 1999; Weinberg, 2008).

Though existing literature explores experiences of scholars from some communities of color (e.g., Gildersleeve, Croom & Vasquez, 2011; González, 2006; Jackson, 1991; Nettles, 1990a; Turner, 2002), the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars of color are underrepresented in the literature, and our understanding of their experiences is limited (Museus, 2009; Poon, 2006). Harper and Hurtado's (2007) audit of studies published in the past decade on student experiences with race revealed that none of the 35 articles specifically focused on Asian Americans as the central focus. After examining the representation of Asian Americans and Pacific

Islanders in seven higher education journals across a 10-year period from 1996 to 2006, Poon (2006) concluded that only 13 of 2,660 articles addressed Asian American and Pacific Islanders. Between 2003 and 2005, no articles were published on Asian American students in seven of the most highly regarded higher education journals. More recently, Museus (2009) found that less than 1% of articles published in the most widely visible peer-reviewed journals in the field of higher education included any focus on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. In a follow up analysis to Museus's (2009) study, Museus, Kalehua Mueller and Aquino (2013) noted that none of the articles in the five most widely visible peer-reviewed journals in the field of higher education gave attention to Asian American and Pacific Islander graduate students. Teranishi (2010) further reported that out of over 40,000 articles in the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), the largest digital library of education literature, only 250 articles focused on Asian American or Pacific Islander academic achievement.

Some researchers posit that the lack of research in higher education related to Asian Americans is largely due to the model minority myth, the pervasive stereotype about Asian Americans and the Asian American community that assumes universal and unparalleled academic and occupational success (Museus, 2009; Museus et al., 2013; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Teranishi, 2010). The model minority myth perpetuates beliefs that Asian Americans are the same regardless of diverse ethnic backgrounds; that Asian Americans are not racial and ethnic minorities; that Asian Americans do not encounter challenges because of their race; that Asian Americans do not need or seek resources and support; and that college and degree completion are equivalent to success (Museus &



Kiang, 2009). Though scholars and activists have been writing about the damaging effects of the model minority stereotype (Ng & Pak, 2007; Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal & Torino, 2009; Suzuki, 2002) publication and visibility of articles in scholarly journals have only recently emerged within the past decade.

Though research seeks to dismantle the existing stereotypes of the model minority myth (Hartlep, 2013), approaches to identity-conscious socialization of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students has not been widely practiced. Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students continue to experience racialized socialization that has excluded them from racially representative mentoring (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001); educational discourse (Kiang, 2000; Museus, 2009; Suzuki, 2002) and has perpetuated treatment as a monolithic racial group (Teranishi, Behringer, Grey & Parker, 2002). Therefore, Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students may experience socialization processes that do not support the development of an academic identity due to isolation, exclusion in higher education curricula, and underrepresentation. Further exploring the academic socialization experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students may disrupt existing practices of exclusion and marginalization, and support socialization processes that are bidirectional and willing to respond to the growing needs of a more diverse society.

### **Problem Statement**

Though socialization is defined as “bidirectional process that produces change in individuals and in organizations” (Tierney & Rhoads, 1993, p. 16), existing socialization processes have failed to respond to and include the development of Asian American and

Pacific Islander doctoral students who are underrepresented in graduate higher education programs. Particularly when examining the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in the field of higher education (Chang, 2008; Hune, 2002; Museus & Kiang, 2009), there is a lack of representation of published research in existing journals (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Museus 2009; Poon 2006), and lack of formal and informal inclusion of Asian American and Pacific Islander issues in higher education curriculum (Chang & Kiang, 2002; Museus, 2009; Suzuki, 2002). Further, the mistreatment of Asian Americans has been driven by assumptions and stereotypes that have characterized the population as a model minority that has overcome barriers to take over American higher education (Teranishi, Behringer, Grey & Parker, 2002).

Research has shown that race- and gendered- matched role models can provide clear messages about the opportunities available to members of one's own social group (Baker & Griffin, 2010; Zirkel, 2002). In addition, race- and gendered- matched role models are likely to provide culturally relevant and inclusive mentoring than those from non-matched role models (Zirkel, 2002). Therefore, it is critical that we understand the aspects of social and cultural contexts of how Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders experience socialization in education and how to increase the number of mentors who can provide race- and gendered- matched mentoring. Understandings of the opportunities that are available are often formed before anticipatory socialization to education, and it is important that we understand both the messages that contribute to a sense of belonging for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education and the messages that keep them on the margins of higher education.

Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars and practitioners contribute to a changing landscape of diversity in higher education, and these voices are currently underrepresented. This study seeks to better understand the process of socialization in order to identify ways in which individuals, graduate programs, and departments can contribute to a more inclusive, engaging and supportive environment for Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students.

### **Significance of the Problem**

Overall, higher education should be concerned with the formation of doctoral students for four main reasons (Gardner, 2009): 1) doctoral student persistence contributes to talented leaders, innovative researchers and influential educators; 2) doctoral student persistence contributes to students feeling successful and who may pass on that success to others; 3) doctoral student persistence, retention and satisfaction helps programs understand how to best support students; 4) doctoral student retention can reduce costs associated with recruiting new doctoral students, investment in graduate assistantships, and contribute to departmental assistance.

Existing research on the formation of scholars has not adequately examined the role of race in the development, socialization and formation processes. Existing paradigms about race and higher education may underlie the lack of understanding and responding to needs of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education (Teranishi et al., 2009). Therefore, research on development, socialization and the isolation of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education research and practice contribute to an important inquiry into the understanding of higher education. By

understanding this impact through organizational socialization, this study broadly explored the experiences of scholars of color in higher education and, more specifically, the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education graduate programs as they develop an academic identity, navigate between affirming racial/ethnic identity and develop effective role continuance in the academic discipline.

The following study is significant because it examined the role of socialization and the academic identity development of scholars of color, particularly Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars, in an effort to draw attention to gaps in theory and practice. Problematic stereotypes about the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, such as the model minority myth, have classified Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders as a population that does not need support in higher education due to aggregation of the needs of the community. This isolation has contributed to an environment in higher education that has excluded Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders from areas of great interest in higher education, including campus climate, access and equity, persistence, outcomes, and support. With few Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars in the field of higher education, it is important to turn to socialization as a way to understand how Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experience formation as scholars in a field in which they are underrepresented and how organizations might increase the persistence of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students through culturally inclusive practices.

This study is significant to leaders in higher education who are concerned with the experiences of scholars of color and, in particular, Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars. Such leaders include department chairs charged with facilitating transitions for newcomers; doctoral program faculty who are engaged in the anticipatory socialization stages; and graduate student organizations which seek to understand and support doctoral students in the graduate school process. Further, for the doctoral programs and organizations, the issue of attrition matters. Doctoral student attrition is expensive for an institution given the investment in mentoring, stipends, teaching allowances, and ongoing research funding and support, and this study seeks to inform reasons why Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students might leave the field and how to provide organizational support to reduce attrition and increase persistence.

This study is significant for scholars of color who are navigating the process of developing an academic identity that integrates racial and ethnic identity and for Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students who might experience graduate education in isolation from other Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students and faculty. By exploring doctoral student development, socialization and identity, this study provides support for understanding a more interactional model of scholar formation.

This study is significant to those who are invested in the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars who continue to be underrepresented in fields of education and higher education programs. Further, even within this underrepresented population, many Asian American and Pacific Islander subgroups suffer from disparities

in educational attainment; therefore, as a community of higher education scholars and practitioners, we have a moral and social responsibility to advance knowledge of these populations in order to better understand respond to, and serve these communities.

This study offers an opportunity to hear directly from Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students who come from programs with a commitment to their development as Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars as well as doctoral students who experience isolation and lack of affirmation in their identities as Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Finally, this study is relevant to professors in higher education who seek to be more inclusive of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders as well as Asian American and Pacific Islander issues in their curriculum and pedagogy, preparing future scholars and practitioners in higher education to be more culturally responsive and culturally inclusive, and positively impact the formation of scholars.

### **Purpose and Guiding Questions**

The purpose of this study was to address the broad question of the formation of scholars through doctoral student socialization, doctoral student development, and racial identity as experienced by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. By drawing from multiple academic disciplines and perspectives on socialization, this study provided a deeper understanding of the socialization processes to institutional and academic expectations and explored the role of socialization in the development of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral student identity in the field of higher education. This inquiry advances our understanding of ways to create and sustain more inclusive and engaging

learning environments that support racial diversity in higher education and to better understand the barriers that have socially and historically marginalized Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The overall research question seeks to explore how intersections of race, racial identity and social stereotypes impact the ways in which Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experience socialization and doctoral student development in higher education programs. To answer this question of how Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experience formation as scholars in higher education programs, as informed by the intersections of race, ethnic identity, and social stereotypes, the following sub-questions were used to narrow the focus of the study:

- How do Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experience the anticipatory stage of socialization in higher education programs?
- What organizational factors of doctoral programs impact or inform the development of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education programs?
- What role do Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students play in shaping their socialization experiences in higher education doctoral programs?
- In what ways do higher education programs, including curriculum, pedagogy, peers, faculty advising, etc. shape the socialization of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students?

### **Note about terminology in this study**

As this study examined the critical experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, it is important to draw attention to the use of the terms “Asian American; Asian American and Pacific Islander; and Pacific Islander” as used in this dissertation. Primarily, there was intentionality displayed in four ways: 1) when original literature used the terms, I remained consistent with the original language of their studies; 2) when the experiences described are only unique to Asian Americans, I chose to only use the term “Asian American”; 3) when the experiences described are only unique to Pacific Islanders, I chose to only use the term “Pacific Islander”; and 4) in my own study where the critical narratives refer to the communities either separate or together, I refer to “Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students” or disaggregate when writing about separate communities.

Throughout this dissertation, the term “Asian American” is used to refer to the residents of the United States who are of Asian descent and heritage. Throughout this dissertation, the term “Pacific Islander” is used to refer to those who are of Pacific Islander decent and heritage. I intentionally use “Asian American” when referring to the larger Asian American, Desi American and Multiracial communities because it is congruent with the political and activist movement of Asian America as a way to solidify an Asian American consciousness (Museus, 2014). The clarification of terminology is critical to understanding the purpose of this study: to further complicate our understanding of identity, socialization, environment, and development. Further, this clarification honors the request by scholars, particularly those who identify as Pacific



Islander, not to aggregate data, information, or experiences of Pacific Islanders when, in fact, the voices of Pacific Islanders were not included. In addition to the distinctions made to clarify terms related to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, I have also chosen to address the needs of different ethnic identities and experiences by honoring the ways in which individuals chose to self-identify, rather than what has traditionally been presented in literature or by policies restricting self-identification (e.g., Pacific Islander, Desi, Filipino, Pilipino, Viet, Vietnamese, Khmer, Multiracial, Southeast Asian, use of hyphenation vs no hyphenation).

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review includes four areas of examination which, taken together, provide an understanding of the academic socialization experiences of doctoral students of color. The first area explores salient types, roles and purposes of socialization in order to better understand the processes of socialization to the academic profession, to an institution, and to discipline specific expectations. The second area of review explores the socialization experiences of doctoral students of color as related to campus climate, experiences of marginalization, and the role of socialization in navigating a scholar identity. This area is relevant for laying the foundation of broadly understanding the impact of racial identity in the socialization process, particularly as research on the experiences of some communities of color have been growing in the literature. The third area explores the research on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education, including factors that influence the identity consciousness and racialization of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. It is important to examine these historical and social factors of race and racism in order to understand both how Asian American and Pacific Islander identity is shaped and how identity and socialization processes are intersectional. The final area of this literature review looks closer at the role of socialization in the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education programs, especially as they navigate their formation as scholars.

## **The Role of Socialization**

Tierney and Rhoads (1993) define socialization as a “bidirectional process that produces change in individuals and in organizations” (p. 16). Participating in this bidirectional processes are organizational leaders and new organizational members (Bess & Dee, 2008, p. 259). In higher education, the socialization process reflects institutional and academic culture and, through this process, new members learn the organizational values and beliefs of the academic environment and community (Tierney & Rhoads, 1993).

Though Tierney and Rhoads (1993) and Bess and Dee (2008) described socialization as a bidirectional process, earlier research describes socialization as a unilateral process, whereby a novice is prepared to perform a function or a role (Durkheim, 1984). Trent, Braddock, and Henderson (1985) stated that the purpose of socialization in an educational institution is for “the transmission of the culture of a society along with the political function of inculcating commitment to the existing political order” (p. 307). Additionally supporting that socialization processes behave in more unidirectional processes, Brim (1966) stated that socialization theory and research are concerned with how a society molds the individual and not how the individual changes society (as cited in Stein and Weidman, 1989, p. 6). Further, Brim’s (1966) theory also claimed that individuals experience either reward or punishment for congruent or non-congruent behavior in the socialization process (p. 90). Stein and Weidman (1989) stated, though unidirectional socialization assures for norms and

standards within a profession, the disadvantage of a unilateral socialization process is that the “complexity and richness of the professional role and educational process are ignored” (p. 9).

Merton’s (1957) work on socialization has served as the foundational definition for much of the writing on the topic, defining socialization as “the processes through which [a person] develops [a sense of] professional self, with its characteristic values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills...which govern [his or her] behavior in a wide variety of professional situations” (p. 287). Socialization, therefore, is a process through which an individual becomes part of a group, organization or community (Merton, 1957; Tierney, 1997; Van Maanen, 1976). In higher education, national culture, culture of the profession, disciplinary culture, institutional culture and individual cultural differences can all impact identity formation of scholars (Baez, 2000; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996; Clark, 1987), as well as inform the types of courses, pedagogical frameworks, and types of research that faculty privilege (Rendón, 2000; Stanley, 2006; Turner & Meyers, 2000; Turner, Gonzalez, & Wood, 2008). These values, beliefs, and attitudes held by faculty tend to reflect their socialization experiences and they, in turn, impact the socialization of doctoral students to these values, beliefs and attitudes. In essence, the process of socialization affirms an existing faculty culture (Tierney & Rhoads, 1993).

Clark and Corcoran (1986) and Van Maanen and Schein (1979) define socialization as a process by which an individual is influenced by the professional expectations of the field, discipline or role. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) describe organizational socialization as “the process by which an individual acquires the social

knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational role” (p. 211). The professional and organizational socialization process often includes two stages: anticipatory socialization and role continuance (Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). The anticipatory socialization phase includes activities in which the individual makes the decision to join the organization and begins to learn about the organization through the recruitment and selection process (Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). The individual may look to websites for information about the organization, speak to individuals who are working in the organization or profession, and research programs that would assist the individual in gaining membership into the organization. In anticipatory socialization stages, the individual develops an understanding of the academic role from sources ranging from personal experiences, departmental websites, peer networks, and media influences (Gardner, 2009). From such sources, the individual learns about expectations, norms, values, attitudes, and beliefs about the academic field, discipline and profession. Socialization and development that students experience in the anticipatory stage are important to their success in the role continuance stage because individuals begin to form beliefs about their own abilities in the profession.

The role continuance stage begins after the individual has gained membership into the organization. In this phase, the individual learns about the values, attitudes, and beliefs of the culture and makes decisions about whether or not to stay in the profession or organization or forgo the profession or leave the organization (Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). In role continuance stages, the individual experiences the socialization processes that will ultimately influence the decision to adopt the values, attitudes, and beliefs of the

institutional culture or academic discipline or to refuse these characteristics and leave the institution or profession (Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). It is in this phase that doctoral students may seek out mentors who can assist them in their development of an academic identity (Gay, 2004; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996).

In Tierney's (1988) investigation of the organizational culture of higher education, he recommended examining essential concepts to better understand a college or university. These essential concepts include environment, mission, formal and informal socialization processes, information, strategy, and leadership (p. 8). To understand organizational culture, one must explore how the organization is defined, the attitudes toward the environment, how decisions are made and by whom are decisions made, what types of information are shared, and an examination of leadership roles and styles. Intertwined in this definition of organizational culture is socialization, including how newcomers experience the environment and how the organization views newcomers.

Through socialization, individuals learn informal and formal rules, norms, and behaviors that construct the community (Corcoran & Clark, 1984; Reybold, 2003; Staton & Darling, 1989; Van Maanen, 1976). These values of the profession, discipline and institution may be articulated formally (e.g. through process such as tenure and promotion) as well as informally (e.g., through information at orientation, advising, peer networking, mentoring). Taken together, the culture of an organization and community that is based on unchallenged beliefs and values may perpetuate inequalities or create barriers to effective socialization for some populations. As Tierney (1997) writes, "...if we are socializing people to a cultural ethos that we no longer desire, then it is clearly

important to understand the underpinnings of socialization so that we might socialize people to different objectives and goals” (p. 3).

Research has suggested that socialization processes lean towards congruence and assimilation to established norms, creating problematic conditions for those who might be dissimilar from the organization (Antony, 2002). Improving organizational socialization processes includes making organizational culture explicit to new members and involving individuals in shaping organizational learning (Taylor & Antony, 2000; Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). Therefore, it is important to examine organizational effectiveness of socialization as bidirectional process.

Weidman and Stein (1989) developed a conceptual framework of socialization that acknowledges the bidirectional socialization and the impact of the individual on socialization processes and outcomes. This framework suggests that socialization is not a static functional role, but instead one that changes over time due to tension between individual needs and institutional role requirement. This foundation can also be found in earlier work by Getzels (1963) and Reinharz (1979) in which socialization results in new identities, new definitions of situations, and is a product of the sum of experiences rather than simply a unidirectional process. Further, Stein and Weidman’s (1989) framework includes the importance of student background characteristics on the impact of the educational experience. Together, these concepts inform the interrogation of how background characteristics may be impacted by socialization and how socialization may be impacted by background characteristics.

Building organizational effectiveness that honors difference requires the organization to be amenable to change. In essence, organizations must be willing to engage in a bidirectional process. Advancing the literature on socialization as a bidirectional process, Tierney and Rhoads (1993) offer the framework of divestiture socialization – a socialization process that affirms differences and allows for flexibility. As diversity increases in institutions, organizational leaders must pay attention to differences between organization acculturation and socialization processes that honor differences to be effective. Informed by the literature, the outcomes of effective socialization for all faculty, including faculty of color, include satisfaction with teaching, identification with supportive administrative leadership, a sense of accomplishment, positive mentor relationships, collegiality with other faculty of color, and institutionally valued research and service (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002; Piercy, Giddings, Allen, Dixon, Messer & Joist, 2005; Robinson, 1999; Turner et al., 1999).

In addition to being an organizational process, socialization is also a social and cultural process by which individuals shape their identities; therefore, socialization plays a significant role in shaping the values, beliefs and perceptions of institutional members. Through their participation on committees, teaching courses, conducting research, and involvement in the life of the college, faculty are socialized to the culture of an institution. Their roles are a product of social processes and social interactions, where new faculty have the opportunity to contribute to the culture of the institution just as the culture of the institution helps to shape their academic identities and experiences (Bess & Dee, 2008).



The literature on socialization identifies several stages through which doctoral students, who are engaged in anticipatory socialization, move toward the goals of identity development and understanding the role of the academic profession (Clark & Corcoran, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Bragg (1976) identifies a five step progressive process in individual socialization: (1) observation in which the individual identifies with a role model; (2) imitation or trying on of the behavior; (3) feedback or evaluation steps; (4) modification where the individual alters or refines behavior as a result of the evaluation; and (5) internalization in which the individual incorporates the role model's values and behavior patterns into one's own self-image (p. 32). Through this lens, individuals develop an understanding of a field through personal engagement with the practical components that define this role. For example, a student who is interested in a faculty career would learn about the role through observing faculty, gaining an understanding of the role of faculty, practicing this role through a graduate teaching assistantship or research opportunity, seeking feedback from faculty who may be serving as mentors or role models, refining one's actions by improving teaching or research skills, and finally identifying as a faculty member.

Though the literature identifies many models of socialization (e.g., Bragg, 1976; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Weidman et al., 2001), the models share components of a learning stage, feedback stage, and continuance stage. Broadly, the literature tends to address three areas of socialization: individual socialization, professional socialization, and organizational socialization. Through these processes, the individual learns how to behave; what to expect; what it means to fail and succeed individually, within an

organization, and within the profession; what organizations value; and what behaviors, skills, and concepts are valued to continue in the role.

**Broad implications.** A significant body of early literature on socialization emphasizes the importance of assimilation in order for a newcomer to experience successful transition, adjustment and role continuance. While there is value in understanding culture, and being socialized to the norms, values and beliefs held by the culture, there is a need to explore fluidity between professional and social lives in ways that previously were not connected in earlier socialization models. Weidman et al. (2001), for example, provided a model that includes key components relevant to the examination of underrepresented populations, such as the non-adoption of values (e.g., values of the institution, values of the discipline), the inclusion of individual aspirational goals, and the intersectionality and influence of multiple social identities on the socialization process. As the landscape of higher education is changing, there is an overwhelming need to respond to changes in demographic shifts, particularly as students of color are participating at higher numbers in colleges and universities and the professoriate has remained relatively homogeneous (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2011).

### **Socialization of Doctoral Students**

Doctoral students are the pipeline for faculty representation and leadership in higher education, and they experience several socialization processes related to the academic culture: socialization to the role of graduate student, socialization to the expectations of academic life and the profession, and socialization to a specific academic

discipline (Austin, 2002; Golde, 1998; Staton & Darling, 1989). The beginning of this academic journey begins with enrolling in a doctoral program. The decision to enroll in a doctoral program represents a commitment to an extensive and in-depth process of development, including identity development (Colbeck, 2008), professional development (Reybold, 2003) and organizational development (Weidman & Stein, 2003).

Though students enter doctoral programs for a variety of reasons, a primary reason may be to advance their knowledge in a given discipline or field as well as a desire to teach, conduct research, or attain a degree in order to advance in one's current career (Austin, 2002). Researchers have used a combination of career choice theories and socialization to understand the career decision-making process (Antony, 2002; Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). Paulsen and St. John (2002) suggest that graduate school enrollment decisions are influenced in part by the system of values and beliefs an individual holds about the educational outcomes of graduate school. These beliefs about the educational outcomes include benefits of a graduate degree, cost associated, and the cultural/social capital that a graduate degree affords (Perna, 2004).

The decision to enroll in graduate school is often a culmination of years of anticipatory socialization. Bess (1978) noted that students tend to formalize their occupational selections during their college years, focusing on academic choices that support interests, pursuing work or internships for practical experiences within a field of interest, and eventually pursuing pathways towards an occupation. For some students, graduate school is a component of occupational selection, choosing academic careers in order to "continue their intellectual growth, out of interest in a field, serve mankind

better, and satisfy job requirements” (Bess, 1978, p. 292). In this anticipatory socialization process, students may also be impacted by the image of the profession (e.g., faculty, researcher); the contributions one can make as a professor; and whether the student identifies with the values and norms of the profession.

**Model of Doctoral Student Development.** Through their experiences in graduate programs, doctoral students learn skills, values, and norms of the profession (Bess, 1978). Though doctoral student preparation includes professional socialization to roles as faculty, scholars, researchers, and practitioners, doctoral students also experience a developmental process in which they grow cognitively, interpersonally, personally, morally, and professionally (Gardner, 2009, p. 204).

Though often addressed together, there are distinct differences between doctoral student development and doctoral student socialization. Socialization can best be viewed as a social transmission of values through instruction, explanation, role modeling, and group reinforcement (Snarey & Pavkov, 1992). In the socialization process, the established group determines the values of the profession, organization, or the group itself and teaches the new member about those values and goals. Development, on the other hand, refers to the “ways that a student grows, progresses, or increases his or her capabilities as a result of enrollment in an institution of higher education” (Rodgers, 1990, p. 27). Taken simply, socialization is a process that seeks to align an individual to a group with given norms while development is a process by which an individual grows in one’s own capabilities. Developing an understanding of doctoral student socialization and

doctoral student development helps to shape a more holistic view of the doctoral student experience.

Through multiple qualitative studies with 177 doctoral students, Gardner (2009) advanced a model of doctoral student development that presented doctoral student development in three phases of challenge and support. Unlike stage development theories, Gardner's (2009) model instead highlights the fluid, interconnected relationships and influences in identity development that may be impacted by external factors such as support, relationships with faculty, and advising. These relationships are also influenced by processes of transitions and expectations, which are outlined in Gardner's phases of doctoral student development.

Gardner (2009) outlines three phases of doctoral student development: Phase I (Entry); Phase II (Integration), and Phase III (Candidacy). Phase I is similar to anticipatory socialization phases, where the individual explores various programs, is influenced to choose one program over another, and learns about the qualities of a prospective program. In this initial phase, doctoral students identify their sources of support, begin to meet peers in the program who might serve as support systems, and experience orientation to the program and institution. As Richardson (2006) stated, "Nearly everyone has been a student, and on the basis of that experience, many claim knowledge of the field, and perhaps even consider themselves to be experts" (p. 258). Yet, doctoral studies are different than previous educational experiences in that students are "not just learning how to think differently in their coursework but also how to see themselves differently with regard to knowledge" (Gardner, 2009, p. 49). Phase I may

also be the period in which students experience marginalization or underrepresentation given the unique social nature of this phase and become aware of social identities that are both privileged and isolated. Ellis (2001) found that early coursework experiences may be negative for students who are generally underrepresented in their fields, with some students feeling pressure to represent the “minority” viewpoint and develop feelings of tokenism and isolation (Gay, 2004).

In Phase II, doctoral students are generally engaged in coursework and preparing for academic and programmatic milestones of progressing in their studies. These milestones may include preparing for comprehensive exams, thesis requirements, or research requirements. Students in Phase II continue to explore their intellectual development and become “truly immersed in the language and culture of the discipline” (Gardner, 2009, p. 62). Through this progression in coursework, doctoral students move from being knowledge receivers to knowledge producers, working on research projects with faculty, serving as graduate assistants, and working in the classrooms as teaching assistants. In this phase, students may also develop a deeper sense of purpose and experience a shift in their socialization as they participate in the larger dialogue in the field (Gardner, 2009). In Phase II, students may also experience challenges in competency and ability to meet expectations of the discipline and field. Similarly, this may be the phase in which students are made aware of social identities – including scholar identities and interests – that are privileged, either in compatibility with faculty research interests or mentoring opportunities. Doctoral students of color, for example, may not have access to faculty mentors who are interested in their research agenda or

who affirm their racial/ethnic identities as scholars. Doctoral students of color may also be advised not to pursue research topics that affirm their racial/ethnic identities as these areas tend not to be privileged in current academic processes such as tenure and promotion (Bernal & Villalpando, 2002; Cuadraz, 1998; de la luz Reyes & Halcon, 2002; Gay, 2004; Jayakumar et al., 2009; Joseph & Hirschfield, 2011; Ponjuan, 2005; Stanley, 2006; Stanley, 2007; Turner & Myers, 2000).

After moving through the challenges of Phases I and II, individuals arrive in Phase III. This phase marks the beginning of candidacy, the time in which doctoral students focus on producing original research. In this phase, independent research is one of the most notable challenges as the structure of coursework is complete and the individual moves from student to scholar. By nature of the independent phase, doctoral students may lose connection with their support system and are tasked with drawing on their own self-motivation and self-direction to progress through to the end. This isolation may be amplified for students who have faced challenges with support during Phase I and Phase II and find themselves further isolated in the candidacy phase. Within each phase, doctoral students experience opportunities for challenge and support. As they face these opportunities, some doctoral students may find their social and cultural identities amplified or dismissed.

In addition to phases of development, doctoral student socialization is also impacted by organizational structures and institutional environments. González's (2006) study found that doctoral students identified both positive experiences and negative experiences related to their development and satisfaction in their graduate programs.

These positive experiences included experiences in schooling prior to the doctoral program that built confidence in academic abilities; financial support in the form of scholarships and fellowships; institutional diversity; and department support. Further, doctoral students of color who were encouraged to build connections with other students and faculty of color at the institution reported more positive support.

González (2006) also found that there were significant institutional challenges that impacted doctoral student development and socialization. These factors included lack of financial support; stigmatization; a hostile climate; hidden institutional policies that excluded individuals from benefits of the institution; perceived double standards; and difficulties with “claiming their voice in their doctoral seminars, with professors, and with their writing” (p. 358).

### **Experiences of Doctoral Students of Color**

Socialization to doctoral work has been shown to be a determining factor in doctoral student success and retention (Turner & Thompson, 1993). Doctoral students pursue graduate degrees motivated by a love of teaching, enjoyment of research, and interest in doing service; they find college campuses appealing places to work; and they appreciate the lifestyle of faculty (Golde & Dore, 2001 p. 10). While these motivations may be shared by most doctoral students and early career faculty, it is important to examine the ways in which social identities – such as race – impact socialization experiences.

Gardner (2008) stated “students’ individual demographic characteristics such as race, gender, enrollment status, and background play an influential role in their



preparation for the degree program and their experience in it” (p. 127). Further, socialization to what is valued within academic culture may influence the type of academic pathways doctoral students pursue. For example, doctoral students of color have identified challenges to developing a professional identity in an existing academic culture that has marginalized teaching, research and service in communities of color (Stanley, 2006). These values may be communicated formally or informally, as Jackson (2004) and Stacy (2006) found that scholars are often warned that particular areas of research are controversial, risky, or generally not accepted by academia. In addition, scholars of color may experience stress by having their racial identities challenged, especially when pursuing teaching, research and service that affirms their racial and ethnic identities (Quaye, 2007; Truong & Museus, 2012).

Because advancement within academic culture in higher education emphasizes the importance of an institutionally valued research agenda, scholars of color must choose paths of either adhering to existing value systems of tenure, promotion, and publication while isolating one’s racial and ethnic identity; or to pursue the development of a racially and culturally affirming scholar identity but risk not progressing through academic processes. Gildersleeve et al. (2011) noted this theme of “stifling scholarly endeavors” is a result of the consequences of perceiving an academic department to be absent of scholarship that focused on the experiences of people of color. The findings of Fries-Britt et al. (2011) also illustrate the failure of institutions to uniformly value the research interests of faculty of color who engage in scholarship on communities of color, stating that such research is often dismissed as “self-serving” (Bourguignon, Blanshan,

Chiteji, MacLean, Meckling, Sagaria, Shuman & Taris, 1987; Turner & Myers, 2000). Existing organizational socialization processes that devalue and marginalize teaching, research and service in communities of color can leave students feeling isolated and frustrated and, as a result, possibly questioning and doubting their academic work and abilities (Austin, 2002; Fries-Britt et al., 2011; Gay, 2004; Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Golde, 1998; Mendoza, 2007; Weidman et al., 2001).

For scholars of color, ineffective organizational socialization also contributes to unclear expectations. For example, scholars of color may be expected to serve as tokenized representatives of diversity on committees or to advise students of color, but such activities also tend to be undervalued in existing structures such as tenure and promotion (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). These conditions result in a cultural taxation that Tierney and Bensimon (1996) argue works uniquely against them by limiting individual desires to conduct teaching, research and service in marginalized communities that may be at odds with the value system of promotion and tenure. As a result of this organizational socialization, scholars of color may choose to assimilate to the values of the organization, department, and discipline (Van Maanen & Schein, 1976); not adopt these values (Weidman, 1989); or forgo careers in academia all together (Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). Beyond the experiences of early career professional stages, this devaluing of scholarship of scholars of color may contribute to the lower levels of equity for faculty of color among the ranks of full professors and tenured track faculty (Perna, Gerald, Baum & Milem, 2007).

Lovitts (2001) argues that institutional policies, procedures, and environments that do not value teaching, research and service in diverse communities contribute to ineffective organizational socialization and to the failure of large percentages of doctoral candidates of color not completing degrees. As institutions and departments assess pathways to the doctorate and seek to dismantle structures such as racism, sexism, and classism in the design and implementation of graduate programs and curriculum, the application of critical race theory is helpful to understanding existing barriers to doctoral completion (Bernal & Villalpando, 2002; González, 2006; Solórzano, 1998).

Critical race theory (CRT) draws from the broad literature base in law, sociology, history, ethnic studies and women's studies (Bell, 1980; Ladson-Billings, 2009). Initially utilized in legal studies, CRT has been extended to areas in education to challenge the discourse of a White, male hegemony. The foundation of critical race theory is that racism is "normal, not aberrant, in American society" (Delgado, 1995, p. xiv). Ladson-Billings (1998) noted that critical race theory plays a key role in education given that curriculum is an artifact of social construction, marginalizing people of color and the role of people of color in challenging dominant authority and power; or, as in the case of some communities of color, excluding them entirely from the narrative. A critical race lens provides an opportunity to examine socialization experiences of doctoral students by interrogating existing pathways to the professoriate that privilege Eurocentric teaching, research and service; artifacts of anticipatory socialization that impact a doctoral student's decision to pursue doctoral study; socialization experiences of doctoral students

of color related to access to mentoring and support; and the role of the organization in providing culturally affirming opportunities.

Through a critique of existing socialization theories, Antony (2002) stated that “socialization should instill an awareness of the field’s values and norms without expecting a student to accept those values and norms as one’s own; that there is more than one method for socializing graduate students; and that socialization should enhance and encourage intellectual individuality” (p. 373). This is important because studies have demonstrated that some graduate students of color have described their graduate school experiences as “oppressive and dehumanizing” (Gay, 2004; Nettles, 1990b).

Additionally, findings from existing studies suggest that doctoral students of color must endure a socialization process that has the potential of pushing them out of doctoral education (Gay, 2004; Nettles, 1990b; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). This pushing out inhibits student progress toward doctoral degrees and takes shape in the form of failed and insufficient advising and mentoring relationships with faculty; academic and personal invalidation; lack of departmental and institutional support; and alienation and isolation (Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Tierney & Bensimon, 2002). In the Gildersleeve et al. (2011) study, participants remarked they were often tokenized and asked to speak on behalf of the experiences of their racial and ethnic group, further amplifying feelings of otherness. Supporting this research is data from the Council on Graduate Schools (2004) that shows that, historically, attrition from doctoral programs has been consistently higher among students from underrepresented racial minority groups.

**Broad implications.** Laura Rendón (2009) writes, “It is easy to become overwhelmed when we attempt to do things differently. That is why so many of us give up when others become dismissive about our work or when we confront resistance or see continued social injustice. It is tempting to become frustrated and retreat to our shells that protect us from pain and harm. Yet, we must remain hopeful” (p.148). Higher education has been concerned with the experiences of doctoral students, particularly as the attrition rate for doctoral students is approximately 40% (Golde, 2006). While the American graduate education has been regarded as one of the best in the world, the success and completion of doctoral students has been criticized as a result of a system that does not function effectively.

While overall doctoral student attrition has received a great deal of attention (Nettles & Millet, 2006), the attrition rate for doctoral students from underrepresented populations across disciplines is even higher (Gardner, 2008). Understanding the differences in socialization experiences can provide helpful insight into how to improve outcomes for doctoral students of color. For example, in institutions where faculty of color have a strong sense of community and solidarity, they assume the responsibility for informing newcomers about organizational culture, institutional climate, and the intricacies of tenure and promotion, increasing the sense of belonging for doctoral students of color (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). The development of intentional opportunities for connection is one way in which doctoral students and early career faculty have found support.

The research on socialization of doctoral students of color assists higher education scholars and practitioners in developing and supporting practices that focus on socialization processes that affirms identity; rewards teaching, research and service that affirms identity; serves the public good; diversifies the academy; expands scholarship; and keeps pace with an increasingly diverse society (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002; Piercy et al., 2005; Turner et al., 1999). Further, understanding socialization of doctoral students of color can inform practices that occur prior to graduate school, for example in undergraduate institutions, as institutions seek to expand the diversity of their student body (Lundy-Wagner, Vultaggio & Gasman, 2013).

### **Research on Asian Americans in Higher Education**

Asian Americans come from diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious, social, and political backgrounds. Asian American ethnic groups have diverse immigrant histories and relationships to and with the United States, including but not limited to political asylum, colonization, government sanctioned internment, exclusion, and perceived elevated social status. Though these experiences vastly differ between ethnic groups, Asian Americans are faced with stereotypes that treat these communities as monolithic.

In the late 1960s, as a way to organize politically, Asian American communities, despite their differences, contributed to the development of a pan-ethnic Asian American identity, particularly on college campuses (Espiritu, 1992, p. 31). As the movement of Asian American political and social identity gained momentum, a pan-Asian consciousness created an avenue for Asian Americans to address social injustices. While

the Asian American community tends to unite as a pan-ethnic social and political identity, emerging research in higher education has advocated for the need to disaggregate ethnic data in order to address the diverse needs in the pan-ethnic Asian American community.

The push to disaggregate data related to Asian Americans has also emerged as a political and social reaction to stereotypes that have positioned Asian Americans as a “model minority” -- a racial group that has achieved overwhelming success in the United States. This stereotype, in particular, has contributed to existing practices of excluding Asian Americans from diversity related research, policy and practices, and has positioned them outside of a Black/White binary of conversations on race and justice. Therefore, this literature area highlights the ways in which Asian Americans have been represented in existing research in order to contextualize the lived experiences of Asian Americans in higher education.

To better understand the interconnectedness of race and the socialization process, it is important to examine the historical, political and educational experiences of Asian Americans that may influence socialization. Samuel Museus, in his recently released publication *Asian American Students in Higher Education* (2014), stated “the time has come for institutions of higher education to develop more holistic and authentic understanding of this significant and rapidly growing population” (p. xiv). As articulated by National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education’s (CARE) goals, research on Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) populations must take into consideration the differences in socioeconomic, ethnic,

language and immigration backgrounds; the impact of stereotypes and perceptions of AAPI students on educational policy, practice and research; as well as intersections of race with class, gender, immigration status, religion, and language (National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education [CARE], 2008). While many universities have made commitments to serve an increasingly diverse student body through institutional and organizational initiatives, AAPI voices are often overlooked or marginally considered on our campuses (Chew-Ogi & Ogi, 2002; Green & Kim, 2005; Inkelas, 2006; Teranishi, 2002). Few studies have documented the campus experiences of AAPIs, adequately disaggregated data for AAPI subpopulations, or looked at AAPIs in different institutional contexts (National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education, 2010).

Chang and Kiang (2002) note that research on Asian Americans in higher education tend to fall, broadly, into five categories: (a) national demographics and profiles that address the lack of information available about Asian Americans in higher education (e.g., Hune, 1997; Hune & Chan, 1997; Suzuki, 1990); (b) research on Asian American contemporary issues, particularly including race and affirmative action across K-12 and higher education (e.g., Ancheta 1998; Nakanishi & Nishida, 1995); (c) case studies from particular campuses that analyze different groups or comparative studies including Asian Americans (e.g., Gupta 1998; Kiang, 1993); (d) curricular and pedagogical practice in the fields of Asian American studies and student development (Hirabayashi, 1997; Kiang, 1998); and (e) personal narratives of Asian American



students, and faculty, related to themes of persistence in the academy (e.g., Kiang 2000; Matsuda, 1996; Nguyen & Halpern, 1989).

Research in the Asian American community is further complicated by the diversity and pan-ethnicity of the Asian American and Pacific Islander population. Often, research related to the Asian American community consists of overrepresentation of a few ethnic groups, most of which have experienced relative success in the American educational system. Research on the Asian American community, for example, does not often include participants from Southeast Asian or South Asian communities, Pacific Islanders, or multiracial experiences and voices that then oversimplify the heterogeneity of the communities (Accapadi, 2012, p. 62). Emerging research has begun to explore the diversity in the pan-ethnic Asian American and Pacific Islander population, and is serving as a solid foundation to engage in deeper inquiry about how Asian American students negotiate and navigate their social identities (e.g., Buenavista, 2010; Buenavista, Jayakumar, & Misa-Escalante, 2009; Chen, LePhuoc, Guzman, Rude & Dodd, 2006; Nadal, 2004, 2011).

While scholarship on the complexities of the Asian American community is growing, Museus and Chang (2009) outline several key barriers to increasing the knowledge base about Asian Americans. For example, there are chronic barriers related to existing stereotypes, such as the model minority myth, that place burden on justifying the rationale for including Asian Americans in research on equity, outcomes and educational experiences. There is also a lack of financial resources that facilitate research on Asian Americans due to their exclusion in categories such as “underrepresented

racial/ethnic minorities” or “at-risk populations”, despite research that has demonstrated the disparate educational attainment rates of some ethnic subgroups. There have been policy shifts to de-minoritize Asian Americans, impacting access to scholarships or support programs for college. These barriers are rooted in racialization of Asian Americans and, together, these barriers highlight the challenges Asian Americans face both as researchers and as communities in need of attention. Further, normative frameworks have positioned experiences, outcomes, and representation of Asian Americans relative to Blacks and Whites; this Black-White paradigm has “contributed to a precarious positioning of the Asian American educational experience” (Teranishi et al., 2009, p. 889).

**The racialization of Asian Americans.** Ancheta (1998) wrote “the racialization of Asian Americans has taken on two primary forms: outsider racialization as non-Americans and racialization as the model minority” (p.44). Museus (2014) furthers these two categories by adding that Asian Americans are also racialized as deviant minorities, as academically inferior, gang members, and overly dependent on welfare (p. 17). Though these categories are not intended to compartmentalize Asian American identity, it is important to understand the ways in which society has racialized Asian Americans and the Asian American experience in order to understand the impact that these stereotypes have had on identity development and the social construction of race.

One of the earliest appearances of the term *model minority stereotype* was coined in the 1960s during the Civil Rights movement as a way to create a racial divide between people of color and the fight for equality; Asian Americans were politically positioned as

successful people of color and thereby used as a measuring tool for other people of color who were advocating for equal rights and protection (Matsuda, 1996). Suzuki (2002) noted that the model minority myth “has become an almost unconscious image embedded in the minds of the public, subliminally influencing their perceptions” (p. 25). The *deviant minority myth*, used primarily in the context of Southeast Asian Americans, was used to characterize Southeast Asian Americans as school dropouts, gang members, and welfare dependents (Ngo, 2006; Ngo & Lee, 2007). The polarized extremes of the model minority myth and the deviant minority myth fuel contradictory assumptions about Asian Americans and Southeast Asian Americans (Museus, 2013).

Closely related to the model minority myth is the *yellow peril fear* that was created to perpetuate fear and threat of Asian Americans (Espiritu, 2008). The yellow peril fear was the root of many policies created to exclude Asian Americans from opportunities and protections, many of which have continued to exist by deminoritizing Asian Americans through policy decisions. In higher education, the discourse on Asian American overrepresentation on some college campuses has reinvigorated the yellow peril fear. Robert Teranishi’s (2010) book, *Asians in the Ivory Tower*, in particular, addresses both the social and political backlash towards Asian Americans that has resulted in some colleges placing higher admission standards on Asian Americans, positioned the enrollment of Asian Americans as taking away seats for other racial minorities, and further limiting access to ethnic groups within Asian America who do not have high college attendance rates.

The *perpetual foreigner stereotype* draws from the stereotype that, regardless of citizenship or years in the United States, Asian phenotype denotes an “otherness” as immigrants or foreigners and to exclude Asians as being Americans (Kim, 2009; Sue et al., 2007). Asian Americans have been subjected to racial taunts such as “Go back where you came from” or inquiries about their Americanness such as “Do you speak English?” As sociologist Mia Tuan writes, “Asian ethnics are assumed to be foreign unless proven otherwise” (Tuan, 1998, p. 137). Historical exclusion and targeting of Asian Americans in the United States further exacerbated the impact of the perpetual foreigner stereotype: the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, for example, barred Chinese Americans from becoming naturalized Americans and stripped Chinese Americans citizens of their citizenship; more than 120,000 Japanese Americans, a majority of whom were citizens, were imprisoned and suspected as enemies of the United States.

As a result of the racialization of Asian Americans via the model minority, perpetual foreigner and yellow peril stereotypes, Sue et al. (2007) identified additional themes that are also directed toward Asian Americans: (a) denial of racial reality (“Asians are the new Whites”); (b) exoticization of Asian women (“Asian women are so obedient”); (c) invalidation of interethnic differences (“All Asians look alike”); (d) pathologizing cultural values/communication styles (“To get a better grade, you need to talk more”); (e) second class citizenship (“Move to the back row”); and (f) invisibility (“Racism is between Blacks and Whites”). With roots in historical oppression, these stereotypes were created to perpetuate fear, hate, and marginalization of Asian Americans and many continue to be enacted on our campuses, in our organizations, and in our

programs today in the forms of both overt and microaggressive behaviors (Museus, 2014). Racial microaggressions -- subtle insults directed at people of color automatically or unconsciously -- affect the experiences of Asian Americans by impacting quality of life, perceptions of social support, and efficacy beliefs that significantly influence the persistence of racial and ethnic minority students (Gloria & Ho, 2003). For Asian Americans, racial microaggressions additionally contribute to invisibility and exclusion and reinforce existing stereotypes about Asian Americans.

**Research on undergraduate Asian Americans.** Over the past few years, there has been an increase on research addressing the needs and experiences of Asian American students in higher education. As the research on Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students is still limited, the following research on undergraduate Asian American students provides a foundation for exploring issues that may impact graduate student experiences. Recent research has included broad categories including, but not limited to, deconstructing the model minority myth (e.g., Hartlep, 2013; Lee & Kumashiro, 2005; Museus, 2008; Museus, 2009; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Ng, Lee & Pak, 2007); research related to ethnic identities (e.g., Buenavista, Jayakumar, Misa-Escalante, 2009; Kiang, 2004; Kiang, 2009; Maramba, 2008; Nadal, Pituc, Johnston, & Esparrago, 2010); the role of ethnic student organizations and institutional support (e.g., Museus, 2008); multiracial identity (e.g., Root, 1997); college degree attainment (e.g., Hune 2002; Museus, 2009; Teranishi, 2002); undergraduate student leadership (e.g., Balón, 2005); disaggregating data on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (e.g., Kodama & Dugan,

2013; Museus, 2009; Museus & Truong, 2009) and policies related to Asian American issues (e.g., Chang & Kiang, 2002; Kang, 1996; ).

**Critical race theory and Asian Americans.** A helpful framework to interrogate existing structures that have impacted the experiences of Asian Americans and their socialization to the academy is critical race theory (CRT). Critical race theory is a methodological, theoretical and conceptual construct that disrupts racism and dominant racial paradigms in education (Solórzano, 1998). Teranishi et al. (2009) stated that CRT is a particularly effective conceptual tool for understanding how Asian Americans are affected by research, policies, and practices in higher education by making central the voices of Asian American students, by addressing interest convergence, and by emphasizing social justice as central in higher education (p. 59). Critical race theory challenges educational discourse that perpetuates, in particular, the model minority paradigm because it looks at the racialization of Asian Americans and challenges Eurocentric interpretations of Asian America. By using a critical race framework, researchers and leaders further examine ways in which underrepresented Asian American students are kept from fully participating in higher education with the same level of access and success as other groups. In particular, a critical race framework also provides insight into the decisions made by and for Asian American students (e.g., access to support programs, choices about college and access to college).

Using a CRT framework, Buenavista et al. (2009) asserted that the generalization of Asian Americans is a result of a racial agenda that maintains the dominant status of Whites in the United States and oppresses Asian American ideas, experiences, and

contributions. The emerging framework of AsianCrit has been used to apply critical race frameworks to the analysis of Asian American experiences in an effort to better understand the ways in which racial oppression and subordination have impacted Asian American communities and identities. As race is socially constructed, racism occurs at micro- and macro- levels (Solórzano, 1998), and the interconnected tenets of AsianCrit provides a framework for scholars to examine both past and present marginalization of Asian Americans in higher education.

Ng, Lee, and Pak (2007) further this argument by stating that “more nuanced understandings of race and racialization in education are needed to see the real experiences of Asian American students as they negotiate inequitable and discriminatory social structure conditions” (p. 122). CRT assumes that race matters and that race, along with other social identities, are subject to conceptions of the dominant group in power. Therefore, critical educational research contributes to transformative educational practices.

Centrality of experiential knowledge is another tenet in critical race theory. The experiential knowledge of people of color highlights ways in which racism is interconnected to dominant ideologies and practices. In their study on counter-narrative storytelling – a powerful tool that emerges from critical race theory – Pendakur and Pendakur (2012) state that Asian Americans “are a group at risk. We are often not visible or fully understood. We juggle our ethnic and pan-racial identities.... In our work, we are called up on to be social justice educators about race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, ability and power, while we ourselves are marginalized by racialized and systemic structures”

(p. 49). This duality contributes to the earlier assertions of cultural taxation that Tierney and Bensimon (1996) remark work against people of color.

Existing processes that have isolated and marginalized Asian Americans have also kept Asian Americans “in the dark about their own communities, histories, and stories” (Pendakur & Pendakur, 2012, p. 41). Critical race theory demonstrates that a pervasive paradigm has been used in educational research to perpetuate White, middle class, hegemonic notions of merit and to dismiss disparities that exist within the pan-ethnic Asian American community (Buenavista et al., 2009). Buenavista et al. (2009) state that critical race theory also provides a useful framework for “moving beyond the critiques of the model minority stereotype and toward a deeper understanding of the socio-historical contexts of how Asian Americans are racialized in the United States” (p. 72). To examine the marginalization of Asian Americans in higher education, critical race theory provides a framework to examine intersectionality of race and racism; challenge to dominant ideology; commitment to social justice; the centrality of experiential knowledge; and approach the work through an interdisciplinary perspective (Buenavista et al., 2009). Therefore, critical race theory can both inform larger approaches to research, policy and practices and also promote educational opportunities, such as leadership, that affirm Asian American identity, visibility and mattering.

**Culturally sensitive framework of leadership.** The role of a leader may come in many forms in higher education. For example, some individuals may choose roles as faculty and identify as leaders in a classroom, department, or serve on committees; some may choose roles as administrators and serve as leaders in an administrative department,



a college wide program or initiative, or advise a student group or organization; and some others may choose the role of researchers and lead research teams, student or peer research groups, or serve as a principal investigator on a study. Doctoral programs play a key role in the socialization of doctoral students as leaders. During graduate school, doctoral students are expected to develop leadership skills and to prepare to continue the “vigor, quality, and integrity of the field” (Golde, 2006, p. 5). Doctoral students are educated to be tomorrow’s scholars, researchers, leaders and educators and to impact social, governmental, educational, and industrial organizations (Council of Graduate Schools, 2005; Gardner, 2009).

While no single organization or association exists to support doctoral students in the field of higher education, many doctoral programs include purposes in their mission such as “improving higher education generally; accomplishing this with specific expertise in organizational behavior and management, public policy, academic affairs, and student development, assessment, and evaluation” (University of Michigan) or “on preparing leaders who are committed to fostering, facilitating, and managing change in diverse settings” (University of Massachusetts Boston) or “prepares students for senior educational leadership and policy positions by critically examining the conceptual, organizational, political, social, managerial, interpersonal, and technical dimensions of schools and other educational institutions” (New York University). Taken together, doctoral programs in higher education seek to prepare students for a diverse range of leadership roles in colleges, universities, and educational organizations; yet a critical race lens interrogates the dominant definitions and paradigms used to define leadership,

calling for a more culturally inclusive definition and practice of leadership and leadership development.

Komives, Lucas, and McMahon (1998) define leadership as “a relational process of people together attempting to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good” (p. 21). Developing a relational style of leadership means shifting from a hierarchical, leader-centric view to one that “embraced leadership as a collaborative, relational process” (Komives et al., 2005, p. 609). Though many higher education practices emphasize these values of leadership, Arminio et al. (2000) found that students of color did not prefer the labels “leader” and “leadership” and did not feel validated in leadership programs based on conventional leadership literature. Rather, students of color preferred structures and processes that were “honest, open and collaborative” and that “embraced collateral relationships with groups, de-emphasized hierarchical relationships and used language of involvement, association and commitment” (Arminio et al., 2000, p. 505).

Authors of the National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education (2008) report suggest there is evidence that Asian American college students are becoming more aware of the importance of holding leadership positions. In order to support leadership development that affirms identity, builds coalitions, and challenges institutional barriers, it is important to take into account the influences of the racialization of Asian Americans, the experiences of Asian Americans in education, and the framework of critical race theory. By developing programs and

practices that support culturally relevant leadership, campuses may impact the anticipatory socialization processes that build positive self-esteem in college.

The work on culturally sensitive frameworks of leadership is helpful in analyzing the socialization process of Asian Americans in leadership positions, particularly in higher education. Neilson and Suyemoto's (2009) culturally sensitive framework focuses on the assets that Asian American cultural values affirm – such as hard work, collaboration, humility -- rather than the deficits that keep them from engaging in leadership. Neilson and Suyemoto's (2009) model is also significant because it integrates Western and Eastern values (e.g., risk taking, collaboration) without compromising cultural influence. Though a Eurocentric framework, alone, does not explain the reasons why Asian Americans are underrepresented in leadership positions, a culturally relevant framework provides an opportunity to redefine leadership values and reshape socialization for Asian Americans to a more relevant definition of leadership.

**Broad implications.** Asian America has been historically treated as a monolithic racial group with shared experiences, goals, and outcomes; however, the racial category includes more than 48 different ethnic categories, which become further diversified when multi-ethnic and multi-racial combinations are considered (U.S. Census, 2000); diverse immigration experiences; language; and political and social racialization. As the authors of the National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education (2008) report state, “unless educators and advocates dispel and replace the myths about Asian Americans, both higher education and society as a whole will miss

fully developing and engaging these students who have much to contribute to our schools and communities” (p. 30).

Diverse images of Asian Americans have emerged through scholarship and practice that serve to disrupt the monolithic categorization. For example, competing images of Asian Americans as being both beneficiaries and victims of affirmative action have surfaced as complicated existing stereotypes of Asian Americans. Chang and Kiang (2002) noted, “the recognition of diversity is the recognition of contradictory images” (p. 145). When Asian Americans are viewed as whiz kids and academic superstars, they are often overlooked despite needing services or assistance in language skills. When Asian Americans are viewed as needing additional assistance in language or as outsiders, they are often overlooked for leadership positions, educational opportunities such as academic grants and scholarships, or guidance in professions that one may require strong verbal, writing or social skills. This social construction of Asian Americans as a “good” minority has led to the underrepresentation in research, the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes that have ignored the challenges within the Asian American community, and marginalized Asian Americans as not needing services or attention.

Because socialization is, itself, a process influenced by social construction and meaning, it is important to examine the lived experiences of Asian Americans related to stereotypes such as the model minority, perpetual foreigner and yellow peril. Doing so reveals a compelling framework for examining Asian Americans in research. Teranishi (2010) noted that examining the Asian American population reveals (a) the extent to which Asian Americans are included in educational debates such as access and

participation in higher education; (b) the study of educational mobility; and (c) how Asian American communities and students develop and pursue goals and aspirations. Further research on growing needs of Asian American communities further disrupts existing stereotypes and can inform a more authentic bidirectional process of socialization. To do so requires that we recognize and acknowledge existing social oppression.

To interrogate social oppression that may be perpetuated by existing stereotypes, Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) proposed that individuals who engage in a *transformative resistance* process confront oppression and demand social change. It is critical for higher education to understand how people of color negotiate ethnic and racial identities and how those identities inform and influence their socialization processes. Understanding the experiences of Asian American students is helpful through a critical race theory lens, one that also includes transformative resistance, because it positions the Asian American experience, historical context, and current issues as a central component to understanding racialized experiences and campus climate without simply using Asian American populations as a comparison group in larger conversations within a Black/White binary.

Complicating our understanding of Asian American identity is not just important in higher education but also in early experiences in education. For example, numerous reports have shown that teachers, counselors and school administrators from kindergarten through higher education hold beliefs about stereotypes and the Asian American community, particularly the model minority stereotype, and fail to recognize how Asian

Americans contend with similar issues that other communities of color face (National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research, 2008). Further, the focus on overwhelming model minority success has resulted in a lack of studies that address low achievement among Asian American students, thereby limiting understanding that could influence policies, programs, and services for Asian Americans. The misrepresentation of Asian Americans is pervasive in scholarship and research, with gaps in knowledge about Asian Americans in the K-12 educational system, higher education, and graduate school. Increasing knowledge and culturally relevant interpretation of data contributes to more reflective inclusion of Asian Americans and a more nuanced understanding of socialization.

### **Research on Pacific Islanders in Higher Education**

The 2010 U.S. Census identified 24 distinct Pacific Islander ethnic categories. Of those, the six largest Pacific Islander groups were Native Hawaiians, Samoans, Guamanians or Chamorros, Tongans, Fijians, and Other Micronesians (U.S. Census, 2012). By using a multidimensional analyses of current national data available on Pacific Islander populations, Museus (2013) provided an intersectional examination of Pacific Islander identity and social conditions with education, occupation, and socioeconomic status, revealing disparities within and among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Further, Museus (2013) highlights differences in both high school diploma and bachelor's degree attainment among Pacific Islander groups. For example, while the national population of persons with bachelor's degrees is 28%, Guamanians (13%), Tongans (11%), Fijians (11%), Samoans (10%), and Other Micronesians (4%) all hold bachelor's

degrees at a rate less than the national average.

Traditionally, when examining data or writing about the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander populations, information is aggregated, giving an overly simplified picture. Despite movement to disaggregate data on Asian Americans, there has been little movement to disaggregate data related to Pacific Islanders. This practice not only ignores the voices and experiences of Pacific Islanders, it also creates a monolithic story of Pacific Islander issues. Further, linking data related to higher education on Pacific Islanders with Asian American data can be misleading as there is often greater representation in higher education of Asian American students than Pacific Islanders in the data collected (Gregersen, Nebeker, Seeley, & Lambert, 2004).

Additionally, there is a lack of literature on Pacific Islanders in higher education. For example, Museus (2009) conducted an analysis of the five most widely read peer-reviewed journals in the field of higher education. In this review, only 1 out of 1,500 published articles in these journals gave explicit attention to Pacific Islander populations and no articles gave explicit attention to Asian American and Pacific Islander graduate students. While there is a paucity of literature on Pacific Islander students in higher education, existing research highlights the importance of culture and identity in student experiences (e.g., Hokoana & Oliveira, 2012; Kupo, 2010). And, focusing on the concept of identity and experiences of Pacific Islanders will provide an understanding of their experiences different from those of Asian Americans as well as unique within their own communities.

Some researchers have studied indigenous college students, specifically American

Indians, and have made connections between Native Hawaiian and American Indian communities as indigenous (Kupo, 2010). Specifically, studies have found that support from family, perception of university climates, and relationships with faculty and staff are among the factors that influence persistence and retention in higher education (Jackson, Smith, & Hill, 2003). Studies have also demonstrated that indigenous students are not often in school systems or structures that honor indigenous education or indigenous ways of knowing (Kupo, 2010). College students, in particular, are often taught in systems that value dominant and colonized ideals, and values that can alienate students and their heritage (Abayo, 2006; Beresford, 2003a; Champagne, 2006).

Wright and Balutski (2013) note that research including Pacific Islanders tends to focus on indigenous Pacific Islanders. This may largely be due to the ability to make connections to existing research and experiences of Native Americans and other indigenous populations. Similarly, it is important to create counter-spaces where indigenous Pacific Islanders can “learn about and create culturally familiar spaces and co-construct counter-narratives” that include historical and sociopolitical contexts of the Pacific as both an indigenous community as well a community that has been impacted by colonialism. These counter-spaces, such as subcultures of ethnic studies programs or ethnic student organizations, can (a) provide safe havens for students within unwelcoming dominant campus cultures; (b) foster critical connections between institutional agents and students of color; and (c) serve as spaces in which college students can integrate the academic, social and cultural spheres of their lives (Museus, Mueller, & Aquino, 2013, p. 109).



A critical study by Kaomea (2005) contextualizes the impact of indigenous education and the interplay between non-Indigenous educators with the demands for indigenous curriculum. As Kaomea (2005) writes: “Over 100 years after the illegal overthrow of the Native Hawaiian monarchy and Hawai’i’s forced annexation to the United States, the (post)colonial state of Hawai’i remains economically and politically dominated by a colonial settler population that is approximately one-third white and one-third Asian American” (p. 24). Though there has been legislation mandating that the stories and experiences of Native Hawaiian people are included in curricula, there simply have not been any studies that have critically examined how an Indigenous Hawaiian curriculum is carried out in the classroom. Essentially, though Native Hawaiian topics are discussed, there are no accountability measures for how this education is being fulfilled, particularly by non-Native Hawaiians. Further, education that is not interrogated from a critical perspective may, in fact, be perpetuating stereotypes of Native Hawaiians. For example, as a result of a class observation in which children were reporting what they learned about Native Hawaiians, Kaomea (2005) reflects: “How is it, I asked myself, that a curriculum designed to foster an appreciation for Native people of Hawai’i could lead to such horrific depictions of Hawaiian sadism and violence? How could a classroom teacher allow these misconceptions to be perpetuated in her classroom?” (p. 27).

In Hawai’i’s public school classrooms, the largest percentage of students is of Native Hawaiian ancestry (24%), yet the largest majority of classroom teachers are Japanese American (37%) and Caucasian (26%) (Hawai’i Department of Education, 2003). Samoan students account for less than 5% of Hawai’i’s public school population

and even barely 1% of the teachers in Hawai'i's public school systems identify as Samoan (Hawai'i Department of Education, 2004). Further complicating the challenge of representation is the fact that many of the teachers who work in Hawai'i's public schools come from the mainland where there is little to no education that includes the experiences of Pacific Islanders or Native Hawaiians. Essentially, the teaching core of the public schools in Hawai'i are not trained or prepared to address and include the cultural relevancy of the students who they teach.

Kaomea (2005) cautions the practice of simply increasing curriculum about Native Hawaiians: "Ultimately, Native peoples should have authority over Native issues" (p. 40). Kaomea (2005) further adds that transforming classrooms and classroom spaces means that non-Hawaiian classroom teachers must take a back seat to Hawaiian elders and cultural experts and "assume a supportive role that allows Hawaiian experts to take the lead" (p. 40). Kaomea's (2005) recommendations highlight the need to disrupt existing socialization processes that have created barriers for Native Hawaiians to pursue careers in education. Providing more culturally responsive, reflexive and inclusive curriculum may also influence the cycle of socialization to education. Increasing the number of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islander teachers would contribute to culturally reflexive and culturally responsive education that centers the experiences and knowledge of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.

Data also shows that Pacific Islanders also face barriers in higher education (Ong & Cruz-Viesca, 2006): "Slightly less than 1/3 (29%) of Pacific Islanders between the ages of 18 and 24 are enrolled in a college or university, a rate comparable to African

Americans (29%). In contrast, the college enrollment figures are 39% for non-Hispanic whites and 57% for Asians” (p. 4). The authors of the report also demonstrate that Pacific Islanders are underrepresented at universities such as the University of California, Los Angeles, with only 166 Pacific Islander applicants; only 26 Pacific Islanders were admitted; and only 11 enrolled (Ong & Cruz-Viesca, 2006, p. 4). Data for Hawai’i shows that Native Hawaiians who attend college at the University of Hawai’i Manoa are underrepresented; and those who do attend college are concentrated in the state’s community colleges (Ong & Cruz-Viesca, 2006).

In order to improve educational attainment as well as inclusive reflectiveness and responsiveness to Pacific Islanders, there needs to be a change in public policy and enhanced services. As Ong and Cruz-Viesca (2006) note, “So far, Pacific Islanders have not been a part of the policy discussion about the need to increase diversity in higher education and to redress underrepresentation of minority groups” (p. 6). Because Pacific Islanders are often included within larger categories of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders or Asian/Pacific Islanders, scholars such as Behman (2006) and Kauanui (2008) advocate for researchers not to subsume the distinct voices of Pacific Islanders into broader categories of Asian/Pacific Islander. These research practices of aggregating the experiences of Pacific Islanders were likely the result of the U.S. government’s labeling of Pacific Islanders and Asian Americans into one racialized group via the census, despite the lack of attention and inclusion of Pacific Islanders in the larger discourse. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge when research is, in fact, inclusive of Pacific Islander experiences and voices or if Pacific Islanders are simply included because of broad

classification that has historically grouped them with research on Asians and Asian Americans.

### **Socialization of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Education**

In the United States, about 10% of all bachelor's degrees, 25% of all master's degrees, and 15% of all doctorates awarded annually are in the field of education (Richardson, 2006). The field also awards the largest number and largest percentage of minority doctoral recipients among all doctorates awarded, including nearly half of all African American doctorates (Golde, 2006). Although Asian Americans are one of the fastest growing racial/ethnic minority populations, a relatively small number of Asian Americans pursue majors and faculty careers in the field of education (Kim, 2009).

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2008), only 1.9% of total Asian American/Pacific Islander college graduates majored in education, while 7.6% of total US graduates majored in education, 8.9% of Whites, 4.9% of Blacks, and 5.1% of Hispanics majored in education. Of the total master's degrees awarded in 2008, 29% were in education. Of those awarded master's degrees in education, 34.3% of Whites, 31.2% of Blacks, and 36.8% of Hispanics earned master's degrees in education. Asian Americans represented the smallest number master's degree graduates in education at only 12.8% (NCES, 2008). Asian Americans also represented the smallest number of doctoral degree graduates in education in 2008: 70.8% White, 14% Black, 6.9% Hispanic, and 3.9% Asian American (NCES, 2008).

To contextualize the underrepresentation of Asian Americans in education, it is important to examine the role of anticipatory socialization to the field of education,

including but not limited to the conditions in the elementary and secondary school environment for Asian American students. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2008), of the fall 2008 student enrollment in U.S. public schools kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, 5% of the student population was Asian American/Pacific Islander while 1.2% of the teacher population was Asian American/Pacific Islander. Teranishi (2010) noted that underrepresentation of Asian American teachers is problematic, especially when examining the retention rates of Asian American teachers in public schools. For example, Teranishi (2010) found that 45.2% of Asian American/Pacific Islander teachers left their teaching positions in 2004-2005 to pursue other careers, whereas a smaller percentage of teachers from other ethnic groups did so. While the statistics on retention and persistence are troubling, Rong and Preissle (1997) further suggest that Asian Americans may avoid teaching altogether, and instead choose careers in which they are well represented in order to avoid discrimination and racial conflict that come with being underrepresented in a field.

Teranishi (2010) suggests that the lack of Asian American diversity among teachers and administrators could be the result of an inadequate effort to encourage students to major in education fields. While there is no singular reason why Asian American students are underrepresented in doctoral studies in education, there are mechanisms within each discipline that prevent students (i.e. students of color) from matriculating into programs, including underrepresentation, lack of previous experiences, and social support (Espino, Munoz, & Marquez Kiyama, 2010). Researchers have demonstrated that culturally relevant mentoring, peer networks, and role modeling are

important in socialization for students of color; therefore, the shortage of Asian American teachers may continue to be problematic in effectively socializing Asian Americans to pursue careers in teaching and education.

**Underrepresentation of Asian Americans in education programs.** Researchers suggest that the lack of diversity among teachers and administrators as well as the limited number of teachers and administrators from Asian American and Pacific Islander communities could be the result of “an inadequate effort to encourage students to major in education fields” (Wang & Teranishi, 2012, p. 10). There has been a decrease over the past three decades in the undergraduate major decision trends for Asian Americans in education. Wang and Teranishi (2012) reported that, in 1971, only 2.2% of Asian American freshmen men surveyed chose education as a probable field of major and 7.1% of Asian American freshmen women chose education as a probable field of major. In 2005, the number fell to 1.5% Asian American freshmen men surveyed chose education as a probable field of major and 4% Asian American of freshmen women chose education as a probable field of major. This decline in interest in education majors for Asian American men and women freshmen may have impacted the pipeline and shortage of Asian American teachers, and possibly the shortage of Asian American faculty, staff and administrators on college and university campuses (Wang & Teranishi, 2012, p. 12).

Furthering the understanding of how socialization and social influences impact the decisions of Asian Americans to education, Rong and Preissle (1997) outlined four clusters of factors that may help to explain the disproportionately low number of Asian Americans in the field of education: occupational orientation, discrimination, parental

influences and institutional characteristics of the teaching profession. Of particular interest related to Asian American doctoral student socialization are occupational orientation and institutional characteristics of the teaching profession because these two factors address interconnected themes of underrepresentation, marginality, and invisibility in the educational experience.

The notion of an ethnic-enclave (Rong & Preissle, 1997) may also perpetuate the cycle of underrepresentation of Asian Americans in the fields of education, as they may choose, instead, to pursue careers in which they are not underrepresented. Rong and Preissle (1997) state that “people from the same ethnic group are more likely to cluster in occupations perceived as accessible and for which they have adequate resources to be successful” (p. 278). However, Asian Americans who do choose education and teaching may also experience organizational socialization that excludes them from becoming full members of the institution. For example, Goodwin, Genishi, Asher and Woo (2006) found that a sample of 21 Asian teachers in New York City believed that they are a marginal minority, invisible in school, and that the school curriculum does not adequately include Asian American life experiences and culture.

The combination of underrepresentation in the teaching profession, invisibility in curriculum, and perceived institutional racism may impact the decisions of undergraduates to choose education as a field of study. As anticipatory socialization to teaching may occur early in one’s educational experience, it is important to recognize the impact of lack of role models for Asian Americans teachers. Park (2009) stated, “the paucity of Asian American teachers is troublesome for a variety of reasons. Children

need role models with whom to identify, and they need to be able to see themselves in the faces of their teachers” (p. 124).

The participation of Asian American teachers also serves to affirm identity of Asian American students. Unfortunately, Ng et al. (2007) found that numerous educators still come to the classroom with assumptions about the foreignness of Asian Americans, further underscoring the experiences of Asian Americans as perpetual foreigners even in their own classrooms. As the researchers state, “the invisibility of Asian Americans across key aspects of public education such as curriculum and staffing is problematic because it fosters the neglect of Asian American students’ complex identities, experiences, and educational needs” (Ng et al., 2007, p. 108).

**Impact of educational experiences in higher education.** Coloma (2006) described three lenses relevant to understanding impact of educational experiences of Asian Americans: pan-ethnic framework, intersectional framework, and comparative framework. The pan-ethnic framework unpacks the heterogeneity and highlights the disparity in educational experiences. Including the diverse experiences of Pacific Islander, South Asian American, and Southeast Asian American communities – three ethnic subgroups with low college attainment rates -- disrupts the stereotype of the model minority myth and the accompanying unparalleled success of Asian Americans. The intersectional framework provides insight into the educational experiences of Asian Americans and the interplay of other social identities such as gender, class, sexual orientation, immigration, and educational backgrounds. The intersectional framework lens disrupts the belief of a monolithic and universal experience of Asian Americans and



Pacific Islanders and focuses on the multi-dimensional characteristics, histories, and stories of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Finally, the comparative framework is helpful in examining the educational experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders because this framework focuses on the racialization of comparative studies, ones that set the White experience as the standard and all others as the comparison. Historically, Asian Americans have also been used to serve as a comparative group for other racial and ethnic groups (e.g., degree attainment, affirmative action); therefore, it is important to have an awareness of the racialized impact of the comparative framework. Taken together, these frameworks position Asian American and Pacific Islander experiences and identities as fluid, influenced by social and political forces, and highly complex.

Classroom experiences with microaggressions may also impact the sense of belonging Asian American and Pacific Islander students feel. In the classroom, Asian American students have reported hearing comments about their ability to speak English well (regardless of citizenship, birth place, or years in the United States); comments about their perceived accents or pronunciation of words; being tokenized in conversations or being asked to translate a word or phrase in their language. These experiences may contribute to socialization experiences that position Asian Americans as outsiders and the classroom as a culturally alienating experience (Benham, 2006).

**Support networks in higher education.** According to Kuh and Whitt (1988) campus culture is “a persistent pattern of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that shape the behavior of individuals and groups in a college or university

and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions on and off the campus” (p.12). Kuh and Love (2000) proposed that students who come from cultures incongruent with the dominant campus cultures must acclimate to those dominant cultures or find membership in one or more subcultures if they are to succeed. One way in which underrepresented students seek support via subcultures is through ethnic organizations. Existing research has examined the impact of ethnic organizations on underrepresented communities and sense of belonging (Museus, 2008; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Rendón, Jalomo, & Nora; 2000), particularly as underrepresented populations navigate the dominant campus culture. These networks serve functions of both social connection and support.

Social network theory is particularly helpful in studying doctoral student education because it seeks to explain how individuals establish and maintain connections in order to facilitate outcomes such as identity development, professional growth, and overall connectedness (Sweitzer, 2009). In recent years, social networking and support organizations for scholars in higher education – most of which are loosely affiliated with existing higher education conferences/groups -- have been created to support Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars and practitioners. Through the lens of ethnic student organizations, professional organizations serve to facilitate cultural adjustment, advocacy and validation by providing space for Asian American scholars and practitioners to connect, feel supported, and to express their identities (Museus, 2008). Though not complete, these groups include: Research on the Education of Asian and Pacific Americans (REAPA) which is a special interest group of the American

Educational Research Association (AERA); Support Network for Asian American and Pacific Scholars (SNAAPS) which is a social group that meets at the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE); Asian Pacific American Network (APAN) which contains leadership from Association of College Personnel Administrators (ACPA); Asian Pacific Islander Knowledge Community (APIKC) which is a leadership group within National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA); Asian Pacific Islander-National Conference on Race and Ethnicity (APINCORE); Asian American Pacific Islander Womyn in Student Affairs and Higher Education; Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education (APAHE); and the recently established Asian American and Pacific Islander Research Coalition (ARC).

The above groups, as stand-alone organizations, support Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education and include roles as scholars, faculty, researchers and practitioners. Other groups may also include intersecting identities such as gender and ethnicity. Though these organizations and groups have broad reaching and inclusive missions, none of these groups focus exclusively on the socialization experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students. While there is limited research on the support systems necessary to address the needs of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in education, researchers have attempted to answer the question, “What constitutes effective support for graduate students of color?” (Altbach & Lomotey, 1991; Margolis & Romero, 1998; Young & Brooks, 2008). The findings generally include diversity and alignment of curricular offerings; recruitment and retention of faculty of color; financial support; mentoring; and navigating inequity

(Young & Brooks, 2008). Other researchers further suggest that support of graduate students of color must also include race-conscious or anti-racist approaches to supporting students (Young & Laible, 2000).

Although socialization to graduate school is challenging for all doctoral students, students of color often begin their programs lacking social, political, cultural, and organizational capital for success. Therefore, it is important to address issues of institutional and organizational support within graduate programs as well as encourage the personal and intellectual development of graduate students. Researchers also emphasize the importance of supporting graduate students of color throughout the duration of the academic program, including examining curricula that represents perspectives of scholars of color (Grogan, 1999; Isaac, 1998; Young & Brooks, 2008). Curricula that do not address issues of racial inequity or the racial realities of people of color are likely to discourage graduate students of color and “impart implicit messages that their views will not be respected or valued” (Young & Brooks, 2008; p. 400).

**Higher Education curriculum and Asian American issues.** Dressel and Mayhew (1974) reported that, in 1974, there were 67 graduate programs in the field of higher education. Currently, the field has grown to offering over 200 graduate programs, with 104 universities offering the Ph.D. and 91 offering Ed.D. degrees in higher education (Council for the Advancement of Higher Education Programs [CAHEP]). Of those 196 programs currently listed in the CAHEP directory, 45 universities offer both the Ph.D. and the Ed.D. With this growth has come an increased interest in identifying core practices, courses, and experiences that provide cohesion among the degree.

One of the ways in which graduate programs have developed common cores is through the curriculum; however, there are few existing studies that have collected curricular offerings across doctoral programs in higher education (Fife, 1991; Goodchild, 1991). Core courses in doctoral programs in higher education tend to address issues of foundations or history of higher education; student personnel theories; organization and administration; current issues; and research seminars (Dressel & Mayhew, 1974). As programs developed over the next 30 years, Fife (1991) identified eight categories through which doctoral programs in higher education addressed: introductory/foundation; theory; application; clinical/internship; synthesis; research skills; dissertation; and professional/lifelong learning. Though these areas tend to be addressed in higher education doctoral programs, there are no standard expectations for content within these areas; rather, content is driven by faculty interests, program needs, and departmental commitments.

Museus (2014) stated “in the higher education scholarly arena, Asian American graduate students in the field of higher education can pick up some of the most highly visible and widely used texts in the field and find the voices of their communities absent from them, or those students can go through graduate school without ever seeing themselves ... reflected in the graduate curriculum altogether” (p. 1). As there are currently no published studies on the inclusion of Asian American issues in higher education doctoral curricula, it is quantitatively difficult to assess whether or not Asian Americans issues are included in doctoral education programs in higher education. However, effective assumptions about the invisibility of Asian Americans in higher

education research and teaching can be made based on absence of Asian American issues in highly selective peer review journals (Museus, 2009; Poon, 2006); the underrepresentation of Asian American faculty and administrators in higher education (Wang & Teranishi, 2012); and narratives of isolation experienced by Asian American doctoral students (Nadal et al., 2010).

The exclusion of Asian Americans in the fabric of higher education teaching, research and publication contributes to a hidden curriculum, one in which expectations are embedded in practices that reproduce inequalities (Jackson, 1968; Margolis & Romero, 1998). Margolis and Romero (1998) articulated the components of the graduate school curriculum that both produces professionals but also simultaneously “(re)produces gender, race and other forms of inequality” (p. 2). These patterns of interactions contribute to the hostile environment for students of color. In another form, the hidden curriculum also seeks to reproduce higher education via the types of courses that are taught and valued; opportunities for research; and access to mentors and effective mentoring.

As Margolis and Romero (1998) ask, “How can the hidden curriculum reproduce what does not yet exist?” For Asian American doctoral students, this question highlights the lack of representation in the curriculum, the professoriate, to research that is recognized and published in existing journals, and to courses that include critical discourse of Asian Americans. Thereby, the modified question becomes “How does the hidden curriculum of higher education doctoral programs marginalize Asian Americans?” In order to shape a more inclusive higher education curriculum, the impact of the hidden

curriculum must be examined in order to make visible the gaps, assumptions and failures of the field of higher education. If it is not examined, higher education risks reproducing the mirror image of itself (Margolis & Romero, 1998).

One way in which the voices of people of color have been included in higher education is through the interdisciplinary field of ethnic studies. The field of ethnic studies contributes to transforming academic culture through the courses and pedagogy that speaks to the needs, demands, and marginalization of communities of color (Butler 2001; Palumbo-Liu, 2003; Umemoto, 1989; Wei 1993) by recovering and reconstructing the histories of those Americans whom history has neglected; to identify and credit their contributions to the making of U.S. society and culture; to chronicle protest and resistance; and to establish alternative values and visions, institutions, and cultures (Hu-DeHart, 1992). Asian American studies, specifically, includes the social, cultural, economic, political, religious and environmental consequences in the demographic shifts in the U.S. due to immigration and refugee resettlement; addresses the exclusion of Asian Americans in the binary dialogues on race and diversity that tend to focus on the Black-White racial paradigms; focuses on the results of globalization of capital and labor; and includes social and psychological impacts of traumatic experiences of refugee communities (Chang & Kiang, 2002, p.151). In a qualitative study by Kiang (1999), alumni at one campus who had taken at least Asian American studies course indicated that the course had “much” or “very much” increased their understanding of the immigrant experience (91%), raised their awareness of racial stereotypes (86%), enabled them to make friends with people different from their own backgrounds (70%), and

helped them interact more confidently with other Asian Americans (83%) (Chang & Kiang, 2002, p. 152). Additionally, Chang and Kiang (2002) note that despite the documented impacts of Asian American studies on student learning, engagement, identity and empowerment, only eight (0.05%) of college and university courses in Massachusetts were actual Asian American courses – six of which were located in one single university, the University of Massachusetts Boston.

### **Emerging issues in Higher Education Administration and Asian American and Pacific Islander Experiences**

In addition to roles as faculty and researchers, doctoral students in higher education often include those who seek roles as practitioners or administrators. The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) is one of the leading associations for the advancement, health and sustainability of the student affairs profession (NASPA, 2013), and both scholars and practitioners in higher education, especially those focused on the student experience, are members of NASPA. NASPA membership includes master's students, doctoral students, faculty, researchers, scholars and practitioners. The national organization also supports various racial/ethnic and affinity/identity groups under the larger umbrella of “knowledge communities” as well as supports regional sub-groups based on geographic areas.

Using NASPA data, Wang and Teranishi (2012) examined the membership make up of student affairs professionals – a group which additionally serves as a pipeline for higher education scholars and practitioners – and found that of the 7,762 membership records, 61% of members were Caucasian, 16% African American, 8% Hispanic, 4%



Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) and 1% Native American (p. 19). Teranishi et al. (2009) noted that poor representation of Asian Americans in higher education leadership positions is threefold: (a) at universities with high concentrations of Asian American/Pacific Islander communities, there is not representation in senior leadership and therefore students are not being exposed to role models who are also Asian American/Pacific Islander; (b) the Asian American/Pacific Islander student population is growing, and the lack of leadership at institutions means issues affecting AAPI students will continue to receive a lack of attention to the challenges they face; and (c) a lack of AAPI leadership is in contrast to the demographic changes of AAPIs increasing its population (p. 65). Despite demographic growth, the absence of Asian Americans within university administrative ranks has been overlooked; for those who persist in the field, many state they have faced hostile work factors such as tokenism, a glass or bamboo ceiling, and isolation (Suh, 2005).

### **Graduate Education Programs and Asian American and Pacific Islander Doctoral Students**

Lindholm (2004) stated that a new generation of faculty, one that is more demographically inclusive of the diverse population higher education serves, is becoming increasingly more significant (p. 605). As doctoral students serve in the pipeline as faculty, it is important to examine their experiences in the anticipatory socialization phases. Yet, as Truong and Museus (2012) note, only two studies (Gildersleeve et al., 2011; González, 2006) have examined how doctoral students of color cope with racism in the academy (p. 231). This gap is significant as doctoral student of color experiences can

provide information about how they, as Walker et al. (2008) stated, “develop intellectual expertise, habits of the heart and mind, and the role of the given discipline” (p. 8).

Critical race theory continues to be a driving force in understanding the experiences of marginalized communities in dominant structures and environments. Yosso’s (2005) study furthers the framework of CRT by including navigational capital, the recognition that people of color have had to navigate an environment that was not inclusive of their social identities. Navigational capital also helps to make meaning of racialized experiences, interactions, and barriers in the doctoral program. Teranishi et al. (2002) suggests that examining the experiences of Asian American students through a critical race lens suggests major gaps in policy and practice within higher education. For example, student development theories, including developmental theories and models of doctoral students (e.g., Tinto, 1993; Weidman et al., 2001) do not account for race or racialized experiences. Further, existing student development theories overlook potential differences that may be informed and impacted by race.

Influenced by racialized identities, recent studies have shown that Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students may not experience a supportive environment, adequate mentoring or a sense of inclusion (Green & Kim, 2005; Truong & Museus, 2012; Wasburn-Moses, 2007). Green and Kim (2005), in one of the few studies that examined the experiences of Asian American doctoral students across disciplines, found that Korean female doctoral students experienced high levels of marginalization and often felt overlooked due to the Black/White binary in racial conversations. Wasburn-Moses (2007) found that Asian American doctoral students reported lower

levels of satisfaction with their interactions with faculty than students from other racial groups and reported more feelings of dissatisfaction. This finding is significant as connections with faculty have been shown to impact socialization and role continuance. Participants in Kim's (2009) study stated they felt invisible in the classroom, both in class discussions (e.g., a White professor seemed to only call on the White students) and in the curriculum (e.g., diversity readings did not include the Asian American experience). Nadal, Pituc, Johnston, and Esparrago (2010), in their study on the experiences of Filipino American graduate students, found that the participants reported feeling alienated from social support and relationships and also lacked concrete academic resources to courses that affirmed their research interests and identities.

Truong and Museus (2012) found that very little had been documented about graduate students of color and how they cope with and resolve issues of racism. In their study, Truong and Museus (2012) focus on the importance of race-related stress and race-related trauma experienced by doctoral students of color. Interactions that cause race-related stress are often consequences of racialized interactions based on racial socialization experiences, racial identity, personal experiences, individual characteristics, and situational characteristics (Truong & Museus, 2012, p. 227). Race-related stress and race-related trauma manifest themselves as emotional, physical and psychological discomfort and pain, further amplifying existing experiences of isolation and marginalization and impacting the academic pipeline if doctoral students of color choose to forgo academia.

Though doctoral students of color may persist to graduation and enter into academic roles, Trower and Chait (2002) point out that the pipeline of academic faculty “empties into territory (that) faculty of color too often experience as uninviting, unaccommodating, and unappealing” (p. 34). Research on Asian American faculty and administrators revealed that they experience stereotypes as model minorities, as foreigners, and as individuals incapable of leadership due to their passive and non-confrontational natures (Nakanishi, 1993; Hune & Chan, 1997). Some Asian American faculty have been challenged in the classroom by racism, sexism, and establishing credibility as English speakers and foreigners (Li & Beckett, 2006).

Asian American faculty have reported exclusion as a part of their working lives (Turner et al., 1999). In a nationwide survey of 33,986 faculty respondents, of whom 8.7% represented several racial/ethnic groups including Asian American, Astin et al. (1997) found that Asian American faculty were the least satisfied of all racial/ethnic groups with overall job satisfaction, opportunity to develop new ideas, and job security. Unfortunately, studies including Asian American faculty are limited as existing stereotypes have contributed to a belief that Asian American experiences in academia are “exemplary and devoid of any racial/ethnic bias” (Turner et al., 1999, p. 27). Studies that do include Asian American faculty experiences tend to use quantitative analysis, complicating data that confirms overrepresentation of Asian Americans in academia (Cho, 1996). Few scholars who have explored this area note gender differences in Asian American faculty participation, including that Asian American men represent there-

quarters of all Asian American faculty and that Asian American faculty have the largest gender gap of any racial/ethnic group (Hune & Chan, 1997, p. 57).

As scholars seek to conduct research in the Asian American community, many find that funding for research in the Asian American community is not easily obtained (Poon, 2006), and this may dissuade scholars from including Asian American research in their agendas. In qualitative interviews with two prominent Asian American higher education scholars, Poon (2006) found that both scholars departed from studying Asian Americans in higher education because there was more funding to produce research in secondary interest areas that have been given more value in publication and funding. Despite the personal and professional interest in advancing research on Asian American college students, both Asian American scholars in her study pursued research agendas that would support work valued by the institution and the tenure process.

The combination of institutionally valued research agendas in the tenure process, lack of funding to explore Asian American issues, and the underrepresentation of Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars in higher education contribute to a dearth of publication on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education. This lack of published information perpetuates a void in the understanding of experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. In turn, this void may impact the socialization of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to education as they may not see themselves as vital to the educational discourse. Therefore, developing a more nuanced understanding of the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students and early career

faculty can inform recruitment, retention, and persistence and reduce factors that may contribute to race-related stress and race-related trauma.

Walker et al. (2008) stated that “doctoral education provides a uniquely productive seedbed for the next generation of intellectual leaders, and continuing its health is therefore a matter of extraordinarily high stakes” (p. 142). This call to action, to examine how graduate programs impact the formation of scholars, is incomplete without examining the impact of race in these social processes. Recently published research by Museus, Mueller and Aquino (2013) explored the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education, particularly related to how cultural values shape the identities of and experiences of students. Integrating literature on the experiences of students of color with the cultural experiences of Native Hawaiian students, the researchers identified four ways in which faculty in graduate programs can demonstrate culturally inclusive and relevant opportunities for Asian American and Pacific Islander students. These themes include fostering an academic family; creating space to develop epistemological and transformational connections; focusing on collaborative education; and (re)establishing culturally relevant programmatic missions (Museus et al., 2013, p. 118).

Museus, Mueller and Aquino (2013) identified that Asian American and Pacific Islanders are oriented towards collectivist community approaches and collaboration. Therefore, graduate faculty should “work to foster a sense of family and community in understanding the experiences of AAPI graduate students” (p. 118). In the absence of a cohort of other Asian American or Pacific Islander students who might serve as a cultural

family, graduate programs should be aware of social, academic, and cultural integration of Asian American and Pacific Islander students. If there is an absence of this cultural family, Asian American and Pacific Islander students may feel disconnected to the program or may develop their own sense of responsibility in creating and shaping these connections.

In order to affirm cultural identity and the value of Asian American and Pacific Islander research in the landscape of higher education, graduate faculty should make concerted efforts to seek out and incorporate literature that is relevant to Asian American and Pacific Islander cultural communities. To further the connection of an orientation towards collectivist approaches, graduate faculty may additionally engage Asian American and Pacific Islander students as co-constructors of research, scholarship and teaching. In the absence of curricular inclusion, graduate faculty should find ways to engage Asian American and Pacific Islander students in projects related to communities that reflect their cultural backgrounds. Museus et al. (2013) noted, “this would enable students to apply theories and topics covered in coursework to improve their communities, while further strengthening bonds between faculty advisors or mentors and their AAPI students” (p. 119).

While graduate programs are focused on independent work and research, Asian American and Pacific Islander students tend to be oriented towards collectivist work. Graduate program faculty can support this collaboration through activities that highlight shared knowledge and co-construction of knowledge (Museus et al., 2013). Finally, higher education graduate programs often include mission statements that include

diversity and valuing of diverse perspectives; therefore, it would be important to include the cultural values that are represented by, reflected in, and relevant to the diverse cultural backgrounds of the students in the program (Museus et al., 2013).

Given the ethnic diversity within the Asian American and Pacific Islander racial group, it is important to note when researchers highlight identity-conscious models that further disaggregate data on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. For example, the study by Nadal et al. (2010) explored the experiences of Filipino American graduate students and the impact of the model minority myth on their experiences in graduate school. The researchers chose to explore the experiences of Filipino Americans because Filipino Americans are often marginalized within the Asian American umbrella term and found that their participants identified a lack of relationships, connections and social support as well as a lack of institutional support and lack of concrete academic resources that impacted their graduate experiences (Nadal et al., 2010 p. 699). Further, Filipino graduate students expressed their frustration with the lack of Filipino mentors, role models, and lack of support for specialized research and study (Nadal et al., 2010). Their findings also support the idea that “Filipino Americans may experience different racial/ethnic identity development than do other Asian Americans, highlighting previous literature that suggests many Filipino Americans may reject an Asian American identity” (Nadal et al., 2010, p. 702). Therefore, while models have emerged to better understand Asian American identity development (Ibrahim, Ohnishi & Sandhu, 2011; Kim, 1981; Kim, 2012), there is a need for development models that explore the experiences of diverse ethnic identities that have been underrepresented in the literature.



**Broad implications.** Academic socialization of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to education may be impacted in early stages of education when individuals are forming their opinions about who participates in education as leaders, educators, scholars and practitioners. The lack of Asian American and Pacific Islander teachers and school administrators may impact individual decisions to major in education or pursue educational leadership opportunities in undergraduate years. Though pathways to doctoral programs in higher education do not require previous training in the formal area of education, decisions to attend graduate programs in education may be influenced by experiences during undergraduate years.

Though some Asian American and Pacific Islander ethnic groups experience academic success, greater access to higher education, and higher rates of persistence and degree completion, the complication of the model minority myth and the aggregation of data involving Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in research make it difficult to understand the reasons why Asian Americans and Pacific Islander might not pursue education as a profession. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who do enroll in doctoral programs in higher education continue to find themselves and their experiences underrepresented in doctoral programs and excluded from core curricula, discussions on diversity, and research in higher education. The emergence of support networks related to Asian American and Pacific Islander research, identity, intersections of gender and experience have assisted in the anticipatory socialization of doctoral students by developing greater systems of organizational socialization.

The persistence and success of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, early career faculty, and senior faculty help to diversify the landscape of higher education and contribute to teaching and research in and about Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. Graduate programs in higher education and higher education administration serve as the pipeline for scholar, faculty and practitioner positions in today's colleges and universities. Therefore, it is important for higher education to include inquiry into the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students and early career faculty because the presence of Asian American and Pacific Islander leaders, scholars and practitioners in higher education is a "key factor for dispelling and replacing the myths about Asian Americans so that our education system and our broader society can fully develop" (Teranishi et al., 2009, p. 894).

## **Conclusion**

Despite being underrepresented in scholarship, faculty ranks, and the doctoral student pipeline in higher education programs, some Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students have chosen to pursue careers in the academic discipline of higher education. Researchers have suggested that early career scholars of color feel devalued and marginalized; lack mentoring; experience hostile climates; and experience cultural taxation. However, much of the research on doctoral students of color has explored the experiences of Black doctoral students (Ellis, 2001; Nettles, 1990; Taylor & Antony, 2000; Willie, 1991) and Latino doctoral students (Espino et al., 2010; Gonzalez, 2006; Solórzano, 1998). While there are many similarities among communities of color, the nature of Asian American and Pacific Islander pan-ethnicity is further complicated by

both political and social identities, including but not limited to immigration, colonization, language, gender roles and expectations, family, culture, and existing stereotypes. Therefore, further study on the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander is helpful in order to provide more supportive and effective strategies for increasing the number of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders doctoral students in the pipeline in higher education.

Chang and Kiang (2002) noted “institutions of higher education have an important civic role and responsibility as knowledge producers and interpreters to intervene in the cycle of distortion” (p. 148). In order to address the current state of underrepresentation of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in fields of education, it is necessary to explore the impact of racial and ethnic identity on the socialization processes of both individuals and the organization. It is important to expand the understanding of the role of socialization in the development of a scholar identity; the role of existing practices that communicate value and legitimacy in teaching, research, and service; and the socialization experiences for doctoral students and scholars of color in higher education in order to create support systems that foster cultural integrity, acceptance, and validation. Further understanding the intersections and the impact of these factors can provide higher education professionals with the tools for supporting and sustaining an increasingly diverse faculty.

Museus (2008) stated, “The desirable course of action is to cultivate institutional cultures in which the salience of racial stereotypes and prejudice are minimized and students of color ... believe themselves to be unique individuals and valued members of

the broader campus community” (p. 8). Higher education must be concerned with the low numbers of administrators and faculty of color, as faculty of color are more likely than other faculty to include diversity related content in their courses (Astin et al., 1997); to teach courses in women’s studies and ethnic studies (Milem & Astin, 1993); to teach from a student-centered framework (Astin et al., 1997; Hurtado et al., 1999); to have conducted research on racial and ethnic minorities (Milem & Astin, 1993); to participate in mentoring relationships with underrepresented students (Baez, 2000); to engage in community based organizations (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Boyer 1991) and to get involved in diversity related committees (Banks, 1984; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996; Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). Administrators of color also serve as role models in leadership positions (Accapadi, 2012); engage in formal and informal mentoring (DeGuzman, Nixon, & Suh, 2012); engage in service-learning (Antonio, 2002; Antonio, Astin & Cress, 2000) and participate in organizations that support and validate ethnic and racial identities (Accapadi, 2012). Asian Americans are also beginning to define culturally relevant styles of leadership that do not require them to forgo racial or ethnic identity nor cultural values (Neilson & Suyemoto, 2009).

The Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate referred to the doctoral education process as one that includes “not only the development of intellectual expertise but also the growth of the personality, character, habits of heart and mind, and the role that the given discipline is capable of and meant to play in academe and society at large” (Walker et al., 2008, p. 8). There is a need for higher education to develop more culturally relevant, reflective and responsive organizational practices and environments that

respond to the changing demographics of higher education, including paying attention to underrepresented populations and improving persistence of individuals who experience isolation in the pipeline to faculty and academia. By utilizing critical race theory to develop a better understanding of agency, resilience, and identity consciousness for Asian American doctoral students, this study seeks to develop a conceptual framework that informs a culturally relevant and responsible model for doctoral student development relevant to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

**Relation of literature to research questions.** Asian Americans have broadly been the focus of attention in higher education related to admission overrepresentation, cultural myths of academic performance and upbringing, and overall success in persistence and graduation. Yet, in the scholarly and professional fields of higher education, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are one of the least represented populations in graduate programs in higher education as well as in faculty positions in higher education. Upon entrance into higher education programs, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders continue to experience exclusion in curriculum; critical dialogues on diversity that have positioned race as a Black-White dichotomy; lack of access to Asian American and Pacific Islander faculty who could serve as role models and mentors; and have been encouraged to not pursue Asian American and Pacific Islander related research due to lack of interest in the field, perceived lack of marketability in the profession, and quantitative data that Asian American and Pacific Islander issues are underrepresented in scholarly journals related to higher education. Negative anticipatory socialization experiences that have failed to affirm the identities of Asian American and Pacific

Islander doctoral students perpetuate a cycle of marginalization, exclusion and invisibility in higher education programs, scholarly journals, and policy-making.

There are limitations to the existing literature on the academic socialization of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education. Currently no theory exists to explain the socialization experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students. Broadly, the literature addresses socialization of doctoral students but fails to include the nuanced experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders as a racial group with diverse ethnic identities and experiences. Further complicating the understanding of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education is the aggregation of data that simplifies Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in to a single monolithic group. In reality, there is great disparity within the Asian American and Pacific Islander community when data are disaggregated further by categories such as ethnic identities, immigration status, language, generational status in the country, socioeconomic status, and parental education. Literature on Asian Americans in higher education tends to focus on the success of the community rather than the lived realities of those who face barriers to higher education, access, persistence, graduation, and post-college outcomes.

Literature on Asian Americans has been limited to key majors and career areas, notably in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Few studies have examined career paths of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the social sciences and even fewer have focused on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the field of education. Further, there has been little inquiry into the experiences of Asian Americans

and Pacific Islanders in the field of higher education. This lack of research points to a gap in the understanding of why Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are underrepresented in the field of higher education, and further inquiry needs to be conducted to identify what organizational level factors may be contributing to this lack of representation.

The existing literature has supported the need for inquiry into Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who have chosen to enter into the field of higher education (Museus, Mueller & Aquino, 2013). Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education have stated they experience marginalization in the classroom; lack Asian American and Pacific Islander role models on the faculty; are excluded from the dominant literature and texts foundational to higher education; are not represented in scholarly journals; are too often aggregated into a monolithic experience; and have experienced oppressive, microaggressive comments about the lack of value of Asian American and Pacific Islander research; yet, there are individuals who continue to persist in higher education doctoral programs. Developing a better understanding of their persistence strategies, their methods of coping, their choices to adopt or to resist socialization that affirms or denies their identities, and their choices to either continue in their roles to the faculty or to choose alternate career paths would create a more robust and nuanced understanding of how to support Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education programs.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes a discussion of the purpose, research design, selection of participants, and data collection techniques. Also included is a discussion related to the use of biographical life histories as a valid and appropriate data gathering technique. This chapter is organized in the following way: (a) restatement of the purpose of the study and research questions; (b) description of the chosen methodology; (c) research design; (d) role of the researcher; (e) limitations of the study; (f) and trustworthiness.

#### **Purpose of the Study and Research Questions**

The intent of this narrative inquiry was to explore, from a critical race perspective, the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education programs through the following question: How do Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experience socialization, as informed by the intersections of race, ethnic identity, and social stereotypes in higher education programs?

In addition, the following sub-questions were used to narrow the focus of the study:

- How do Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experience the anticipatory stage of socialization in higher education programs?



- What organizational factors of doctoral programs impact or inform the development of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education programs?
- What role do Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students play in shaping their socialization experiences in higher education doctoral programs?
- In what ways do higher education programs, including curriculum, pedagogy, peers, faculty advising, etc. shape the socialization of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students?

### **Use of Qualitative Research**

In exploring lived experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars, it has been important to use the qualitative approach to deepen the understanding of the lived experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students beyond quantitative data that has misrepresented and underrepresented the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities (Museus, 2009; Teranishi et al., 2009). For example, in most existing quantitative data sets, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are treated as one aggregated racial group, masking the needs of many ethnic communities who experience marginalization, who are under-served, and who are under-represented. It is through the qualitative research process that I seek to bring forward the voices of individuals within the Asian American and Pacific Islander community to both contextualize their socialization experiences and to disrupt existing quantitative approaches that mask issues unique to the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities.

Qualitative methodology also deepens our understanding of Asian American and Pacific Islander experiences that have been structurally and programmatically excluded from literature and practices in higher education doctoral programs. Because the number of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education programs is small, our field lacks an understanding of the experiences within both the broader racial group and more specifically within the diverse ethnic groups that make up Asian America. Qualitative methodology provides an avenue for Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students to tell their own stories and experiences with socialization that is more nuanced than widely accepted models have represented.

Consistent with the narrative tradition, the human experience is “one in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 477). In this study, twenty-two participants were asked to share their stories about their lives, identities, development and socialization as Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students. Though their stories represent an aggregate of twenty-two individuals, each individual also represents a unique and personal experience. It is because of the nature of narrative inquiry that these stories can be used to both highlight common themes as well as to provide rich descriptions of individual experiences.

### **Research Design**

**Conceptual framework.** This study was informed by the theories and concepts of socialization of graduate students (Weidman, Twale and Stein, 2001); organizational

socialization (Golde, 1998; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979); Asian American racial identity development (Accapadi, 2012; Helms, 1990; Kim, 2012); Asian Critical Race Theory (Museus, 2013) and Tribal Critical Race Theory (Brayboy, 2005). This conceptual framework (Figure 1) is a starting point for analyzing emergent themes related to these factors, and a final model has been created based on the findings of this study as a way to better understand the formation of Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars who experience racialized socialization processes in higher education.

In order to gain a broader understanding of socialization, I used the widely accepted definition that described the socialization process as one through which an individual becomes part of a group, organization or community (Merton, 1957; Tierney, 1997; Van Maanen, 1976). Merton's (1957) work on socialization furthers this definition as a process through which individuals learn to adopt the values, skills, attitudes, norms and knowledge needed for membership into the organization, group, or society. Later research by Tierney and Rhodes (1993) identified socialization as a bidirectional process, one in which socialization is an active process that contributes to change. It is through these concepts that I explored the ways in which socialization teaches or informs others about what is valued, privileged, and accepted.

The concept of socialization, as it relates to academic socialization to higher education, is best viewed from an organizational socialization lens to understand the structures and processes that exist within the broad landscape of higher education and the more specific attributes of a graduate program. Doctoral students may experience socialization through formal curriculum, opportunities for culturally relevant and

responsive mentoring, development of research agendas, and the value to which faculty place on areas of research interest.

As a doctoral student, my socialization to higher education was also impacted by organizational factors, including the ways in which my program prepared me for the role of graduate student, the social processes of meeting other students and forming connections, the matching process of advisor and advisee, the types of courses required in the sequence, and the opportunities to build relationships with faculty. Therefore, I draw from concepts that further explore whether there are aspects of doctoral programs in higher education that contribute to unidirectional or bidirectional processes. Through this lens, the concept of doctoral student socialization is used to understand the process that doctoral students go through towards developing an academic identity.

For Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, research on Asian American and Pacific Islander communities has historically been limited in curriculum and marginalized in research. This lack of representation may be due to assumptions about Asian American and Pacific Islander identity. Therefore, this aspect of socialization is best explored through the conceptual framework of racial identity development of Asian American and Pacific Islander. By understanding how Asian American and Pacific Islanders have been impacted by the social misconceptions and racialized environments, I briefly include a discussion on the impact of the model minority myth as both a stereotype and as a “pervasive paradigm that has been used in educational research to perpetuate White, middle-class, hegemonic notions of merit and dismiss the educational disparities and overall educational experiences of Asian

Americans” (Buenavista et al., 2009, p. 73). Further, I explored ways in which Asian American and Pacific Islander identity is mediated through early socialization about careers, family expectations, and social stereotyping as well as through organizational socialization. Critical race theory also provided the lens to understand the social, political, and historical role of education in Asian American and Pacific Islander ethnic subpopulations.

This study is informed by the concepts of graduate student socialization and racial identity development. Taken together, this study seeks to develop an understanding of how Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experience their formation as scholars despite existing socialization processes that do not include racial and racialized identities.

**The role of critical race theory.** The tenets of critical race theory inform the ways in which this study was designed. In particular, the use of Asian Critical Race Theory (AsianCrit) and Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit) were essential in developing the approach to understanding the socialization of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to higher education. Though critical race theory advances the practice of interrogating existing structures, policies, beliefs and practices that uphold the dominant paradigm, both AsianCrit and TribalCrit further complicate our understanding of how Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are treated in the discourse on race. Further, both AsianCrit and TribalCrit focus on giving voice to communities and addressing issues that impact these communities.

*AsianCrit*. Though Asian Critical Race Theory (AsianCrit) is useful in understanding the nuanced experiences of Asian Americans, there are certain tenets that were especially useful in understanding the experiences of the participants in this study. The tenets of *Asianization*; *(Re)Constructive History*; *Intersectionality*; and *Story, Theory and Praxis* (Museus, 2013) are particularly relevant in understanding the ways in which Asian American doctoral students experience race and racialized education:

1. *Asianization* highlights the ways in which the racialization of Asian Americans operates to shape and reshape laws and policies that affect Asian Americans and influences identities and experiences (Museus, 2013). For this purpose of this study, the tenet of Asianization furthered the understanding of how Asian Americans experienced education; had racialized experiences in education and schooling; and were treated uniformly due to a monolithic approach to identity in school and schooling.
2. *(Re)Constructive History* provides two major touch points for understanding the experiences of Asian Americans in higher education. First, the tenet exposes the ways in which Asian Americans experience racism in the curriculum. Second, the tenet emphasizes that Asian Americans have been racially excluded from American history – in both the national narrative and in schooling – and seeks to construct a critical consciousness that sheds light on both the struggles and the future of Asian Americans. For the purpose of this study, this tenet contributed to a greater understanding of the ways in which Asian Americans learned about the history of their own people in this

country and the messages they learned about the contributions and agency of Asian Americans.

3. *Intersectionality* is an important tenet in understanding the experiences of Asian Americans in education. This tenet is based on the notion that racism intersects with other systems of oppression to create conditions in which Asian Americans shape identity. The lens of intersectionality guided the approach to this study in that racialized identities as Asian Americans -- along with other social, cultural and political identities -- create conditions, realities and experiences that shape and inform our identities.
4. *Story, Theory and Praxis* asserts that stories and storytelling inform theory and practice (Museus, 2013). The stories told through life history interviewing in this study are rooted in the tenet of story, theory and praxis. By hearing and giving voice to the stories of Asian Americans in education, this study relied on the tenet of story, theory and praxis in order to better understand how Asian Americans experienced early education, racialized experiences in education, and racialized experiences in their doctoral processes.

Taken together, AsianCrit and critical race theory inform the conceptual framework for this study because they assist in the interrogation of how race impacts sense of self, identity, socialization and the development of an academic identity.

***TribalCrit.*** A Tribal Critical (TribalCrit) Race Theory more completely addresses the issues of Indigenous Peoples in the United States (Brayboy, 2005). Though the approach emerged as a theoretical framework to address the complicated relationship

between American Indians and the United States federal government, TribalCrit has also been a helpful lens through which to better address the relationship between Pacific Islanders and constructions of race, identity and experience. TribalCrit is “rooted in the multiple, nuanced, and historically- and geographically-located epistemologies and ontologies found in Indigenous communities” (Brayboy, 2005, p. 427).

Brayboy (2005) outline nine tenets of TribalCrit that are briefly summarized as follows:

1. Colonization is endemic to society.
2. U.S. policies toward Indigenous peoples are rooted in imperialism, White supremacy and a desire for material gain.
3. Indigenous peoples occupy a liminal space that accounts for both the political and racialized natures of our identities.
4. Indigenous peoples have a desire to obtain and forge tribal sovereignty, tribal autonomy, self-determination, and self-identification.
5. The concepts of culture, knowledge and power take on a new meaning when examined through an Indigenous lens.
6. Governmental policies and educational policies towards Indigenous peoples are intimately linked around the problematic goal of assimilation.
7. Tribal philosophies, beliefs, customs, traditions, and visions for the future are central to understanding the lived realities of Indigenous peoples, but they also illustrate the differences and adaptability among individuals and groups.



8. Stories are not separate from theory; they make up theory and are, therefore, real and legitimate sources of data and ways of being.
9. Theory and practice are connected in deep and explicit ways such that scholars must work towards social change.

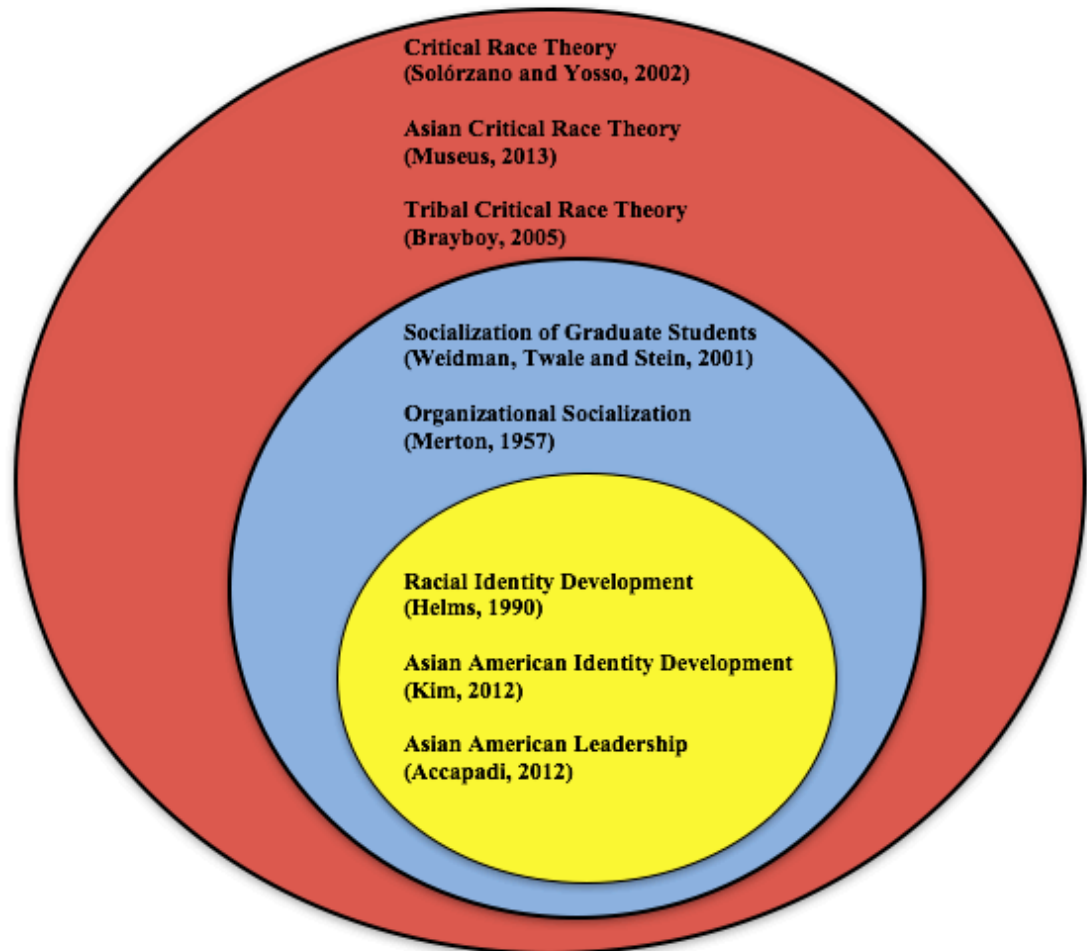
TribalCrit was used to inform this study and to provide a more culturally inclusive framework for understanding the experiences of participants who identify as Pacific Islanders. The acknowledgement of colonization emphasizes the ways in which European American thought, knowledge and power structures dominate present-day society and may have an influence on the ways in which participants experience socialization to education and to anticipatory socialization in higher education. As TribalCrit also connects theory and practice, the use of TribalCrit as a critical lens helps to expose structural inequalities and processes that shaped these inequalities. Given the underrepresentation of Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education programs, TribalCrit served as an important lens to address structural inequalities and social inequalities in the socialization process.

For the purpose of this study, TribalCrit was used to further contextualize the experiences of Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education. As a conceptual framework, TribalCrit offers a lens to understand how colonization is “continually enacted upon Indigenous Peoples” (Writer, 2008) and is useful in contextualizing the experiences of Pacific Islanders who may experience similarities in an educational system that has privileged theory and praxis from a colonized lens.

As evidenced in this study, only one participant identified as Pacific Islander. Therefore, providing the framework for TribalCrit served to honor the critical narrative of this participant. In addition to supporting the narrative of this participant, it is important to acknowledge that other ethnic groups may more closely identify with the history of colonization that is addressed in TribalCrit. For example, Filipinos have often noted that their experiences do not always align with those of Asian Americans – that “Filipino” and “Asian” are not interchangeable (Ocampo, 2013). Filipino history also includes a cultural colonization that shifted and changed indigenous cultural communities that may be understood through a TribalCrit lens. It is in this spirit of inclusiveness and acknowledgement of the varied ethnic experiences, which may not be reflected in AsianCrit, that I have used TribalCrit to inform this study.

Though the above two sub-sections address the key tenets of AsianCrit and TribalCrit that are used to inform the conceptual framework of this study, it is important to understand the overarching concepts of critical race theory. While AsianCrit and TribalCrit serve as more culturally relevant and reflexive frameworks for understanding and interrogating the systems that marginalize Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, the use of critical race theory allowed for a broader context of how race influences systems. Further, using critical race theory, broadly, also helped to contextualize the experiences of students and the structures of organizations that might not neatly align with AsianCrit or TribalCrit. For example, the diverse experience of multiracial Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders may not be adequately represented through the lens of AsianCrit or

TribalCrit. Therefore, employing the broader critical race theory, in conjunction with AsianCrit and TribalCrit, provide a more inclusive framework for this study.



*Figure 1: Conceptual framework*

**Strategy of inquiry.** Creswell (2013) outlined defining features of narrative studies: a collection of stories about individuals' lived and told experiences that may shed light on the identities of individual experiences. A narrative approach in qualitative

research is guided by five defining features: 1) capturing life experiences of a small number of individuals; 2) engaging in the research question through interviews; 3) situating the participant's personal experiences through individual stories; 4) analyzing linkages among ideas presented through the interview; and 5) actively involving participants in the research (Creswell, 2013).

In narrative inquiry, the researcher seeks to understand a phenomenon or an experience rather than to formulate a logical or scientific explanation (Kramp, 2004). Kramp (2004) stated that "narrative inquiry as a method of research is the understanding that narrative is a way of knowing" (p. 106). Narrative also includes understanding or uncovering one's point of view (Harding, 1987) and that the expression of experience requires perspective that reflects an individual's point of view.

Bochner and Riggs (2014) offered the following eight precepts that embrace a reflexive, relational, dialogic and collaborative process of narrative inquiry: 1) the researcher is part of the research data; 2) writing and or performing research is part of the inquiry; 3) research involves the emotionality and subjectivity of both researchers and participants; 4) the relationship between researchers and research participants should be democratic; 5) researchers ought to accept an ethical obligation to give something important back to the people they study and write about; 6) what researchers write should be written for participants as much as about them; researchers and participants should be accountable to each other; the researcher's voice should not dominate the voices of participants; 7) research should be about what could be (not just about what has been); 8) the reader or audience should be conceived as a co-participant not a spectator and should

be given opportunities to think with (not just about) the research story (or findings) (p. 201).

As the opening quote of this dissertation stated: “My research is a part of my life and my life is a part of my research” (Ladson-Billings, 2003, p. 417). Therefore the tenets provided by Bochner and Riggs (2014) inform this study as a collaborative process of inquiry. As an Asian American doctoral student, it is important that my own narrative informed the inquiry, writing and research. This process included the emotionality and subjectivity of both my own life history as well as that of those of the participants. The participants in this study shared two salient characteristics with me: our racial identities as members of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, and our academic identities as doctoral students engaged in research in higher education. Therefore, this study was informed by the narratives of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students and explored ways in which our experiences and identities are shaped by socialization.

Of importance in this study is the belief that the narrative approach to qualitative research privileges the storyteller (Kramp, 2004): “It is through the personal narrative, a life as told, rather than through our observations as researchers, that we have come to know a life as experienced. The subject of our research is not the object of observation, but the narrator and storyteller” (p. 111). As the supporting literature has demonstrated, Asian American and Pacific Islander voices have historically been misinterpreted or made invisible in higher education discourse; therefore, narrative inquiry positions these voices as their own storytellers and interpreters of their own experiences.

**Life history interviewing.** Life history interviewing is a research method that records an individual's biography in his or her own words (Jackson & Russell, 2010). Participants tell the story of their lives, changes that have occurred within living memory, and the ways in which narrative is a construction of personal identity (Jackson & Russell, 2010). This study used life history interviewing in order to discover and understand the socialization process and the participants' perspectives on the socialization process. Through the qualitative method of life history interviewing, this study developed a deeper understanding of the socialization experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education graduate programs and the ways in which race, student development, and socialization to the academy intersected.

Life history, a form of narrative inquiry, portrays an individual's entire life, the circumstances that may influence an experience, and the lived experiences (Denzin, 1989). Life history methodology explores subjective interpretations of how individuals describe and explain their experiences in their lives over time (Musson, 1998). Tierney (2000) suggests that life histories provide the reader with a sense of the author's own life story as well as the story of the participant.

Another major goal of life history is to "change the more oppressive aspects of life that silence and marginalize some and privilege others" (Tierney, 2000, p. 549). By encouraging and lifting the voices of those who are marginalized and who experience oppression, life history methodology provides directions for change. This study included the voices of participants who seek to influence change in higher education as doctoral

students, as future leaders, and as researchers committed to making visible the experiences of underrepresented communities.

Cole (2001) stated three defining purposes of life history methodology: 1) to advance understanding about the complex interactions between individuals' lives and the institutional and societal contexts in which they are lived; 2) to provide voice to the life of individuals, especially those that have been marginalized, silenced, unheard, or oppressed; and 3) to convey an individual's story in one's own words. Goodson (2001) further stated that life history research serves to disrupt commonly held beliefs and perceptions about a particular group or experience.

Commonly held beliefs about Asian American and Pacific Islander are that they are a monolithic group that has not needed assistance or support in higher education. In this current study, it was important to examine the ways in which existing beliefs about Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders contributed to their formation as scholars. Life histories methodology allowed me to explore the impact of these beliefs over the participant's lifetime by uncovering the ways in which childhood, education, family and relationships impact decisions to pursue careers in education (Jackson & Russell, 2010).

Further, life histories methodology was used to better understand the experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in education, as educators, and as rising scholars and practitioners in higher education, particularly in the context of disrupting existing stereotypes. This method contributed to a broader understanding of how socialization to a field, profession, and organization may be informed by a series of life events of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, particularly as those life events may be

impacted by social stereotypes. This method provided me the opportunity to ask directly about the impact of the model minority stereotype on the experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, on their pathways to education, and their decisions to enroll in graduate programs in higher education.

**Site information.** Given the dispersed population of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education programs, there was not one particular site of inquiry. Rather, this study benefitted from a diverse population of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, geographic location, graduate program types, and type of terminal degree. The participants in the study were a diverse group of doctoral students in terms of ethnic representation, generation status in the United States, gender, sexual orientation, and home institution.

Because existing literature has identified that representation, mentoring, culturally relevant socialization processes, and social structures impact socialization, the characteristics of a site location were relevant to informing the study. Doctoral students may have chosen a particular program based on Asian American or Pacific Islander faculty or Asian American and Pacific Islander student representation, or doctoral students may have made choices independent of these factors. In addition, some programs may intentionally include organizational processes that integrate identity conscious socialization, while other programs may not include this as an intentional process. These organizational factors may contribute to differences in the socialization processes of students to the program, to the field, and to opportunities in the academy such as research, teaching, and publication.



## **Rationale for Doctor of Education and Doctor of Philosophy participants**

Currently in the field of higher education, there are two types of doctoral degrees: the doctor of education (Ed.D) and the doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.). The discussion of the purpose of the doctorate degree and of doctoral education is often at the root of distinguishing the Ed.D. from the Ph.D. The emergence of the Ed.D. degree in 1920 at Harvard University was an attempt to differentiate the purposes of the Ph.D. and the Ed.D.: the Ed.D. focused on practitioner-oriented careers and the Ph.D. focused on research and teaching careers. Because of the relevant issues impacting the representation, socialization, and experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in both Ph.D. and Ed.D programs, this study included both populations of doctoral students.

Because assumptions include differences between programs that focus on outcomes of research and teaching and programs that prepare practitioners, it was important to have adequate representation of programs that represent these two pathways to the doctorate. Whereby this study is focusing on the development of a scholar, practitioner and/or scholar-practitioner identity, there may be differences between the approaches to socialization in the Ph.D. and the Ed.D. pathways for Asian American doctoral students.

The relevance of including both Ph.D. and Ed.D. is that the decisions to enroll in either might have been informed by early experiences with race and racial identity. For example, I wanted to allow room to explore whether there might be differences in pursuing a research degree versus a practitioner degree based on how one experienced socialization to the profession or socialization to the field. In the current study, there

revealed no distinct differences; however, this observation is noted in the future research section.

### **Participant Sampling**

Narrative inquiry requires participants who are able to contribute, explore, and identify with a specific experience or issue being examined (Creswell, 2005). Because I specifically looked at Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, I chose criterion sampling (Creswell, 2005) for my research study because criterion sampling required participants to meet certain conditions in order to participate in the research. As race is a complicated and socially constructed identity, the study was also open to participants who identified as multiracial Asian American and Pacific Islander.

In this study, I initially anticipated a participant pool of approximately 12-15 students who are currently engaged in doctoral study, either full-time or part-time, and who have not yet advanced to graduation. Because of the small number of eligible participants, I anticipated that a participant pool of 12-15 people would be the maximum number who would be interested. Due to a high level of interest by the participants, this number increased to 22 Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, largely as a result of snowball sampling. Initially, 25 participants expressed interest in the study; however, 3 participants were in Phase III but graduating at the end of the semester, and therefore they were not eligible for the study.

While there is no formal network of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education that are sponsored by existing organizations, social media forums such as Facebook and Twitter have emerged over the past few years as

opportunities for Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students and scholars to connect and share resources. Primary recruitment occurred utilizing these social networks, and snowball sampling was used to allow participants to recommend or refer other participants to the study (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). In addition, given the connectedness of Asian American and Pacific Islander faculty in higher education, I utilized networks of faculty who could recommend students who were eligible to participate in the study. Since completion of this study, a Facebook group called “APIDA Doctoral Students in Higher Education” was created to address the needs of this population. As of the conclusion of this study, there were 43 individuals in this group.

Criterion sampling for this study was informed by the three phases of doctoral student development. Gardner (2009) outlined these three phases of doctoral student development as Phase I (Entry), Phase II (Integration) and Phase III (Candidacy). Gardner (2009) emphasized that, though this is a stage development theory, doctoral student development is fluid in nature. Because this study explored the ways in which doctoral students experience socialization that is informed by life history, these stages best integrated this personal lens with doctoral student socialization from a programmatic and developmental perspective. This model guided the selection of participants at three key phases. As discussed later in the chapter, phase of study did not serve as influential to socialization and identity; however, it was important to note that this was a factor for which the participants were sampled.

Table 1

*Description of Participants*

<b>Alias</b>	<b>Ethnic Identity</b>	<b>Phase of Study</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Generation Status</b>
<b>Andrew</b>	Filipino American	Phase II (integration)	male	1.5 generation
<b>Carmen</b>	Filipina-American	Phase II (integration)	female	2 <sup>nd</sup> generation
<b>David</b>	Asian American/Vietnamese American	Phase III (candidacy)	male	2 <sup>nd</sup> generation
<b>Eduardo</b>	Filipino American	Phase II (integration)	male	2 <sup>nd</sup> generation
<b>Emily</b>	Filipina	Phase II (integration)	female	1.5 generation
<b>Gavin</b>	Asian/ Taiwanese American	Phase I (entry)	male	2 <sup>nd</sup> generation
<b>Heena</b>	Chinese-Taiwanese	Phase III (candidacy)	female	1st generation
<b>Henry</b>	Filipino-American	Phase I (entry)	male	1.5 generation
<b>Irene</b>	Filipina American	Phase III (candidacy)	female	2 <sup>nd</sup> generation
<b>Jessica</b>	Cambodian American	Phase I (entry)	female	2 <sup>nd</sup> generation
<b>John</b>	Asian American/Taiwanese American	Phase II (integration)	male	2 <sup>nd</sup> generation
<b>Kira</b>	Samoan	Phase II (integration)	female	2 <sup>nd</sup> generation
<b>Melissa</b>	Multiracial Japanese and White	Phase I (entry)	female	1.5 generation
<b>Mia</b>	Vietnamese	Phase II (integration)	female	2nd generation
<b>Olivia</b>	Filipino, biracial Asian American	Phase II (integration)	female	2 <sup>nd</sup> generation
<b>Oscar</b>	Biracial – Chinese and White	Phase I (entry)	male	4 <sup>th</sup> generation
<b>Patrick</b>	Vietnamese, Southeast Asian American	Phase II (integration)	male	2nd generation
<b>Ravi</b>	Asian/Indian	Phase I (entry)	male	1.5 generation
<b>Sabina</b>	Indian American	Phase II (integration)	female	2nd generation
<b>Sopheha</b>	Khmer	Phase II (integration)	female	2 <sup>nd</sup> generation
<b>Tae</b>	Chinese-American	Phase I (entry)	female	2 <sup>nd</sup> generation
<b>Vinny</b>	Chinese	Phase II (integration)	male	3 <sup>rd</sup> generation

The final sample included twenty-two Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in fifteen different programs of higher education (see Table 1). Seven (7) students were in Phase I at the time of the interview; twelve (12) were in Phase II; and three (3) were in Phase III. This did not serve as a limitation to the study as the focus of this study was on the anticipatory socialization period and the role of organizational socialization. Participants in Phase III, overwhelmingly, provided stories and examples from their pre-doctoral program phase (anticipatory socialization) and in Phases I and II.

The majority of the students were enrolled in Ph.D. programs (n=16) rather than Ed.D. programs (n=6). As Ph.D. programs are more prevalent, it was difficult to balance participants who were pursuing Ph.D. with Ed.D. This dynamic was taken into account during the interview stage when participants were asked to discuss their career goals and outcomes.

Ethnically, the students were asked to self-identify and provided the following ethnic categories: Multiracial Japanese-White (1); Taiwanese American (3); Khmer (1); P/Filipino American (5); Vietnamese American (3); Multiracial Filipino-White (1); Indian American (2); Multiracial Chinese-White (1); Cambodian American (1); Chinese (3); and Samoan (1). It is important to note the ethnic categories in which there is only (1) participant. This sampling further supports the use of narrative inquiry as it is a methodological tradition in which the single story has meaning and context.

At the time of the first interview, the mean age of the participants was 30.3 years. The gender identities of the participants were fairly represented with ten (10) self-identifying as men and twelve (12) self-identifying as women.

Finally, the participants were asked to provide their generation status in the United States. Fourteen (14) identified as second generation (parents/guardians are immigrants); five (5) identified as 1.5 generation (immigrated to the United States before adolescence); one (1) identified as first generation (individual immigrated to the United States); one (1) identified as third generation (grandparents immigrated to the US); and one (1) identified as fourth generation (great-grandparents immigrated to the US). In terms of college-graduating generation status, ten (10) identified as first-generation college students and twelve (12) identified as not first-generation college students.

While the intersectionality of racial and ethnic identity was key to this study, existing identity development models were not used to solicit or to categorize participants. Rather, through life history interviewing, the narratives of the participants helped to inform impact of identity.

### **Interview Content and Timing**

The interview protocol (Appendices B and C) was created to reflect the literature on socialization, organizational socialization and racial identity. There were two semi-structured interviews with each participant – one in the spring semester and one in the fall semester. The first interview (approximately 60 minutes) included questions designed to gain an understanding of the participant's personal identity, childhood experiences, K-12 schooling experiences, and college experiences. Questions also included a general inquiry

about the participant's socialization to education and decisions to apply to, and enroll, in a doctoral program in higher education. The second interview (approximately 60 minutes) captured impressions of and experiences with socialization as a doctoral student. These questions focused on doctoral student socialization, experiences of graduate school, environmental experiences, socialization to graduate school, and the role and purpose of graduate school. In this interview process, participants were able to describe their formation as scholars and reflect on their experiences as early as their childhood.

Interview appointments were scheduled with the participants in two consecutive academic semesters. Every effort was made to conduct interviews in person; however, due to geographic diversity of the participants, hosting individual video interviews were the most accessible method of data collection.

### **Critical Narrative**

Solórzano and Yosso (2002) assert that "U.S. educational institutions marginalize people of color, and that educational marginalization is justified through research that decenters and even dismisses communities of color through majoritarian storytelling" (p. 36). Through the use of counter-narrative, research has revealed the deficit discourse that is often found in theories, practices and policies built to protect White privilege. Existing literature has referred to counter-narratives as a way to provide an alternative story or an alternative explanation that works against a hegemonic, dominant story. However, using counter-narrative in this way continues to perpetuate the dominance of the narrative.

Based on work by Solórzano and Yosso (2002), I have situated critical narrative to explore the following five elements that support critical race theory and methodology

in education: 1) the intercentricity of race and racism with other forms of subordination; 2) the challenge to dominant ideology; 3) the commitment to social justice; 4) the centrality of experiential knowledge; and 5) the transdisciplinary perspective (p. 25). In this study, I refer to critical narrative as a way to give voice to the experiences of Asian Americans in a non-positivist approach. I also chose this approach because of the centrality of critical race theory to this study. By drawing from the tenets of critical race theory, I center the exploration and discussion of the formation of scholars as a way to form basic insights, perspectives, and understanding of the role of race in their development and socialization. This approach of critical narrative serves as a disruptive narrative, as not just a way to provide an alternative story but also to claim space as the narrative itself. A critical narrative disrupts how we have come to understand lives, experiences, and ways of knowing and, instead, becomes the story itself.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Narrative inquiry involves not only the content and style of the interviewee but also the interpretation of the interviewer. Daiute (2014) refers to the process of meaning-making in narrative inquiry as dynamic narrating (p. 3). Dynamic narrating is a “social process ... where people use storytelling to do things – to connect with other people, to deal with social structures defining their lives, to make sense of what is going on around them, to craft a way of fitting in with various contexts, and sometimes to change them” (Daiute, 2014, p. 3). My role as the interviewer was to present questions informed by the conceptual framework and to encourage the participant to reflect on and answer each question. When necessary, I provided clarifying information; however, my purpose was



to have the participants interpret each question in a way that was most relevant to their experiences.

After the interviews, each interview was transcribed, reviewed for accuracy, and then coded using lower-order codes and higher-order codes. These codes were then organized by theme, focusing on similarities and differences within and between participants. Life history interviewing allowed me to gain a broad understanding of how these themes were presented at different stages of a participant's life and experience in education.

In life history interviewing, it is important to consider not only the narrative content but also the narrative style (Jackson & Russell, 2010). In order to pay attention to narrative style, Jackson and Russell (2010) recommend listening to the interviews, in addition to reading transcripts, to "remain attentive to the interviewee's tone of voice and other oral evidence" (p. 190). Jackson and Russell (2010) suggest applying a systematic analysis of lower-order codes using the interviewee's own words to higher-order codes using more academic language (p. 190). The coding process began when I was able to identify such themes as the characters that appear in narrative accounts, the situations in which the actions and events occurred, common themes and experiences shared by participants, interpretations of experiences, tensions that emerge, and opportunities for engagement (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

To analyze the data, I used a plot and script analysis to identify meaning in the narratives of the interviewees. The questions I asked participants included recalling stories and experiences they have had, beginning in childhood, in which the social

stereotypes about Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, including the racialized model minority stereotype, impacted their identities as individuals and as doctoral students. Based on Daiute's (2014) plot analysis guideline (Appendix F), the first step in the analysis is to identify characters (e.g., primary, plot-crucial, secondary) in the narrative. Then, I identified actions within the narrative that made up initial perspective or that served as the foundation of the story; complicating situations that contribute to conflict; and any turning-points or the climax of the plot. Finally, I turned to the interviewee's resolution or strategies to resolve conflict within the narrative. An important final step in the data analysis is to have the interviewee check and interpret the findings (Daiute, 2014, p. 139). This check-in occurred during the beginning of the second interview by reviewing transcript text with the participant and checking for thematic accuracy.

As multiple narratives were gathered from participants, it was important to compile issues that were similarly or differently expressed within the narratives of each participant as well as between narratives of participants. Through mapping of these salient issues, I identified patterns in plot structures and major elements of the narratives (e.g., initiating perspectives, complicating actions, resolutions). The final step in the data analysis was to map the observations made in the interpretation phase to the stated research questions.

One major benefit of the participant population in this study is that each participant was a doctoral student familiar with the process of research. Because of this, each participant understood language about interpreting findings, understanding implications, and proposing future areas of research. The participants were asked to think

about the possible findings and themes of the study and to articulate what they hope the implications and future areas of research would be. This process was an important step in developing interpretations that were both similar and different within and between the participants.

### **Role of the Researcher**

While narrative content is important, it was important that I was also aware of narrative style, or the ways in which stories are told, and the ways in which narrators make sense of their lives (Chamberlain & Thompson, 1998; Jackson & Russell, 2010). Through this awareness, the life-story method draws our attention to life as storied (Russell & Jackson, 2010) and the interpretative nature of memory.

Creswell (2012) stated, “one of the issues that must be integrated into all phases of the research design, in order to maintain congruence in the research process, is the influence of your own social identities and the social identities of the participants on the research process” (p. 101). Reflexivity -- the process through which researchers recognize, examine, and understand how their own social background and assumptions can intervene in the research process – reminds us that we need to be mindful of the importance of difference to our research project as a whole (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010). Macbeth (2001) noted that the process of analyzing and interpreting qualitative texts is also influenced by identity: “Reflexivity is a deconstructive exercise for locating the intersections of author, other, text, and world, and for penetrating the representational exercise itself” (p. 35).

**Insider-outsider status.** Life history interviewing requires a great deal of trust between interviewer and interviewee due to the personal and sensitive nature of the information shared. Therefore, it was important to interrogate the ways in which insider and outsider identity impacted the interview experience. It was important for me to journal about my own biases as a second-generation, Filipina American, who was raised in a predominantly white community and educational system. During the interview process, I kept a journal in order to note whenever I may have made an assumption about any aspect of a participant's identity. I then referred back to these notes during the coding and analysis stage to help identify whether the lens I was using to interpret my data was heavily informed by my own stereotypes. While this process of journaling was important and integral to the data collection and analysis phase, I realize that there were likely many times when I was not aware of my own biases and how my identities informed or impacted my interpretations.

As an Asian American researcher engaging with Asian American and Pacific Islander participants, my insider status had the potential to give me access to the community of doctoral students. This insider identity gave me a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students and to a personal understanding to the impact of social stereotypes of the Asian American and Pacific Islander identity and community. Yet, there were times during the interview and data analysis process when I needed to better understand my own limitations as a researcher and as an insider-researcher.

The acknowledgement of researcher identity and participant identity requires a

reflexive qualitative methodology (Keval, 2009). Dwyer and Buckle (2009) stated, “holding membership in a group does not denote complete sameness within that group. Likewise, not being a member of a group does not denote complete difference. It seems paradoxical, then, that we would endorse binary alternatives that unduly narrows the range of understanding and experience” (p. 60). Therefore, reflexivity and the interrogation of researcher identity and participant identities are important in creating, analyzing, interpreting and discussing information in research. As an Asian American doctoral student exploring the experiences of other Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, it was important that I interrogated my own insider-outsider positionality in this research because aspects of identity in which I shared similarities and differences with the participant sample can impact the analytic and interpretive process (Creswell, 2012). bell hooks (2004) advised that researchers have a responsibility to interrogate their perspectives, their identities, the locations from which they write and their roles in perpetuating oppression. Because of the ethnic diversity within the Asian American and Pacific Islander group, I needed to constantly and consistently interrogate my own understanding, beliefs, and stereotypes of pan-ethnic identities within the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. While my Asian American identity positioned me as an insider into the Asian American community, my positionality as a Filipina American researcher positioned me as an outsider to other ethnic groups. It is through this lens that I experienced both insider and outsider positionality.

Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2010) identified the term “insider status” as an “attribute, characteristic, or experience the researcher has in common with his or her research

participants” (p. 127). By identifying as an insider, researchers find commonality in some of their important status characteristics – such as race, gender, and sexual orientation -- so that they can gain permission and cooperation from the community of interest. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2010) identified the term “outsider status” as “the major differences -- such as race, gender, and sexual orientation -- between researchers and their research participants” (p. 127). DeAndrade (2000) stated that “insider/outsider status is also an ongoing presence or dynamic in the research process” (p. 271). It is through this lens that we understand that insiderness and outsiderhood are not dichotomous; rather, it is a process of ongoing evaluation.

A common assumption made about participant observation is that being an insider offers a distinct advantage in terms of accessing and understanding the participant culture (Labaree, 2002). Insider identity may allow a researcher to access hidden knowledge of a group that an outsider must acquire. Scholars have additionally argued that insider researchers, unlike outsiders, are more likely to have difficulty “intellectually and emotively” distancing themselves from the research group (Innes, 2009).

Outsider identity implies a detached objectivity, but may not account for nuances within the community. Chavez (2008) stated, “For an outsider, the danger is the imposition of the researcher’s values, beliefs, and perceptions on the lives of participants, which may result in a positivistic representation and interpretation” (p. 475). My positionality as an outsider to an academic program may have influenced my interpretation of an individual’s experience; therefore, it was important that my positionality as an outsider was interrogated. For example, during the study, I often

journalized about my assumptions about particular graduate programs in which participants were enrolled, and this sometimes shaped the ways in which I asked questions or the types of questions I assumed would be answered in a particular manner.

Because negotiating insider and outsider identities is fluid, Labaree (2002) found that being an insider contributes to gaining initial trust in research. It is through this initial trust that I used the lens of insider-outsider identity to better understand the ways in which Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education describe their socialization experiences and the ways in which they navigate the development of an academic identity. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed me to probe further into the experiences of participants through this process.

### **Limitations**

There are several limitations to this study. Life histories methodology relies on the ability and willingness of the participant to articulate an understanding of past experiences. The interpretation of the participant is central to the telling of one's story, but it is only as effective as the participant is able to explain it. For example there were a number of times when a participant would respond to a question with, "I don't know" or "I can't recall an example right now, but maybe I could think about it more later."

Another limitation involves participant recruitment and participation. The participant population was limited by the recruitment method of snowball sampling and relying on social networks to reach out to Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education programs. In programs where Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students are isolated, the recruitment outreach may not sufficiently

reach these students. Essentially, participants only knew about the study if they were already involved in a social network or if a faculty member or peer referred them. This fact was evident in the sample in that only 2 of the 22 participants described themselves as “not connected to any network of Asian American or Pacific Islander organizations.”

One of the factors that I had anticipated would be important in this study was the impact of degree type (i.e. Ph.D. and Ed.D.). I had intentionally sampled both populations in order to better understand whether degree type contributed the formation of scholars. Given the philosophical and practical differences in degree type, I had expected to see differences such as differences in research interests, career aspirations, opportunities for mentoring and networking, and experiences in coursework. However, these differences were not articulated in the narratives of the study. While some participants followed traditional pathways of choosing a graduate program and selecting faculty members who would serve as research partners, there were also participants who chose graduate programs because they were convenient, closer to family, or because they received tuition remission or support from their universities. Future research should further explore the impact of these differences. However, in this study, the choices in degree type of the Ph.D. or the Ed.D. did not reveal differences in the actual philosophy and purpose of the degrees but rather the affirming factors such as family, community, support, and responsibility that played a much larger role in degree type and program selection.

Though not a central part of the study, the impact of generation status may have been important in understanding the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education. Yip, Gee and Takeuchi (2009) did not find



differences in the effects of discrimination by nativity status in their study examining differences between immigrants and United States-born individuals; however, it is not clear if generational status of the participants in this study impacted sense of self or contributed to persistence in their doctoral programs. The key limitation in this study is that there was not a consistent representation of generational status among the participants, thereby making it difficult to analyze for impact. Further, within the participant group in this study, there were individuals whose families came to the United States as immigrants and those who came as refugees. Though this was acknowledged in their narratives, the differences in experiences were not examined due to immigration journey not being a central part of this study. However, further exploring this identity and experience is recommended in the future research section.

While the strength of narrative inquiry is that the single narrative matters in developing and deepening our understanding of experience, some of the participants are members of ethnic minorities that are of the most underrepresented in the doctoral student in higher education population. Therefore, their narratives serve as single-stories in this study. Because of the small number of doctoral students of a shared ethnic identity are present in higher education programs, there are limits to what may be shared or extrapolated given that doing so would violate the anonymity promised to the participants. This same characteristic further complicates the analysis process because there may not be a representative sample of particular ethnicities in this participant sample.

Related to the limitation that there are ethnic identities that are underrepresented in this study, this study only included the narrative of one Pacific Islander. Coupled with this single narrative is the lack of literature and scholarship on Pacific Islanders in education, limiting understanding of the needs and voices of Pacific Islanders. Additionally, existing literature and scholarship on Pacific Islanders does not disaggregate information on the experiences within this diverse group. While I did include a section on emergent research on Pacific Islanders in higher education, this study was limited by the dearth of available literature on the experiences of Pacific Islanders. Further, existing literature does little to disaggregate information on the various ethnic identities within the Pacific Islander population. When appropriate, I chose to include Pacific Islanders in the broader literature and analysis; similarly, I chose to convey information about Pacific Islanders when information, singularly, was unique to that community.

### **Trustworthiness**

Lincoln and Gruba (1999) noted that “the basic issue in relation to trustworthiness is simple: how can an inquirer persuade his or her audience that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of? What arguments can be mounted, what criteria invoked, what questions asked, that would be persuasive in on this issue” (p. 398). Trustworthiness is established through transparency and credibility of the research method; the openness of the researcher to include personal identity and observations of insider-outsider status; and representative analysis of the data. In addition, Jones, Torres and Arminio (2006) stated that establishing trustworthiness within a research study

includes intentional behaviors that promote congruency, whereby congruency is the ability to authenticate the findings with participants through member checking, providing participants the opportunity to react to the findings and interpretations that emerged as a result of participation, and completing the circle of by providing input into the research process (Jones, Torres and Arminio, 2006).

**Member checking.** Creswell and Miller (2000) identify that the qualitative paradigm assumes that reality is socially constructed, and it is what participants perceive it to be. Though the researcher creates interview questions and interprets the data based on coding, it is important to check the information with the participants' realities. In this study, I used member checking as a method for ensuring trustworthiness to ensure that the interpretations accurately reflect the reality of the participants. The comments of the participants provided an opportunity to include commentary from participants about the final narrative. Further, as the Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students who participated in this study also bring with them experience in research and in conducting research, I solicited their input and feedback on the questions, methods, and findings of the study and their interpretations of the findings. In this way, Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students had agency in how this study was interpreted and communicated, further leveraging their voices in this under-researched space.

In Chapter 4, I have provided three critical narratives to provide a more complete picture of Asian American and Pacific Islander socialization, development and racial identity. These narratives were told using first-person perspective and told in the narrative tradition of storytelling. After completion of the narratives, each individual was

sent the write up in order to confirm accuracy, voice, and thematic storytelling. I chose these three narratives because of their rich description. I also chose these three narratives because of the unique identities of the storytellers: a third-generation Chinese American male; a second-generation Khmer American woman who is the daughter of refugees; and a Pacific Islander (Samoan) woman who is also a mother and partner. While all the participants contributed to critical narratives of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education, these three narratives provide even more depth to our complex understanding of Asian American and Pacific Islander socialization.

In Chapter 5, I have chosen to outline the various ways in which Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders experience socialization through a discussion of shared themes that were affirmed by the participants. I have used excerpts from the participants to affirm the various ways in which Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experience socialization, development, and a racialized identity. Included in these themes are narratives about their formation as scholars prior to their doctoral programs and during their doctoral programs.

**Peer Advisory.** The role of peer advisors in this research helped to guide the process and the interpretation of data collected. This advisory board consisted of two Asian American educators who were not participants in the study and who had knowledge of Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, diversity of ethnic identities within the Asian American and Pacific Islander racial category, and the role of curriculum and instruction in higher education. These individuals did not have access to the names or program affiliations of the participants, and any personal identifying

information were removed. The Advisory Board only had access to redacted statements in order to assist in the identification of salient themes. I selected one scholar who specializes in Asian American studies and communities and another scholar who focuses on narrative, storytelling and voice. Both of these scholars identify as Asian American.

In addition to the peer advisors, I kept an audit trail including documentation of journaling and memoing, a research log of the activities of the study, and recording data analysis procedures clearly outlined (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The Peer Advisors provided feedback as to whether the findings were grounded in data, whether the inferences were logical, the degree of researcher bias, and the credibility of the findings (Schwandt & Halpern, 1988).

### **Researcher Reflexivity**

My own identity as an Asian American doctoral student in a higher education program contributed to bias in this study; however, the process of journaling throughout the research process allowed for me, as the researcher, to provide interpretive commentary while also identifying ways in which my own identity and experience informed or influenced the study. Throughout this dissertation process, beginning with the formation of my problem statement, I have had to navigate tensions of my own internalized racism and external oppression to commit myself to studying the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander students. Yet, because of the invisibility of a culturally relevant education that affirmed my identity as an Asian American and because of the lack of critical discourse that included Asian American issues, I continued to question whether or not there was a place in CRT for me to include the voices of Asian

Americans. I questioned the legitimacy of my Asian American voice in critiquing an educational system that rendered me invisible. The use of AsianCrit was incredibly instrumental in my deepening my understanding of the complexities of critical race theory and the reflexivity of AsianCrit. In the end, I chose to include CRT as a broadly defined framework that served as a foundation for AsianCrit and TribalCrit.

My identity as an Asian American afforded me insider status into the lives of my participants. For example, over the past three years, I have been heavily involved in a professional organization that provides support for most Asian American, Pacific Islander and Desi American student affairs practitioners. Because of this participation, people saw me as a leader. However, each time I found myself in a room full of other Asian American leaders, I felt like an imposter. I felt as if I did not belong. I felt like an outsider.

Having intimate conversations with participants in this study brought me closer to my own community. Though we came from many diverse ethnic backgrounds, I felt a strong bond with my participants as we navigated our academic socialization and doctoral student development from a racial and ethnic lens. In their stories, I knew that the framework of critical race theory made sense. These tenets made sense as I listened to participants challenge existing stereotypes that others have of them and how each of them was socialized in an educational system that privileged Whiteness, White culture and White progress. Further, using AsianCrit was essential in understanding the racialized context of Asian American identity in these narratives.

In many ways, I am writing the story of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students who have long been left out of curriculum – as early as their elementary school recollections – and who continue to be made invisible through our doctoral studies. I am writing a narrative of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students who have had to navigate multiple identities in a society that treats us as one monolithic group who cannot be distinguished one from another. I am writing the narrative of when we drew just enough social attention to be called *ching-chong*, to be told that our people were a danger to the United States, to be told that our countrymen – or those that we looked like -- killed someone's uncle or neighbor overseas, and to be told that we built railroads and made fortune cookies. We were told we were good at math, that we were quiet and obedient but never Student Council President material, and that we needed extra help as English Language Learners.

But, in our schooling, a common theme was that we were never told we could be teachers. We were never told we could be school principals or Deans or College Presidents. We were never told that we could be researchers and scholars in education, and we only had a handful of people we could point to who did make it through to these top positions. As I listened to the stories of the participants, it was impossible to distance my own narrative from theirs. In many ways, our stories rang eerily similar despite our generational differences, geographic differences, and even the very make-up of our schools and programs.

The questions generated in this study, framed by a conceptual framework, was propelled by a need understand how early experiences and messages in education shape

our sense of identity as doctoral students. The questions were designed to draw out the pathways to our positions as doctoral students and to help identify the barriers to our persistence. As a researcher, I am keenly aware that we must look at both personal journeys and organizational structures in order to best understand socialization.

Therefore, through the process of life history interviewing, my own identity as an Asian American doctoral student in higher education informed the types of questions that I wanted to ask of other doctoral students. These questions were an attempt at better understanding these personal factors and organizational factors that influence socialization.



## CHAPTER 4

### CRITICAL NARRATIVES: THREE STORIES

*“Race is a factor in every decision I make and everything I do.” – Kira, Pacific Islander*

While the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students are told through excerpts in this study, an important part of narrative inquiry is to develop a deeper sense of experience. In this study, it was important to access a more whole picture of doctoral students and their formation as scholars, particularly as informed by race and racialized identities as Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. These narratives were selected, largely in whole, in order to understand a fuller story of their lives, their socialization, and their experiences as doctoral students in higher education programs. I chose to place these three critical narratives for the reader to explore before discussing general thematic findings. As the public narratives of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students have not been widely read, I believed it was necessary to read the stories of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in order to privilege their voices in the educational discourse on race, socialization and development. This decision was intentional so that the reader may gain a better understanding of the context in which these narratives are told.

To gain a fuller understanding of the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, I used life history methodology to learn the details of the lives of the participants that may have impacted their journey to the doctorate. I asked broad

questions about identity, schooling, family, and experiences in the doctoral program and allowed the participants to tell me stories that related to these questions. In order to provide a narrative in the spirit of storytelling, I employed narrative coding in order to identify characters, plot and setting and to highlight key areas of tension in the stories of these participants. I looked both for patterns among the participants and for experiences that were unique to the individual and not shared by other participants in the study. In the telling of the narrative, I used their first person voice, as transcribed from their interviews. After the narrative was written, I sent the story back to the participant who checked the narrative for accuracy and voice. An example of the narrative coding that was used to develop these stories can be found in the appendix section.

The participants – Vinny, Sophea, and Kira – are all currently enrolled doctoral students in higher education programs. Their individual life stories highlight different experiences in understanding, addressing, and navigating race. I chose these individual narratives because they provide critical information that supports disrupting the belief in a monolithic identity of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and amplifies voices that had been silenced in our field. The experiences of these participants are complex, rich, and speak both to the similarities and differences in the Asian American and Pacific Islander community.

I selected Vinny's narrative because of his extensive network of Asian American professionals in his life. He grew up in a Chinese American household, had access to mentors who identified as Asian American, but still struggled to form his identity as a scholar through a racialized lens. Vinny avoided racialized spaces that focused on Asian

American identity throughout his elementary, undergraduate and graduate school years, and he has begun to explore the impact of racialized experiences on his identity as a doctoral student. Vinny's narrative highlights the complexity of identity, environment, and racialized stereotypes on scholar formation.

Sophea, the daughter of Cambodian refugees, was given strong messages about her community and the ways in which she was expected to be different from those she interacted with in her community. This tension informed her work and also complicated her relationships with her community, but she has found voice and agency through these difficult relationships. Sophea also had formalized mentoring opportunities through an organization that supported Asian American scholars, and she actively engages in spaces that affirm Asian American identity. It is important to note that Sophea's narrative was also included because our field has not provided adequate research on the experiences of Southeast Asian students; students who come from refugee families; nor the experiences of doctoral students from Southeast Asian communities. Therefore, Sophea's critical narrative was an important story to highlight in order for us to better understand the ways in which Southeast Asian doctoral students experience socialization, development and racial identity formation.

Finally, Kira, the only Pacific Islander scholar in the study, experienced her formation as a scholar with strong support in her family, in her undergraduate years as an Ethnic Studies scholar, and through her strong relationships with her mentor who also identifies as Asian American. Kira, as a Pacific Islander, shares that her community is often grouped under the umbrella of Asian American; yet, the experiences of Pacific

Islanders are different from groups in this racial category. Though this is her story alone, Kira's insight and contributions as a Pacific Islander are included in this collection of critical narratives to highlight the unique experiences of Pacific Islanders. Consistent with the narrative tradition, Kira's story provides a richness to our understanding of the socialization, development and identity formation of Pacific Islander doctoral students. Further Kira's story highlights the role of community, a factor shared among many Pacific Islander students.

**Critical Narrative: Vinny**

I met Vinny a few years ago at an academic conference. Confident and friendly, Vinny seemed to be a seasoned scholar and a regular attendee at academic conferences. There was a comfort he displayed around scholars while I, myself, was nervous, shy and timid in my approach with others. Only in this interview process, years after first meeting Vinny, did I discover that the academic conference where we first met was his first one.

What follows is a narrative summary of Vinny's interviews conducted in April 2015 and in October 2015. His story is of particular interest because of the ways in which he tells the story of navigating his racial identity prior to and through this doctoral process. Unlike other participants in the study who learned about careers and scholarship in higher education while in undergraduate and graduate school, Vinny's socialization to higher education began when he was young. Vinny was exposed to scholars and practitioners, many who identified as Asian American, because his family also worked in education. Yet, Vinny's narrative highlights ways in which he questioned his racial

identity, felt the need to deemphasize his Asian American identity, and experienced a racialized doctoral student experience.

Vinny's first interview took place in his car. It was an unseasonably warm April day, and Vinny did not want to have this conversation in his office. Instead, he brought his video device into the car, had the windows rolled up, and constantly kept glancing out the window to see if anyone was looking at him. Throughout the interview, Vinny had beads of sweat rolling down his forehead, wiping them away every few minutes. I had asked Vinny why he wanted to have this conversation in such an isolated and uncomfortable setting. He could have easily had this conversation in his office. His response was, "I'm going to tell you things that hardly anyone else knows about me."

**Vinny.** I grew up in San Francisco, in Oakland, in Oakland Bay area, where it's predominantly Asian. Well, it was predominantly Chinese, really, because I grew up in Chinatown. But, what's interesting about that is that I still experienced racism and some, like, anti-Asian remarks. I have strong memories from when I was, like, seven or eight years old. I mean, I was always being teased for being the *ching-chong* doggie eating kid. That's what was projected upon me at school every day, even in the Bay area, even growing up in a place where it was predominantly students of color. Even though the elementary school I went to was a public elementary school that was highly Asian and Latino, those stereotypes still were out there. I was always made fun of because I had the bowl haircut, so I was always called Bruce Lee. It probably didn't make it any easier that I took karate. But it was *taekwondo*, and like, that's not actually anything that Bruce would do.

For lunch, I always brought black bean spare ribs with rice to school because that was what grandma made. It would always stink. It would stink in the cafeteria and people would look at me. There was always a lot of that shame, I think, that was really projected upon me, so I stopped thinking about it. My way of coping was to disassociate from all parts of that identity and to actually not identify at all, racially or ethnically. I wanted to be known as Vinny. I just wanted to be known as Vinny the kid. I didn't want to be known as Vinny the Chinese kid or Vinny the Asian kid or anything like that. For a good amount of years, actually, all throughout high school -- I went to a predominantly Asian high school as well -- I didn't identify as Asian American at all. I didn't identify racially or ethnically. I didn't even think about it. I didn't *want* to think about it. I think I consciously did that. I said, "I would rather not think about race, ethnicity or myself at all. I just want to go through life and not be teased or made fun of."

The funny thing was that, outwardly, I would have this anti- Asian identity sort of thing. But in the privacy of the home, I was totally the Chinese kid that would speak Chinese at home. I would never use forks. I would refuse to use a fork at home. I would always use chopsticks. I would go to Chinatown every weekend with my grandma and we would go to the temple. I would go out to dinner with my uncles and aunts every weekend. That felt very safe to me, but it was outside the confines of the home that pushback was really happening at that point. That was an odd split in behavior for me, and no one really saw the full picture. My parents never really got that story because I never told them that story. To this day they get little pieces of it because I tease them and

I joke about where we are now and what happened back as a kid, but no one saw both sides of it. Home was completely different.

When I went off to undergrad, that was the time where it really challenged my identity because now I'm with 60% Asian students. There were many people that identified the way that I identified in terms of the generational status -- I'm third-generation -- and in terms of my ethnicity. So, I started talking to them a little bit more. That was that first semi-consciousness of feeling like it was okay for me to say that I'm Chinese. It was okay for me to say that I'm a third generation because I have all these brilliant people around me now who have made it and who are here. I remember thinking that this is comfortable, so I feel I'm going to be a little bit more of myself. It was just that I don't have to fight this feeling of wanting to hide my identity. I don't have just to be Vinny, I could actually claim an identity as a third-generation Chinese American.

I had really begun to understand my racial identity until an incident happened in undergrad. I had a girlfriend at that point, and she was also Chinese American. We had broken up, and I asked her why we were breaking up. She looked at me and said, "Well, I realized that you're never going to be White enough for me." I didn't understand this. She said, "Well, I've realized that dating you means that I actually like White people more than I like Asians, so I don't think we could ever be together." That was the biggest dagger. It crushed me. I came back to this negative place of asking, "Why do I have to be Asian? Why am I cursed at being Asian at this point? I had to grow up with all this, and now in my early 20s, when you think you'll end up with someone, then all of a sudden your race is what defines you again?"

I actually started resenting my race a little more. I remember thinking that there was no way in hell I was going to study Asians in my research because I'm being completely dismissed because I am Asian. I actually stayed away from all of that. I stayed away from all the curriculum. I stayed away from faculty – Asian American ones who could have been so good for me. There was a particular faculty member I could have met with, and I could have walked to his office hours. But, I was so angry that I was like, "Well, there's nothing that he's going to offer me right now. I'm just going to get on with my life."

I actually, purposely, ignored the Asian American studies and Ethnic Studies Department. I dedicated more time, again, away from that racial identity piece. I just wanted to get my school and over with. The Asian American stuff, I knew it was there. I didn't have the heart at that point and a place where I was at in life to get over that moment. I was still in that resentful phase. When I went to my master's program, I continued to avoid Asian American stuff, but, in a strange way, I actually started thinking more about racial and ethnic identity. But, there, people were identified as Asian, not even Asian American. All the time, I was identified as Asian. I usually heard it phrased as, "There's the Asian guy. There's the Asian guy on campus." Or if people mentioned that our college doesn't have any Asians on campus, people would respond with, "Oh, right, Vinny's the Asian guy." I internalized a lot of that in my initial experience there because I was like, "Well, okay, I guess I'm the Asian guy."

When my grandparents passed away, it got me to start thinking about, "What is my past? What is my history?" I began talking with my dad more about it. We started



having more conversations about identity and understanding what Asian and Asian American mean to us. As a society, what does it mean to be Chinese American? At that point, that's when I started to really think, about being Chinese American and, more specifically, a third generation Chinese American. I'm thinking about our fathers and grandfathers and all of those ancestors that came before us in trying to understand how that really came together to shape who I was. For me, personally, it's a reflection of my dad. It's a reflection of the past and where he came from. It's a reflection of my grandparents. It's a reflection of the fact that neither of my grandparents had any education at all.

This is where I know having my dad work in higher education was important to my development. After graduate school, I felt lost. I started thinking about it a little bit and I started to think about asking my dad what he does. But, I didn't ask my dad directly. I ended up asking my mentors what my dad did for a living. It was about four to five months before I even told my dad, "Hey, I'm interested in going to Student Affairs." He actually never pushed me to go into Student Affairs. He actually just asked me, "What are you doing?" I said, "Oh, I think I want to do this." My dad didn't believe me at first, but he was really supportive. He said, "Well, you should do it."

When I showed up to my doctoral program interviews, I would say who I was, that my dad inspired me, and people would put two things together and say, "Why in the hell didn't your dad call me and tell me that you're coming?" To this day, still my dad doesn't do that. He stays away which is one of those things because he's my dad and I see him as that, and he sees me as his son. Every once a while, we talk about people we

know, but for the most part, it's just been a supportive relationship. My parents both remind me that my grandparents would be happy and proud that I'm doing my doctorate and that I've gotten this far. I know my dad is a mentor for so many people in this field, including Asian Americans. But, it's odd because I always forget that my dad is this well-known person. To me, he's Dad. As a mentor, he has even chosen to be less present because, when he's around, the attention goes to him. That's been one of those things I'm like, "Well, it's different. It's okay that it's different." He was actually someone that I learned how to mentor by having a mentor teach me how to mentor. It was just one of those things where that kind of cultural social capital through the Asian lens, I've been trying to pass through and work on.

I think that experience, of finding out more about my family and identifying with community, has really made me focus on what community means. But, now, in my doctoral program, I don't feel I have community here at all, especially an Asian American one. I mean, I have a lot of African American and Black friends here. There haven't been many Asian Americans, let alone third generation or anyone that's that far removed. For me, I've shared a lot of my stories with Black and African Americans and that's been my community here. On the first day of my doctoral program, I was really nervous because I don't like the first day. I'm such a quiet person outside. I was like, "I'm not going to have any friends showing up to school at this point." I was really nervous about that. And, when I showed up on campus, it was exactly that. I had no friends; the cohort was really small. We have a six-person cohort, three people are full time, three of them are part-time. I felt like all I wanted was to find another Asian person,

to be really honest with you. I was like, “If there’s one Asian person at this cohort, fantastic.” I showed up and there was an Asian man that showed up.

I guess I was a little too enthusiastic about this. But, it was important to me. I introduced myself to him and he just stared at me. I said, “Are you so-and-so? Are you the person that is in this cohort as well?” He says, “Maybe.” I said, “Okay, well I’m Vinny, nice to meet you.” He says, “Okay.” He just sat there and ignored me. I went and looked at the directory, and I’m like, “Oh there’s another Asian man.” This other student was from California, so. I went to go talk to him. He also gave me the brush off! All he said to me was, “Yeah, you’ll be fine. I’ll see you later.” It was maybe a two-minute conversation, and this is on my first day.

Between the time I got accepted and to the first day, I felt really, really, really lonely. In fact by the second week, I had questioned if I had made the right decision in even coming to grad school because, if this is what it’s going to be like for four years, just me being by myself, there’s no way I’m going to be happy. I still have these challenges today. It still is just not having people understand what it’s like being a full-time Ph.D. student, what it’s like to teach full-time and to not have the income part-time students have. Those are the challenges. The good thing about it is that, because I am full-time, I get to see everything. I get to inform the other cohort mates who aren’t as involved or who work part-time about some of the things you need to do as a doctoral student.

Because I’m a full-time student, I also get to develop relationships with faculty in a different way. I think they do have my best interest in mind. For example, when I first

came into the program, I actually wanted to study Asian American issues. I wanted to really look at microaggressions against Asian Americans, specifically. The faculty member and the faculties actually said, “Great that you want to do that. Start broad and let’s see if you can get there.” It’s been the push of the faculty actually saying, “Well, move away from the Asian American thing for now. First, do the whole big literature review on microaggressions. Know microaggressions, top to bottom.” Then they said, “Look into the construction of otherness. What is the construction of otherness and then define that, where it came from and everything there. Then look into power and privilege and post modernism. Understand the theoretical basis behind how power and privilege really get defined within. How do we use it?” They’ve actually kept pushing me to think in broad themes and said that if I somehow end back to the Asian American theme, great. But their philosophy is that, as a doctoral student, I need to have a larger breadth of knowledge first. That’s where the microaggression project is right now, it’s actually focusing just all on people color. They feel like their job is to push me into the larger construction of knowledge versus that just the Asian American part. My term papers are always about the Model Minority Myth or Microaggression that Asian Americans face or Immigration Policies for Asian Americans. I’m able to take that liberty as my course work, but in terms of officially work of a faculty, they’re pushing me in a different direction.

Seeing you at ASHE, Liza, and realizing that when I shifted to going to ASHE for the first time, I was scared out of my mind. I was like, “I don’t know what I’m doing here.” I’m just introducing this panel, but I don’t really know what that means. I had all

this anxiety. But, just seeing you there and meeting all these other people, that was really helpful for me to feel like I belonged there.

Being an Asian American doctoral student, for me, means that I get to potentially carry on the legacy of the reason why I came in the field to begin with. For me, being an Asian American doc student, means that I may be able to achieve the same level of success that my dad did. He's been the reason that I'm here to begin with, and I've seen all of the ways that he's been able to impact different people's lives and policies. Obviously he gave me an opportunity to live a great life as well. For me, that's one of the first things, is that it means actually being able to reach a legacy, and a legacy that's rooted in why I'm here.

Being an Asian American doctoral student means, to me, carrying on a responsibility that others have come before me. I can contribute to research. We need to truly understand what our experience is like in education and how we can better those experiences through research and scholarship. We need to examine the world that we live in more than just as a practitioner, but as someone with a critical eye who can publish something that can be used for future generations to look at. For me, it's about also contributing to what's come before me from that research and scholarship side.

Being an Asian American doctoral student means, to me, that I could inspire others who come after me to take a very similar path -- to be grounded in some of the same principles that I'm grounded in and to understand that the work never ends. We all sacrifice in different ways, and we continually give back to education, which has given so much to us, to allow us to even be here, and to consider being in a program. For me, it's

also that inspiration, and providing a way for others to see that there is a way to get your doctorate, there is a way to achieve, there is a way to change the world in different ways.

I'd like for people to understand that nothing is as easy as it may seem. I probably have been more privileged in my life and had more support in my life than anyone else, yet it is still difficult in different ways. It's still hard even though I've had people who have told me, "This is how to navigate your institution." I still really struggled, being confused and lost most of the time. Everyone needs help and a lot of the hesitation to admitting that, for me, comes from the idea that I'm a man in this world as well, and there's some sort of idea of masculinity that tells me that I have to stand up and be strong and confident and never have that emotional moment.

A lot of the institution has shaped who I am, but my hope about doing the work that I want to do is that I could help shape the institution as well, that I could help shape the students and the people that I work with. But, most of my advice that I get about how to navigate the doctoral process isn't from Asian Americans – except for my Dad. It's from straight, White men. It's actually been one of those really big tensions that I've never been able to reconcile. I always feel bad by saying that I think I was better off with that information and with that guidance from outside of my own racial community, but I really am. Especially at a place like my doctoral program, which has no idea what to do with an Asian person, let alone Asian man, I've learned how to navigate a White experience. In my doctoral program, they don't really know what to do with me as an Asian American male -- just that idea there could be someone who looks different, who experiences the world different, who sees the world differently is completely non-existent

at my institution. Because I chose mentors who were straight, White men, I was prepared for that environment. I was prepared to navigate those conversations in a way that would allow me to get research assistantships and be on publications. Actually, lo and behold, out of all the people in my program, taking the advice of my mentors, it's actually gotten me more positions, more research opportunities, more teaching assistant gigs than anyone else. I've seen that way – a very White way -- of communicating worked better. Communicating through Whiteness worked better than communicating through a Black, Latino or Asian lens. It's incredible. I think what I'm getting at is, I'm well aware of it, and it sucks. It sucks that I have to operate in that way.

At the end of all of this, I hope readers understand that there isn't the single narrative. There is the individuality of how we experience things. It's powerful when you're able to examine yourself, and go through that process, and try to inspire others or to give others a reason to believe that my experience and my narrative is just as valuable, too. We have a lot of work to do to shape the culture of doctoral programs to better reflect how people – Asian Americans – experience it. I still feel this desire to be my authentic self of just being vulnerable, and recognizing the intersectionalities of my identities, and the struggles, and how oppression has really come in there and shaped the way that I see and communicate. Not being able to be my authentic and whole self has actually affected my professional development and community, and all that has added to my guilt that has actually started to cripple me a little bit. I had a small breakdown a couple of weeks ago, and I had to talk through some things. It's bigger. I feel like navigating racial identity is bigger than just my doctoral student studies. Because I

always feel this tension of being my authentic Asian self and navigating a culture that privileges Whiteness and White-ways of knowing, this tension has actually infiltrated other portions of my life that never were impacted by things. It's the first time I've had to deal with this, which is why I just had this crazy moment of being unable to understand what in the world is going on with my identity in doctoral student and this experience right now.

### **Critical Narrative: Sophea**

Scholars (Kiang, 2004a; Museus, 2014) have only recently noted that Southeast Asian Americans (e.g., Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, and Sri Lankan Americans) have been marginalized within the field of Asian American research, and their voices have been rendered invisible in this discourse on Asian American identities and experiences. I met Sophea through a shared mentor when she was a first year doctoral student, and I was in my second year. I chose to highlight Sophea's narrative because of her experiences through her lens as an Asian American from an underrepresented ethnicity.

Sophea identifies as Cambodian American, and her family came to the United States in the late 1970s as Cambodian refugees. While Sophea's experiences as an Asian American doctoral student connect her to the larger community of Asian Americans, Sophea's experience towards scholar formation are have been informed and impacted by the lack of inclusion of Cambodian Americans in our curriculum, scholarship, teaching and pedagogy in higher education. Sophea's narrative is told by using narrative coding to identify chronology, plot, setting, and conflict. In particular to Sophea's experiences, this



narrative highlights Sophea's racialized experiences in education and in relation to her community as Sophea experiences her formation as a scholar.

During our interviews, and even in moments after the interviews were completed, Sophea shared that she was feeling pulled in many different directions. She felt tension between wanting to be a scholar and a researcher; yet, Sophea felt like her community needed more than just research and scholarship. Her community needed change and opportunity. A few times during the interview, Sophea simply sighed and commented that she was not sure if other would think her research was important. She often questioned whether she could do right by her community, by her family, and by herself.

*Sophea.* I'm a first-generation college student, first in my entire family to go to college. My family are Cambodian refugees. They came here in the late 1970s, escaped a war and genocide, and settled in California. I had a really tense relationship with my identity. Reflecting back, I think a lot of it was due to a lot of the trauma of the genocide and feelings of mistrust that my family had for the community, and so I was raised separately from the community. So, I grew up with mistrust and thinking really negative, deficit things, about the community. I grew up thinking that Cambodians are gangsters and welfare sponges and that they were going to be a bad influence on me.

It was in this way that I was taught to think negatively of Cambodians and to not associate with the community. I internalized a lot of this and developed deep internalized racism against my community. Furthermore, I was always very good in school, and school was kind of my safe haven. In the community, they have this bad habit of comparing children to each other. So, because I loved school and did well in school,

Cambodian parents were always comparing their children to me and highlighting what I was doing.

I don't know how to characterize what came next, but young people would look at other Cambodians and look at me, and say, "Oh, you're whitewashed," or, "You think you're better than us," or, "You speak so properly." That made me feel really uncomfortable. So, I've never felt comfortable within the community because I spent so much of my time away from it. Also, because of those sayings, or those interactions, I also felt, "Okay, fine. I'm not going to engage with you because you think I'm this way. In return, I'm going to think of you that way. And, I'm going to think I'm smarter than you, too."

Those were kind of the feelings that I was having. I didn't have my first Cambodian friend until college, by choice. Not counting when I was younger, in elementary school, where those friendships faded because I moved away from the area. Even in high school, the only other Cambodian students were those who were friends of the family, and who also were taken away from the community.

After high school, I went off to college. My first year was really difficult because I commuted. I lived about thirty minutes from the college. That was the agreement that my family made because they initially wanted me to go to a school closer to home, but I secretly applied to another school, a private school, and I got in. They still let me go there, but the agreement was that I had to commute from home.

I was excited and everything, but it was really difficult that first year. This university has a large Asian population, about thirty percent, but I was the only

Cambodian student in many of my classes. It was really difficult because, even though there are all these Asian students, I couldn't identify with any of them. Our experiences were different, and so, my first year was really difficult. Before college, I was a 4.0 GPA student. But, here, I earned my first F ever in my life.

I didn't know how to ask for assistance. That just wasn't in my nature. I was just the type of student to just get down and do the work. And when I failed, I blamed myself. There was a lot of struggle, internal struggle, probably some depression, just because I wasn't doing well in school. But, then I joined the Filipino Student Association. That became my anchor on campus because it soon became the reason I was coming to school. Unfortunately, I would go to school to hang out with the Filipino Students Association but I would skip classes.

Then, in college, I was seeing the Filipino community so unified, and the Filipino Student Association was celebrating their culture and their heritage. I was seeing that and I wanted to have that, too, for Cambodians, for Cambodian students. The reason I share that piece is that the town where the school is located has the third largest Cambodian population in California. There's a really large Southeast Asian population in general, and the school is only a few miles from the community college. That's where all the Cambodian students were. While I was going through this private university, I was just trying to make sense of why that was the case. It didn't make sense to me, because I felt there are smart, able, capable, other Cambodian students. Where were they?

That's when we started the Cambodian Student Association. It was the three of us, we had no idea how to run a club. We knew that we could do a cultural night or we

could do this or that. That was the first time I really engaged positively with other Cambodian students. During that time, I was starting to celebrate my culture. Despite all of that looking back at all of the internalized pieces of negativity, looking back at the community, I don't think I ever felt one way or the other about my identity. I never was proud of being Cambodian but also not really ashamed of being Cambodian, either. It was just kind of there. I just didn't have the language or the tools to deconstruct what my identity meant to me. I would say that my first identity through that entire experience was that I was a student, a learner, and that was just it. I didn't consider my racial background or my ethnic background.

During college, I remember moving out of the house and being kind of disowned from the family for a few years because, to them, I was being disobedient. My Cambodian family was very strict and they had many strong expectations of me as a young woman. But I needed to learn how to be on my own, so I left and was focused on supporting myself. Even with my scholarships, I still worked fifty hours a week, went to school full-time. My brother moved in with me, so I had a lot of responsibility. Even though I moved out and have never gone back home, I've always felt under someone else's control. It wasn't until I applied for a Ph.D. program out of state that I finally received my family's blessing to do what I wanted to do. My grandmother said, "You should go. Why aren't you going to go?" For me, that was a big deal because my entire life I had to listen to them, but I couldn't go to another school outside of being close to the family, because they wouldn't let me. This was the start of the catalyst that helped me begin to dissect and explore myself and my identity.

During college I started to get more involved in a mentoring program for Asian Americans. I felt those were the spaces that I would ask the questions about identity and ethnic identity. So I started that slow process of doing that. I started noticing the community around me, and I learned that the city I lived in had a reputation of being one of the worst cities in California. It's known for high rates of gang membership, and unemployment, and just bad, whatever that means. That's my experience in college with understanding my identity.

Just a few years ago, I started thinking about my identity, intentionally. Just three years ago, I started to learn how to integrate or understand where my ethnic background came from and what that meant to me. In some senses, I feel a little bit behind, so I'm still learning right now. For example, in my doctoral program, I write reflections and interrogate what identity means to me. And now I do it on a daily basis. For me, I need to understand what this identity means to me before I can even try to understand how this makes sense for other students.

That's the gist of being aware where I come from. I'm at a point where I'm trying to deal with all of the internalized racism that I developed for the community. In some ways it still affects how I engage with the community now. Me, being a doctoral student now, I've always considered myself in the margins because I'm Cambodian, but I was never raised within the community. So, I feel uncomfortable when I'm around the community even though I try and want to be a part of this space. Because my identity development was outside of that space, I don't have that same connection that other people might have.

After my undergraduate years, I completed a master's degree. I took a year off of school and, during that time, I wanted to take some time to explore what I wanted to do next, because I didn't know anything about Ph.D. programs. During that year, I happened to attend the Asian Pacific Islander Scholarship Fund Summit. I remember sitting in the audience and looking up on the screen, and these statistics pop up on the screen, and there are Cambodian students, Laos students, Vietnamese student statistics with all of these very low educational attainment rates. It was at that moment that I connected why there were only a few Cambodian students in my private university, but that there were many Cambodian students in the community college. I realized that this was something that matters to me because I see the issues in my community with education.

Seeing those statistics reminded me of my siblings. My sister and I have our college degrees, but my brothers have their high school degrees. We're in the same gene pool. We have the same capabilities, so something was happening with the messaging, or with the process, but the system was not nourishing their capability to get degrees. So then and there I found my purpose and passion for a Ph.D. program. I came home and asked people I knew about the Ph.D. process. A friend of mine connected me with a couple of people. I remember writing out the email to one of those people, and it was so nerve-racking because I felt like it was a cold call; I had never done this before. There had never been anyone in my undergraduate career that I connected with, that I could consider a mentor, or someone who could guide me. I remember my first phone call to one of those people, and I was super nervous. We had a really good conversation about what I wanted to do and what my interests were in. This person gave me so much

information: told me what the difference between Ed.D. and a Ph.D.; what I should be doing to get my application ready; told me about the GREs; and encouraged me to connect or talk to other faculty so that I can get an understanding of the process and who I'd like to connect with. I had opportunities to talk to two faculty members, in depth, and it was because of this attention that I figured out how to navigate this doctoral process.

I ended up choosing a doctoral program, but that experience was really hard. I think I was going through a lot of anxiety about impostor syndrome. I kept questioning whether or not I was meant for this. I kept wondering if anyone would find out if I wasn't smart or capable. At the same time, I didn't really share much in common with the other people in the program. I remember having a conversation with a couple of the Ph.D. students, asking them, "Oh, let's get together and maybe talk about the research," and the response I got was, "Oh, well, I'm not on that same timeline and I'm not here to do that much research." It was really kind of demoralizing, in a sense. I felt I was the only one, and so there wasn't anyone that I could connect with.

I actually went to two doctoral programs. As a result of my experience in my first doctoral program, when I moved to my second, I knew what I needed and wanted to feel comfortable and supported. Thankfully, the new program fostered a cohort model and I was able to really help build, with the support from other students, the cohort. The cohort has been amazing because we've been really intentional about building the cohort group. We've done things where we support each other in writing and in retreats. I always hear about these experiences with other doctoral students, that they're alone, and really competitive with each other, and that's the space that we didn't want to be in because I

just knew that that wasn't what I wanted. All of us have, in our own way, really given a lot of ourselves to this cohort. We spend time together. We do outside activities. Our families and our partners all spend time together, and I think that really helps because we're not the only ones going through this experience, our partners are, too.

I think being in this program ... it's real interesting. As I'm thinking about it, I think in some regards being a doctoral student, doing this work, is kind of my way of getting back into the community, but it's also taking me further out. Does that make sense? There's this push-and-pull of wanting to use this area or this field to rebuild my relationship with the community, but also recognizing that this is another way where I'm ... I don't want to say ... I don't know if "distancing" is the right word -- because I don't think it's that clear that it's a distancing -- or I'm different in some way, but there's that piece of that going on.

I recognize, now, too, that my position as a doctoral student and potential scholar doing work with the community and for the community, I'm still in that liminal space of outsider, no matter how much of an insider I want to be. I think I just have to accept that I'm not ever going to have that insider position within the community. I'm not even aware of what path I'm running. I'm just at this point trying to deal with all the demands of the program and what's expected of me. I'm very uncomfortable with being the public voice, because I feel, again, I'm uncomfortable with the space that I'm in, right now. It's a slow process of making sense of it and accepting it. I think there's a piece of me that has to, at some point, accept that I'm not going to be an insider, and so, I've never been that insider in the first place.



Life as a doctoral student has been interesting. I've noticed that, when I was younger, being told that I was whitewashed or too educated was alienating to me. It's interesting that now, people say, "Oh, you're getting your Ph.D., that's great, and you're doing such great things for the community." It's interesting. I don't know what to call it. Before, my education was what separated me from the community, and now it seems it might be something that will help the community. In a sense, that's what I'm doing it for but it's interesting to see this shift in how I am viewed, or maybe how I view myself, in education and in the community.

I spend a lot of time thinking about what impact I want to make and how my work is going to influence experiences for Southeast Asian students. I'm not sure yet. I'm just trying to figure that out. Personally, my brothers are the reason why I'm doing a doctoral program or doing this work. I think about the messaging that we get, and their experiences, and how they struggled. A lot of the literature and a lot of the research focus on the deficit perspective of my community. Especially for them, that's why I'm doing the work that I'm doing. I have an emotional connection to the research because of the experiences that my brothers are having. I look back and think about how I participated in this deficit perspective -- speaking, perpetuating, about them and then it's been interesting to realize throughout the years all of the systemic things in place that are meant to alienate, and isolate, and push students out. Looking back, that seemed to happen to my brothers. And, without realizing it, I was also participating in it.

For me, I recognize that I was very good at performing Whiteness, performing all of this stuff that I thought would make me worthy, and I think it had to do with me being

the older sibling, and seeing, and learning, and being a translator, and learning how to navigate systems, and how to suppress my discontent with some things or maybe just ignore them to survive. I feel I was oblivious to a lot of things, but probably a piece of me just ignored it because I learned how to figure out how to survive in school by changing myself. For my brothers, I remember getting really upset at them, but now I get angry about them being treated unfairly. I feel a responsibility to them because they didn't have the support that they needed. Unfortunately, society wants to blame them for the choices that they made. I'm still trying to work through the emotions of me participating in a system that also has kept my brothers down. I had to really dig deep and explore lies about what it means to be a good person or a hard-working person. I had to really confront the fact that they didn't have the people, the educators, and the teachers, and people who were willing to work with them, and to really support them. And it wasn't just them -- there are so many other young people being treated this way.

One way that I'm supporting myself in navigating this doctoral student identity is by coordinating a group of graduate students from historically underrepresented communities. This program is a success program for these students who are struggling or learning how navigate the graduate school's system and their programs. With this group, we talk about how being a doctoral student is a very vulnerable process and what impostor syndrome does to us. I think impostor syndrome comes and goes, and it increases and decreases depending on your place in the program. I think this is the time, right now, where I'm done with structured coursework, where I feel it the most because there's so much uncertainty. So, I feel the impostor syndrome creep up in saying, "Oh

well, you're not good enough, or maybe you're not really ready." Things like that, and so it's really interesting to kind of recognize it and know what it is, but it's still really paralyzing in a sense. I think that's another kind of word that describes how I feel right now, pretty paralyzed.

One class that was really pivotal for me in finding my voice was a critical race theory class. We were talking about Japanese internment, and my professor asked me "What kind of Asian are you?" I couldn't believe it. When I answered that I was Cambodian, this professor then said, "Oh, well just pretend...." I couldn't tell if he was telling me to pretend that I was Japanese, or if he was telling the whole class to pretend they were Japanese. But, regardless, I was shocked and confused. I realize my face was pretty expressive in class, but my face fell. I didn't say anything and it was pretty emotional. Yet, we just kept moving on in class. That moment for me was shocking. This is a critical race theory class, this professor is well known; he's a great professor and he's nationally recognized, and he said that to me. I remember going home and agonizing over how I was going to address this. This was an important moment because I had the tools and the language and the lens to recognize what was happening.

My hope is that the more that I talk about these difficult experiences, the more I become comfortable with expressing it. It's a difficult journey of discovery, forgiveness, and empowerment. I still definitely feel a responsibility to my community. I always tell people, "I'm not doing this doctoral program for myself." It has to be more than just about me. There's so much emotional effort -- you put yourself in this emotional trauma sometimes. I feel it's more than me. I feel I definitely have a responsibility to bring

voices to the table that are not listened or respected in some ways. The other thing is that I feel a responsibility to represent my community in a way that is assets based. My community is always being talked about in a lot of different ways, and one of those ways that is really crappy and insidious, is the deficit. I'll be honest, I've fallen prey to that. My internalized racism sometimes creeps through when I'm not paying attention, and it's hard not to speak about communities in this way because we're just so socialized in that way. For me, that's my test to really represent our experiences, to highlight our resilience in a way that doesn't reinforce this idea that my community is a bad community or whatever.

One important aspect that I'm always thinking about is community. I'm curious if it comes up for other doctoral students in this study because, well, we're all very diverse. I want to know what the relationship of the community is to their work and their identities. I can imagine some of us are doing work that's related to our identity in some form or fashion. I'd like to figure out how others navigate or manage community connection while recognizing that you are moving away into this academic realm that, in some ways, are so separate.

I feel that this doctoral journey is one aspect of me beginning to feel closer to my community, but I also realize that the more I go into academia the more abstract or high theory it is. I guess I hope that my narrative inspires others to recognize, not just my own resilience, but the resilience of my community is behind me. I feel like that's the biggest piece of why I am doing this. I feel like I am a conduit between my community and this work, and so what I'm doing is not really for just myself. I think it's a reflection of how

my community has resilience and a power that's not recognized in our system. I hope that my narrative reflects that.

### **Critical Narrative: Kira**

Kira is the only Pacific Islander doctoral student in the study. I met Kira through a shared mentor, and she has been active in presenting on issues related to Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. Kira is also one of the only participants in the study who is a parent and partner, and this identity has informed some of the decisions she has made related to finding a higher education program and working with an Asian American scholar. Kira's narrative focuses on community and the need for community in her life. Informed by her identity as Pacific Islander, Kira shared her journey to scholar formation.

Kira had moved in between our first interview in April 2015 and October 2015. In our video interview in April, Kira was alone in a room during our conversation. In our October 2015 interview, Kira had just moved. Not only was she surrounded by moving boxes in the video, but the context of completing the interview at home provided new insight into Kira's life. At times, her child came in and out of the screen, wandering behind her in the video interview. Seeing Kira's child prompted questions about family, responsibility and the role of community in the life of a doctoral student and scholar.

### ***Kira***

I love to talk about race and ethnicity. Those are my favorite topics. I guess that's the Ethnic Studies person in me. I think it's also easy for me to talk about race and ethnicity because I'm a military brat. My dad was in the Air Force, so I grew up in a lot of different Air Force bases. These were mostly in the US, but when I was eight years old

we moved to South Korea, and I was there until 6th grade. My first language was probably Samoan. I don't speak it very fluently now, but my ethnic identity has always been cemented in my mind. I know that I am Samoan. My parents spoke to me in Samoan and English and they still do. I mostly only speak English fluently. Around my cousins, I used to get teased because I couldn't speak Samoan. I had a lot of identity issues growing up. Sometimes I felt like I wasn't Samoan enough. But I'm not White; obviously, I'm not White. I have this accent. My parents raised me with very Samoan values, but over time and being exposed to U.S. education, well, more specifically, U.S. Department of Defense education, I think that they deliberately have this American identity. Like, living on base means safety; on base means American; and anything off base means foreign. Even though, when we are in other countries, we're actually the foreigners.

Because my dad was enlisted, I think I was exposed to more different types of people. Most of my classmates in Korea were either White, or half-white, half-Korean. Now that I look back, being in the military wasn't a typical community. I mean, within the military it's pretty typical for communities to come together, but very few have children have that experience. Even now, a lot of Samoans join the military, but what happens is, especially nowadays that the military is really downsizing their budget, they won't send whole families anymore. They'll just send the enlisted parent. We were lucky that we went with our whole family. It was a different sense of community - a cultural community. In Korea, there's a lot of Samoan men that enlist in the army. So even though we lived in Korea, our house became a sanctuary for a lot of the Samoan single

guys and some of the single women, too. During Thanksgiving and Christmas, we would just have way too many people at our house, bodies all over the place, drinking. I had a thousand Uncles and Aunties, and they would all be up late into the night singing Samoan songs. My dad would be playing his guitar. Really, in Korea, I had a Samoan community.

When I was in elementary school, there was this 4th grade kid who told me there were only two choices for identity: there was, like, Black or White in our class. And I was like, I mean, I'm not Black. I'm Samoan. So, this kid then tells me that, no, I'm Black because, I mean, he knew that I wasn't White. So, he tells me that I must be Black. I remember feeling so upset. I think I cried. I'm not Black, and I don't know why that irritated me, but it did. Usually, I would tell people I was Hawaiian because nobody knew what Samoan was. People kind of knew what Hawaiian was.

When I got to college, I think that's when I really became aware of my Pacific Islander identity and a racial identity. Right before school started, I had just moved to the city. I was 18, and a student came up to me and asked if I was Samoan. I'm like, "I'm not trying to hang out with Islanders." I don't know. I just wasn't into that my first year. I didn't really get involved until my second year in the Pacific Islanders student organization. That, I think, was real formative for everything else, like, even my research interests now. The Pacific Islander Student Organization at my school is a very political organization. It was governed by Native Hawaiians and others who had very activist identity. The Pacific Islander students at my university were much more radical than I think other Pacific Island organizations in California or perhaps in the country. I think that the culture at my school between and among the Pacific Islanders and the Asian

Americans, and the Asian Pacific Islanders, there's a heightened awareness of the need to be careful about those labels.

I found that there was a good community for me with the identity of Asian Pacific Islanders but me, myself, I call myself a Pacific Islander, or Samoan, and when I'm talking about issues as an advocate I will refer to "API". I don't think I would call myself Asian American or Asian Pacific Islander, unless somebody who has never heard of any of those communities, then I might use the term Asian Pacific Islander. But, for me, for myself, Pacific Islander is very empowering for me.

I think too, being around Ethnic Studies has influenced my identity, too. In PISO (Pacific Islander Student Organization) we would focus more on the indigenous Pacific Islander communities, like Hawai'i for example, American Samoans and the other territories. I think our political identity at my school was kind of influenced by Native Hawaiian and indigenous activists. I mean, that's what I was reading about in my studies. I learned, early on, that there's this racial identity and then this indigenous identity. The racial identity, I think, has mostly political implications whereas the indigenous identity has, sometimes, spiritual aspects, but a lot of it is around issues like decolonization. Like, I learned to connect structural issues as to why there are all of these Pacific Islander students not doing well. I learned how to connect that to indigenous communities and their struggles to access higher education.

Did I mention that I love talking about race and ethnicity? I think because those two early experiences – 1) the kid telling me I was Black and I wasn't Black, and 2) and I think going to the school I went to and being a part of PISO and embracing a Pacific



Islander identity. I think if I hadn't gone to that university, I probably would have not really been involved at all. I probably wouldn't have had a desire to give back to my community or even understand that was something that was there for me to do.

I think I had a lot of internalized ideas about what it meant to be Samoan. For example, my family never wanted us to be around other Samoan kids. They didn't want us to be negatively influenced. They didn't take us to a Samoan church where I might have maybe spoke the language. There were a lot of ideas of what being around other Samoan kids would do to us. That could have really impacted me with, like, internalized racism and such, but I think that my education and embracing a Pacific Islander identity helped me to really work against that.

My background in Asian American studies, I think, informed a lot of how I navigated this doctoral student experience. I'd been exposed to things like critical race theory, critical theory, and critical pedagogy. So, I never felt like school or the graduate school process was a negative environment. But, as I'm saying this, it's becoming clear to me, every moment was a racialized experience. I consider myself an ethnic studies scholar, so I always look through the lens of race. You know, when I first came to the doctoral program, I came to work because of AAPI research. I wanted to be part of an Asian American and Pacific Islander research coalition.

One of the things that have been interesting to me as a doctoral student is looking at the sacrifices that people have to make. Even just messages about what climbing the faculty ladder will look like, and what I would need to achieve in order to be a good candidate. Not to say that those are messages to take to heart, I mean, I'm fairly flexible

in what I think I want my life to look like. I'm not particularly tied to the idea that I have to be a full-time faculty member. It's not going to make or break me if I don't do the faculty thing and if I don't take that route. I can imagine it'd be pretty devastating to people if they don't get a faculty job. I mean, I have worked in student affairs. I love that work. I can easily see myself doing that. That's not a question for me. For me the question is more like, where do I want to end up after this. What might be open, where do I want to live, how do my parents factor in. Those kind of like personal decisions really matter to me. School is just like, yeah, we'll see what happens.

One of the things I'm constantly trying to figure out is how to work with my advisor on this major project but, still carve out time for my own work. That's just something that I've been sitting with. Really, just yo-yo-ing back and forth between what can I do for my dissertation. For example, I have been writing this paper for a few years about college accreditation. A lot of the Pacific Island institutions have been going through accreditation issues. But, I want to look at it from a tribal critical race theory perspective. Like how accreditation has become like this, I don't know, neo-colonial way of controlling those institutions. I really have a personal commitment to looking at Pacific Island institutions. I imagine, a lot of us are pulled this way and that between doing research on our own communities versus what one professor of mine called, "fringy." Yeah, I'm fringy. I guess there's a negative connotation, like you know what I mean. Fringy – like not quite out in front or in the middle.

I think, in conference spaces, too, I feel a bit fringy. Like, the experience of being a racialized person, being a Samoan, being a Pacific Islander. Like a lot of the other

Pacific Islanders scholars, I write from, like, an indigenous framework. Pacific Islander scholars are, like, really kind of like moving away from Asian Pacific Islander. At another conference, I was able to talk to Samoan scholars from New Zealand. I got to kind of fellowship with them, which is cool.

I would say race is a factor in every decision I make, I think. It's even a factor in the way that I respond to any of my readings. For example, I have to read this book about Women's history and higher education, and my critique is, like, well where are the Native women? Sometimes I think about other people. Like, how are other people navigating their identity as doctoral students with their own families? And, by family, I mean for me, my spouse, and my child and also just, like, my parents and our extended families. What does your family say that you study? What are their views about you? How do you ask? How do people live their lives? Especially coming from communities where there's not too many other people you can talk about these things with. I think about what other people's insecurities are as doctoral students in these programs. I wonder about how other people create community for each other? I mean, how do you create community for each other in a field that's so competitive?

I want to make it. I want to finish this doctoral program. To do that, I need to link arms with people and be in solidarity and not have it be like a rat race. I think that kind of thinking comes from a cultural community background. The most powerful element for me in terms of feeling like I belong, like I persist, is building family. I think would be really important for any student, not just the API or students of color. But, I think we don't know enough about API students. We just don't, hardly at any level. Graduate

students in particular – I mean, what do we know about us? Yet, we read these reports about the demographics and I think we can foresee a time where more API scholars will come into a lot of fields of studies. Including higher education, hopefully. I think it would be great for graduate programs to be prepared, how to best look for these students.

I think for me, for a lot of people like me, Samoan students, first generation, especially women with a family, it's not easy to decide to go into a Ph.D. program. It takes a lot to even decide that you can give up a career or a job to pursue it. It takes a lot of privilege too, I own that. To the extent to which I feel, like, thanks to the homework that I had, I felt prepared. As prepared as I could have been. I knew what to look for. I knew what to discuss with people. I knew what I should look for in terms of like financial packages. I knew what to look for in terms of finding a mentor. I knew to look for someone who would look out for me, somebody who will take the time to be a mentor. If I hadn't had those things, if I haven't had friends who had gone through the process, if I didn't have people who cared enough about me to say, "hey you should probably talk to this person", I know I wouldn't be here today. If I didn't have someone who I really respected and admired, someone I think of as a friend, I don't know that I'd be still hanging on. I would love for all Samoan women, or Pacific Islander women to know these things and to know this information, without having to be in the right network. I learned what I did because I had the right people in my life. I mean, what about all those people – Pacific Islanders, women – who don't have people they can ask or who can mentor them. What happens to them? I have this one Tongan friend, and she's really

similar to me. She has two kids, she'd be amazing in a doctoral program. She would be a brilliant scholar, but she has talked herself down from it every year after year.

I think, I would love for you to have the end of my story, Liza. I think I would love to know what happens to me after all this is done. I think I would love to know how other people are navigating this whole doctoral student thing but who didn't have the kind of support, affirmation, community, or people in their lives that I have had. I know that I'm here because I have understood what race has meant in my life. I've had the support in my education, in my peers, and in people who have really looked out for me. What does that all mean for others who don't have it?

### **Summary of Findings: Narratives**

As Tierney (2000) points out, biographical research is a process or a portal and cultural biography is a process of constructing and representing an individual's life within the text. Naturally, the researcher's lens is acknowledged throughout the process. To minimize the impact of my own biases in the interpretation process, these narratives were member-checked by the storytellers.

Each narrative represents a unique pathway to the doctorate. Walker et al.'s (2008) work affirms three principles for student formation: 1) progressive development towards independence and responsibility; 2) integration across contexts and arenas of scholarly work; and 3) collaboration with peers and faculty in each stage of the process (p. 61). And, in different ways, the narratives of Vinny, Sophea, and Kira highlight opportunities to engage with these principles. In their narratives, these principles are told through feelings of imposter syndrome; social experiences impacted by race and

ethnicity; relationship to community and with community; engagement in scholarship both related to community and outside of community; and feelings of connectedness and isolation. While the three narratives are unique to the individuals, they provide a better understanding to the complexities of race, identity, schooling and education in scholar formation. The participants shared racialized aspects of their socialization that, to them, were rooted in their cultural identities and experiences. Taken together, these three narratives, in particular, highlight opportunities for programs, faculty, peers, and the individuals themselves, to impact scholar formation and doctoral student socialization.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE FORMATION OF SCHOLARS: CRITICAL THEMES

#### **Introduction**

In this first interview process, twenty-two participants were asked to share their earliest memories about their identities, education, schooling, and social experiences. As part of understanding early socialization around education and careers in education, participants were asked to share the values that their families placed on education; the presence or absence of mentors and role models in education; and their experiences with feeling validated through their educational processes. By using life history narrative, it was important to ask questions about the extent to which education was valued, discussed, or affirmed within one's family. It was also important to ask whether participants experienced a racialized education, one that perhaps informed their own identity development as being Asian American or Pacific Islander. I treated this part of the interview as a way to better understand anticipatory socialization to careers and pathways to doctoral student education.

In the second interview process, participants were asked to reflect on their experiences as doctoral students. Because the participants are also researchers and emerging scholars in higher education, they were able to contribute to a deeper understanding of the relevance of this study. Therefore, this interview focused on

understanding their formation as scholars and as future leaders in higher education and the ways in which socialization processes can be a bidirectional process.

### **Formation of Scholars: Exploring Socialization to Education**

Life history methodology allowed for a more complete picture of how early experiences informed the racial identity development, socialization and student development of participants in the study. Participants were asked to share their earliest messages about education, the role of family in shaping identity development, and how their identities were shaped through schooling. What follows are excerpts from individual narratives of the participants. In these early educational experiences, participants reflected on how their schooling intersected with their identities as Asian American or Pacific Islander, particularly in the context of family, relationships and their own sense of self. The critical narratives of these Asian American, Pacific Islander and Desi American participants demonstrated how memories of their early educational experiences and messages shaped their socialization and their understanding of identity as Asian Americans.

**“I want to be White.”** A common theme among the participants was a shared feeling, early in their educational experiences, that Whiteness was an identity that was affirmed in their environment and in their schools. Overwhelmingly, school curricula privileged Whiteness, and their identities as Asian Americans created conditions of otherness in predominantly White schools. Many of the participants stated that, during their childhood, they wanted to be White. John, a Taiwanese American male, simply stated, “I just wanted to be White. I learned that (White people) have it easy, and



everything that is good is White.” John was not alone in feeling that Whiteness was something better than being Asian. Vinny, a third-generation Chinese American male, shared:

I always think of the time when I was 7 or 8 years old. I always think about this, actually. I was the *ching-chong* doggie eating kid. That’s what was projected upon me at school every day, even in the Bay area, even growing up in a place where it was predominantly students of color. There was always a lot of shame, I think, that was really projected upon me. My way of coping was to disassociate from all parts of that identity and to actually not identify at all, racially or ethnically.

Vinny’s recollection of racial slurs was not uncommon with participants. Many shared the same racial slur of being called *ching-chong* or being asked why they were so different, in a negative way. The idea of Whiteness as normal and Asian as deviant was a powerful message in the early experiences of participants in the study.

While Vinny and other participants experienced being called names or wishing they were White, Irene, a second generation Filipina American, reflected on her upbringing in a predominantly White suburb where she and her family were one of three Asian American families in the town. Irene took steps to assimilate into a culture that privileged Whiteness. Irene noted:

I pretty much did everything to be White. All of my friends were White, so when they bought hair lightening spray to turn their brown hair into summer blond, I did the same thing. My black hair, of course, turned a horrible shade of orange. When they purchased blue eye shadow and pink lipstick, I bought the same thing.

When the little boy in front of me at church turned around and started pulling at the corners of his eyes, I remember, in that moment, praying to God that He would make me White. Being White meant being beautiful. Being White meant blending in. Being White meant being invisible. But, looking back, I realize that I already was.

Irene recalled that she had grown up in a predominantly White community and believed that, perhaps, this isolation reinforced her desire to be White. As Irene told her story, she shared that having people of color earlier in her life may have helped her to develop a deeper sense of self.

However, having other people of color around did not solve the problem for Sabina, a Desi woman. Sabina reflected on her experience interacting with peers from racially diverse backgrounds. Though the people in the room came from many racial backgrounds, Sabina was the only student who identified as Indian American. And, this racialized toll created feelings of self-doubt and exclusion. Sabina remarked:

People often confused me for being Native American. They would point out that I was different. I didn't even realize that I was different until other people told me that I was. They would say, "You look different. You are different. You come from, whatever, a different background." They didn't know where India was. People would make all sorts of race comments when I was growing up.

Sometimes, I didn't even want to get up in the morning.

For Tae, a Chinese American woman, she felt similar desires to be White and to fit in. However, when she had the opportunities to engage in Chinese American culture,

and share it with her school, she noted that there was a different sense of attention that came with it. College was a turning point for her as she began to understand the deeper connections to her Chinese identity:

I identify as Chinese American and my own racial identity is very much still evolving. I grew up for the first half of my life in a predominantly White neighborhood, and I always rejected my Chinese identity growing up. I wanted blond hair and blue eyes like all my friends. I didn't understand why I was so different. It was me, my brother, my cousin, and one other Chinese boy in our school. I remember every January/February time frame, I would be picked on to give a Chinese New Year presentation to the class, and my mom would make fried wontons, which is not even a Chinese thing at all. As a kid I was like, "Oh, this is so cool. I'm getting extra attention." But, I never had really thought about what it meant to be Chinese until I went to college. I studied abroad in China and I minored in Chinese studies, so that's when I started to really learn about my culture and my heritage.

The intersections of self and of society are powerful tools for understanding the development of racial identity (Wijeyeshinghe & Jackson, 2012). Expanding this further, Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton and Renn (2010) present racial identity development as part of a larger ecological system comprised of family, school and society. As racial identity development is influenced by our environment, the participants demonstrated how racialized identities as Asian Americans were informed by the dominant identities and narratives of Whiteness. Throughout many examples, the participants shared that

Whiteness was privileged in their lives and Asian American identity was a source of tension – both in ways that drew attention to their differences but also rendered them invisible.

**“I don’t remember a thing.”** The participants in this study overwhelmingly reported that their elementary and secondary education did not cover material or included curriculum that affirmed their Asian American or Pacific Islander identities. Further, participants reported that even if there were Asian American or Pacific Islander teachers in their schools and classrooms to serve as mentors, these teachers were marginalized in their environments. These experiences created very strong messages about Asian American and Pacific Islander identity and affirmed stereotypes that existed about the community. For example, Vinny recalls a history teacher he had in junior high school who was Asian American:

Every single day, all I can remember is men talking about how exotic this teacher looked, how hot she was. They would make horrible comments about her ethnicity and talk about how they wish she were a submissive Asian woman. We were thirteen years old. Comments about her body were pretty much all I remember about that class. I don’t remember a single thing from history class other than I had a Japanese teacher and that these boys would make remarks about her all day. It got to a point where I was like, “Sure, this is okay” and I would joke along with them. That’s the only Asian faculty member I can remember anywhere in K-12. I don’t remember a thing she taught me. But, I do remember this experience very, very clearly.

For Vinny, this early message about the value and contributions of Asian Americans as teachers and people in power was made clear by his friends. He received messages that Asian Americans did not belong in the classroom and lasting messages that reinforced an exotic and sexualized Asian American female stereotype. For Vinny, the rest of his educational experience lacked other Asian Americans who could counter this stereotype for him, leaving him with imprinted stereotypes and internalized racism about Asian Americans.

In the first round of interviews, participants were asked to reflect on their memories and experiences about curriculum and teacher representation. Similar to Vinny, many of the participants remarked that there were no positive representations of Asian Americans in their curriculum or as teachers in their schools. Absent of learning accurate information about Asian Americans through formal education, individuals were left to form identity outside of school. Oscar provided more detail as to where he believes he learned about Asian Americans:

I would say there was definitely no Asian representation in my books or courses or curriculum growing up. Looking back, I know that it wasn't there, but I didn't know to question it back then. Yeah, probably in World History class I learned about China or something, but I don't think that a lot of representation was there in my classroom. Thankfully, I learned about Asian Americans in my mainstream media growing up .. you know on Nickelodeon with "Ni Hao, Kai-Lan."

Interesting to note that Vinny's reference to Asian American images on mainstream media was that of a cartoon character of a Chinese girl. This sentence in Vinny's

narrative highlighted how pervasive this lack of images or role models in the public sphere were of Asian American heritage.

Similar to Vinny, John noted that Asian American issues were not addressed in his schooling and diversity was limited to celebrations. I asked John to tell me about his town and his school community:

The town I grew up in, at the time, was predominantly white. There were two high schools in the town, and the high school I went to was the less diverse of the two. My graduating class was about 300 or so, and I think less than 10 of us were Asian American and then a handful of other kids of color. Just very, very few of us. Honestly, race never really came up in the classroom or in conversations with peers, other than the multicultural days or those things, where it's like, "Oh, you have different foods. That's cool." Just all the multicultural fun, food, and festival stuff like that.

Henry, a resident of California, helped to shed light on a myth that being in a racially diverse state like California, and being in proximity to Asian American communities, meant there was a commitment to Asian American identities:

Yeah, but it's all so different because I'm in California. The diversity is here, you have a bunch of people who do look like you and yet none of us are learning about who we are. We're still learning Western Civilization, we're still learning the traditional cannon. We're not visible in any of those types of literatures.

Oscar's reflection on identity growing up was particularly interesting because he, too, grew up in California. Though his school, teacher core, and peers were

predominantly White, his parents enrolled him in a number of Asian-centric activities outside of school which, for Oscar, helped to form a strong racial identity:

I think probably all my teachers in elementary school, at least, were White women. I think being involved in activities outside of school probably helped my identity formation or feel strong affinity with the Asian community because my mom had me and my sister play in all-Asian leagues for sports. Yeah, I played on a basketball team that was all Asian. I think there was one white guy on our team and maybe another mixed person. We did that for a long time. Then as a team, we went and then played baseball with basically the same exact group from the all-Asian league. It was against other just all-Asian teams. I would be curious to know if that was just how it formed naturally. It was, I think, formed out of a lot of the Japanese American community in that area. I don't know if there were rules of like, "This is just for Asian kids." I hope that's not the case, but yeah, I grew up doing that. So, being around other Asian people -- that just seemed normal, too. We were just a bunch of people playing sports, which is weird to think about in terms of professional sports and Asian representation or lack of representation, but we grew up thinking that was normal. We all just played sports together.

Taken together, the participants demonstrated that there was a distinct lack of inclusion in curriculum that reflected their racial identities. For some participants, their families were aware of this dynamic and found other ways to bolster their exposure to racial and ethnic communities. For others, the lack of Asian American curriculum was not interrogated and, through the interviews in this study, many of the participants only

recently reflected on this lack of exposure, inclusion and information. Interestingly, when participants were asked this question, they often answered with affirmation that they felt included in the curriculum; however, when I followed up with a question seeking examples of this inclusion, the participants began to think critically about whether or not those messages were present.

**“It depends on where I am.”** Participants reflected on the experiences of living in two cultural environments: the home environment in which Asian American and Pacific Islander identity was central to their experiences and the school environment in which their Asian American and Pacific Islander identities were othered. The home culture reflected their Asian American and Pacific Islander identities and provided affirmation while the school culture was one of fitting in to Whiteness. Through this lens, racial identity and identification were contextual for participants. In a concept known as “code-switching”, which originated in linguistics as a way to describe the use of two or more linguistic varieties in the same interaction or conversation (Myers-Scotton & Ury, 1977), this term has taken on more modern day nuances to describe how individuals subtly and reflexively change the way they express themselves to adapt to different sociocultural norms (Gemby, 2013). For Mia, a second-generation Vietnamese woman, how she racially identified often depended on where she was or who she was with, and this was furthered complicated by her experiences traveling to Vietnam where she felt both an affirmation of her racialized identity while also feeling a sense of otherness:

I identify as Vietnamese, but it also depends on context – basically, who I’m talking to -- and that’s how I identify myself. For the most part I’ll say I’m



Vietnamese. No one thinks I'm Vietnamese, not a lot of people, which is kind of something that I grew up with. It's kind of like, "You're Korean or Japanese or Chinese or whatever." Living in Vietnam didn't help either because I kept thinking, "I am Vietnamese. So living in my homeland and working there, I figured people wouldn't judge me." Oh, yeah. They did. I'm not Vietnamese to them. That was a hard experience because at one point I just stopped saying I was Vietnamese. I'm like, "Yes. I'm American and I don't look like anything you think I am, so whatever." I think for the most part, anywhere I go, I identify as Vietnamese. Sometimes I just make it easy and say I'm Asian, depending on where I am.

For Patrick, this act of identifying and claiming identity was also contextual. While Mia felt a conflict of national identity, Patrick experienced a nuanced context of political and personal identity in order to express both solidarity and uniqueness within the Asian American community. Participants were asked to share how they individually identified racially and/or ethnically. Patrick shared his reasoning for taking context into account when answering that type of question:

I'm sure this is not an uncommon statement, but how I identify really kind of depends on the situation. I primarily identify as Asian American. But, I look at it kind of in terms of political power. We use the term Asian American a lot in government and politics because it strengthens our numbers, and it allows us to look better on paper when we're doing political or advocacy work. That's a lot of the reason I identify that way. The reason why we do that politically is because,

regardless of our differences, our shared experiences are similar in the way outsiders treat us.

I asked Patrick to expand, further, what he meant by the term “outsiders” and who the “outsiders” were in relation to his answer. Patrick replied:

White America. White America doesn’t view us as any different from each other, so because of that unique experience, the whole racial category exists. I identify that way a lot when trying to advance certain agendas. Likewise, when I’m trying to identify other agendas, I’ll identify as Southeast Asian. And then when talking about Southeast Asian refugees, I’ll identify as Vietnamese American because the Vietnamese American experience is so different from the Cambodian experience, the Hmong experience, and all these other group experiences.

Similarly for Jessica, who also grew up as the child of refugees, she holds her identity as Cambodian American as a part of her understanding of who she is and what her family went through. Jessica shared:

For me, I’d like for people to understand that the experience as a child of refugees is quite different than being the child of immigrants. For all of us, in my generation specifically of Cambodian Americans, if we have made it this far, then you can bet it was not a straightforward path and there were many struggles there. Just because we didn’t talk about it, it doesn’t mean that they’re not there in that way. I would hope that people would not make assumptions about two things that often get misunderstood: 1) I want people to understand what it means to have a

middle class background as an Asian person, and 2) what it means to be completely disadvantaged as a Southeast Asian person.

Overall, the context of immigration and coming to the United States as a family of refugees is an important one to consider when examining the role of race, place, and location. Too often, in the literature, the experiences of Asian American refugees are aggregated into the larger discourse on Asian American experiences.

The participants in this study range from 1.5-generation status to fourth-generation status and those identities and experiences shaped the ways in which participants talked about their racial and ethnic experiences. Because of the complexity of race and immigration in this country, some participants shared that they were advised by family to think about how, where and when they talked about their racial and ethnic identities. John shared that, growing up, his racial and ethnic identity were considered a private aspect of his identity:

I didn't have a very positive experience with race ethnicity. I grew up in a very cultural household. For me, being Taiwanese was a private thing. It was something you did in the home or with the community, but it never seeped into high school or what I considered to be public. In that space, I tried my best to just blend in and be as White as possible. I think that really shaped how I thought about my identity as an Asian American. It was something that I wanted to keep at a distance. Being Taiwanese was something that was very important to me, but had a different feel because it was private.

Similarly, for Gavin, time, place and location are important when determining how much of his racial and ethnic identity he wants to share. And, Gavin also shared that there have been times when others have engaged in stereotypical thinking related to identity. Through this lens, Gavin reflected on the way in which location and situation impact how he identifies racially and ethnically:

It's situational. Sometimes I will speak up, sometimes I won't. I was actually interviewing for a scholarship so they asked me how I identified and I was like, "Oh, Taiwanese American." They're like, "Oh, that's just Chinese." You kind of have to know the situation at that time and it's like, well, I can't really say anything because you might be giving me money in the end so I was like, "Cool, yeah, totally." It's there and I think I'm able to look at it when working with a lot of students from different ethnicities. Understanding how people identify is really rooted in their history. There's political history, there's society and culture, and it's all there. How does that weave its way in? It's not just "this is your ethnicity", but it becomes "why do you value this ethnicity?" There's a lot of that for me.

Though the participants in this study grew up in diverse racialized communities, the shared theme of context, and identifying within and among racial and ethnic groups, was common in their experiences. In the above narratives, participants explored that time, place and location were key indicators of how they discussed and experienced their racial and ethnic identities. For some, disclosing and discussing racial and ethnic identity was a private choice; and for others, racial and ethnic identity became part of a larger, more public discussion. These narratives support the theory that Asian Americans experience a

racialized environment in which to form identity both as a product of choice (e.g., choice to disclose or discuss race and ethnicity) as well as a result of existing stereotypes (e.g., all Asians are the same, not being Asian enough).

**“Am I Enough?”** Frank Wu, a Chinese American author and law professor, shared this story in his book *Yellow: Race in America beyond Black and White*:

“Where are you from?” is a question I like answering. “Where are you really from?” is a question I really hate answering. . . . For Asian Americans, the questions frequently come paired like that. Among ourselves, we can even joke nervously about how they just about define the Asian American experience. More than anything else that unites us, everyone with an Asian face who lives in America is afflicted by the perpetual foreigner syndrome. We are figuratively and even literally returned to Asia and ejected from America (Wu, 2003, p. 79).

Wu’s words highlight not only the ways in which Asians and Asian Americans are treated as perpetual foreigners, but also how this repeated treatment of being questioned and interrogated can lead Asians and Asian Americans to internalize feelings of being foreign to America. For participants in the study, this experience was often referred in the question, “Am I \_\_\_\_\_ enough?”

Asian Americans may experience racism, discrimination, prejudice and harassment that include confusing an Asian American’s race and ethnicity (Iwomoto & Liu, 2010). Carmen, a second-generation Filipina American, stated that her identity as second-generation often impacts how she is perceived and how she interacts with her Asian American identity:

When I think about my race, I get it. I'm Asian, but sometimes I just don't feel Asian enough, Filipino enough. I don't speak the language. I don't have an accent. I look it, but then I also look like a lot of other things. People are like, "Are you Thai? Are you Vietnamese? Are you Hawaiian?" I get all of these other ethnic identities, too. I recently went home, back to the state I grew up in, and I was at a store and I could feel all these people looking at me. I looked around and I was like, "Oh my gosh, I'm the only Asian person in this store." That's just what it is in the neighborhood, but I never really noticed that growing up. I guess I never realized that the city I lived in was, truly, a Black and White city. There are so few Asians around. It's so different from where I live now where, specifically, where there's a lot of Filipinos. You can walk in a store and have it be full of Filipinos and no one notices you the same way. But, oddly enough, even though I blend in, I still sometimes get that feeling of "Am I Filipino enough?"

Andrew, also Filipino, shared similar experiences; however, he rooted his comments in whether he felt like he knew enough information about the Filipino experience. Andrew's excerpt highlights the tension he feels around claiming this identity. Andrew shared the following:

I wouldn't identify just as Filipino or Asian. Not even Asian American, but I guess, that would be the closest thing. Sometimes I feel the most comfortable saying I'm Filipino. I'm Filipino and Filipino American. I'm both. Just because that's where I came from. That's, even though I might not know as much history as the other person, it's still kind of one of those things that I don't think I should

just say that I'm not Filipino, or not Filipino American, because it just doesn't feel right. It's interesting, too, because I have a few colleagues who identify as Filipino American, but who do know a little bit more about the culture and history because they've taken formal classes. They've taken the language and everything, which I don't think I'm going to shut the door on that because I think it'd be cool to take some language classes and pick up the language. If I knew the language, I could talk to my parents. That'd be pretty fun.

The narratives of Carmen and Andrew as Filipino(a) Americans is affirmed in a recent study by Anthony Ocampo (2013). Ocampo (2013) interviewed fifty Filipino Americans to learn more about the educational experiences and pan-ethnic identities of second generation Filipino Americans, finding that Filipino Americans more commonly viewed themselves as similar to Latinos than to East Asians and felt that "Filipino" and "Asian" were not interchangeable descriptors (p. 302). This understanding may help explain some of the ways in which Filipino Americans may not feel "Asian enough."

Tae expressed that, as a Taiwanese American, she sometimes felt that she did not always fit into the Taiwanese or Chinese communities. Growing up, Tae had to navigate cultural expectations and social practices after moving from a predominantly White community to a predominantly Asian and Asian American community:

The second half of my life I moved to a predominantly Taiwanese and Chinese neighborhood. I didn't know really how to process my identity then. I looked like my friends, but I didn't practice the same customs. Even down to the things like I would have to address my friends' parents like, "Auntie, hello. Uncle, hello."

With my parents, they were just like, “Hey, Mr. And Mrs. Chang.” It was just very different, down to the small practices. I felt like I didn’t really fit in with American culture, but I didn’t really fit in with Chinese culture. I wasn’t American enough, and I wasn’t Chinese enough. I think it wasn’t until college, my masters program, even now, where I’m starting to think, “My identity is my identity,” and really owning that.

For Heena, the straddling of identity is complicated. She grew up in Taiwan but moved to the United States when she was thirteen. She claims a Chinese identity, and yet, in the context of American culture, her peers, and her schooling, Heena often does not feel like she is firmly rooted in a Chinese identity or a Chinese American identity:

You know, honestly I identify myself more as being Chinese than Chinese American. I was brought up in Taiwan until I was 13, although I am very American-culture influenced, but I feel like that was later on in life. When I think of being Chinese American, I think of those who are born here and who may not have the experience growing up in China or Taiwan. Being Chinese, it’s interesting, because I often feel like I don’t fit in because obviously if you tell people I’m Chinese, Chinese people would be like, “No, you’re not. You’re not Chinese.” When I’m talking with Chinese American or Taiwanese American, I feel like that I’m to “FOB-ish” for them. Even when I was in high school, I always labeled myself as the FOB (“fresh off the boat”). Maybe it’s because I was so insecure about the identity, I made it very well known and I made it very public so I feel like people will cut me slack.



Taken together, the excerpts shared by the participants highlight a complex interaction of race, identity, racialized environments, and personal strategies for addressing race. Many of the participants shared that they experienced tension based on how they were perceived, how they perceived themselves, and the expectations that they felt were placed upon them by society. For Carmen and Andrew, this tension lived in the belief that being Filipino enough meant speaking the language, knowing information about their ethnic history, and feeling like they fit into their environments. For Tae and Heena, this tension was tangled in how they identified and interacted with others: Tae experienced differences between the traditional Chinese families she knew and her own upbringing while Heena highlighted her immigrant identity in order to protect herself and be one step ahead of others interpreting her identity.

**Family.** In this study, the use of life history methodology allowed me to gain an understanding as to how early messages about education, education as a career pathway, and racial identity contributed to the formation of scholars. For many of the participants, family and home was one of the few places in which Asian American identity was affirmed. Family was also an important context for learning how identity was expressed, discussed, or engaged. For John, a second-generation Taiwanese-American, race and racial identity was affirmed in the home, but he was given explicit messages about race as a family issue. John reflected:

I didn't have a very positive experience with race and ethnicity. I grew up in a very cultural household. For me, being Taiwanese was a private thing. It was something you did in the home or with the community, but it never seeped into

high school or what I considered to be public. In that space, I tried my best to just blend in and be as White as possible. I think that really shaped how I thought about my identity as an Asian American. It was something that I wanted to keep at a distance. Being Taiwanese was something that was very important to me, but had a different feel because it was private.

For some participants, the act of compartmentalizing racial and ethnic identity was done to facilitate the assimilation to American culture. For David, a second-generation, biracial White-Asian American male, his family experiences included the tension between holding on to aspects of his Vietnamese culture while also being exposed to messages about American identity. For David, these messages included issues of immigration and of assimilation that his mother received when she came to the United States:

When my mom came over, I feel like something told her or somebody told her – maybe it was the culture that told her -- to become American, to become White American. So, the language was never spoken in our house. Even though she would maintain some bits of culture, like a Buddha statue or a picture, or occasionally going to a temple or doing her work as a realtor or language translator in Vietnamese communities, it was not necessarily talked about in our house. Because we lived away from my Grandma, and my Uncle was really young when he came over so he didn't remember the language, language wasn't spoken really around us. I don't resent that obviously, it's not the right word, but I wished that we had those opportunities to learn those languages because, now that

I'm older and I've become more connected with Asian folks and Asian culture or Vietnamese culture, I wish I spoke the language.

Vinny, a third-generation Chinese American, experienced the family dynamic and engagement in identity very differently from other participants, perhaps because of his family's generation status in the United States. It is significant for Vinny that his family actively engaged in an education process that privileged his family identity. Vinny continues this active engagement by reflecting on the differences between the generations and the responsibility he feels towards them. Vinny shared the following about his family:

We started having more conversations about identity and understanding what Asian and Asian-American mean to us. For example, as a society, what does it mean to be Chinese-American? It was in my first couple of months, actually, in Student Affairs that I realized what it meant to be third generation Chinese-American. I still take the identity with me today. That's where my identity is. For me, personally, it's a reflection of my Dad, it's a reflection of the past and where he came from. It's a reflection of my grandparents. It's a reflection of the fact that neither my grandparents had any education at all.

My interview with Vinny stood out because of his active self-reflection in the interview process. When Vinny spoke about his family in the above excerpt, he became very emotional and further reflected on the messages he hoped to shape about what it meant to be a third-generation Chinese American in this country. Because Vinny understands that recent immigrants to this country experience education, family and

socialization differently than he has, he began to think about the ways in which other participants are experiencing messaging about their identities, their voices as scholars, and their opportunities as practitioners and leaders.

**Curriculum.** Just as identity cannot be separated from the context of family and home, learning cannot be separated from the context in which it takes place. Sonia Nieto (1999), in her book *Light in Their Eyes: Creating Multicultural Learning Communities*, stated, “minds do not exist in a vacuum, somehow disconnected from and above the messiness of everyday life. The way we learn, what we choose to learn, and the opportunities and resources available for learning, and the social and political status of our identities all influence how and the extent to which we are successful learners” (p. 38). The impact of curriculum was significant to the participants because they largely experienced education void of Asian American and Pacific Islander teaching and learning. As informed above, many of the participants identified their experiences as having shaped internalized oppression around Asian American and Pacific Islander identity vs White identity; fitting in; and feeling like they had a place in this country’s history. With the exception of a few participants who studied Ethnic Studies or Asian American Studies, that lack of information continued, for nearly all of the participants, through to their doctoral programs.

Villegas and Lucas (2002) noted six characteristics of a culturally responsive teacher and the impact of culturally responsive teaching on curriculum. For example, the researchers discuss the need for teachers who are recognize multiple ways of perceiving reality; who affirm view of students form diverse backgrounds; who see themselves

responsible for bringing about educational change that is responsive to all students; who understand how learners construct knowledge; who knows about the lives of their students; and who uses knowledge about students' lives to design instruction (p. 21). For the participants in this study, the lack of curriculum that was responsive to their identities as Asian Americans served as messages of their value, worth, and contribution to education, learning and schooling.

Eduardo, a Filipino American, second-generation male, reflected on his experiences in grade school and what he learned about Filipinos:

Looking back at grade school and even middle school in terms of things that we learned there and even through high school. I look back now at the U.S. history text that we used when I was in AP history class and thinking about it now, how very conservative the text was. I don't know if conservative is the word but it was just a very dominant narrative, not having a lot of focus on the history of all the communities that make up this land. Thinking back now I think, gosh, there's so much missing from my education. I don't think we, even as diverse as my communities or schools were, had the where-with-all to even challenge any of that or contest any of that. I just think we kind of took it in because that's what's being taught.

Eduardo's interview was a very conscious stream of thought around how he wanted to change this dynamic that occurs in school. He continued his narrative saying:

It would be interesting now to go back to the high school where I went and be able to talk with students saying, "Think about what you're learning and, is this

what you should be learning? Are there things that you feel that are missing?”

Although I don't know what they're teaching now but thinking back 20 years ago, just what was being taught, I don't think our stories were being part of the curriculum. I mean, even in items of even role models or teachers. My experience with teachers is that teachers were White. Looking at grade school, I'm trying to think, even in kindergarten ... yup.

As Eduardo began to think about the teachers in his life, he reflected on the opportunity he had to switch schools and attend a more racially diverse high school. He stated:

Then going to high school, again, I went to high school in California and again my high school was about 70% Latino and we had lots of alums who came back and taught at the high school so we had a little bit of a diverse community of teachers. Still predominantly White, but some African American, some Latina teachers. I do vividly remember, I don't remember if she was the first but, Mrs. Lopez. She was Filipina American and she came in and did one of our science classes. Wait, she was immigrant Filipina. I think all of us who were Filipino or identified as Filipino were like, “Oh this is kind of neat to see one of our teachers who is actually a Filipino teaching us.” It was one of those things where during breaks in the class we'd connect with her personally and talk about or tell Filipino jokes or connect to her in that way.

Eduardo began to smile when he recalled his experiences with his teacher who identified as Filipino and the ways he felt comfortable with her. He recalled a joke that he had told his teacher one day:

I remember this joke where you ask someone “What’s 5 x 5?” and you keep having that person repeat the answer all the time. Then you say ask them to think about the first vegetable, like, “What’s the first vegetable you think of?” The joke is that 99% of people say the vegetable carrot, right. We did this to her and we were like, what’s the first vegetable you think of? And she said, “Eggplant.” We were like, “Okay, of course. Eggplant. So Pinoy.” I don’t know why I’m remembering that, but it was important to me.

While Eduardo had the opportunity to connect with a teacher who identified as Filipino, others had experiences in which their racial identities were the target of cultural norms. When Olivia, a multiracial Filipina American, moved to Japan with her family, she tried to hold on to her ethnic identity as a multiracial Filipina American. She recalls an incident at school during which she felt her identity was used to explain challenges she was having:

I was always told not to forget I was Filipina by my family. It’s interesting, I have this memory of elementary school when we first moved to Japan and being pulled into, I don’t remember if it was the teachers office or the counselors office, and I remember them telling my mom, “You need to stop speaking to her in *tagalog* because she’s not speaking in class,” and my mom going back and saying, “Olivia’s first language is English, she’s just really shy. She’s very slow to warm. Once you get her started she won’t shut up.” It was interesting because that really cemented for me how much my mom valued me knowing who I was as a Filipina and knowing my language, knowing my heritage. She was so defiant. It was like

she was so offended that someone would tell her in what language she should speak to her child, when she knew that I was perfectly capable. In fact English was my first language, I just didn't like speaking apparently. I was a really shy kid. I would say that's the first memory that's ingrained where race and being Filipina and my mom affirming my identity really stood out to me.

Despite external pressure to assimilate, Olivia's memories of her mother affirming her Filipina identity were strong, and this served as a foundation for how she identified in her life.

For David, recollections about a racialized identity were not quickly identifiable; however, he mentioned that the lack of awareness around a racialized identity was likely significant:

I think part of it also is we don't talk about race a lot in schools, necessarily, and so that's probably a part of it as well. So there's no real space to be like "You're an Asian person," like, "This is what you are, this is who you are." Why would I ever think to talk about race if I was never given a space to talk about it or share a story? Like I said I'm always still attracted to those spaces where people are talking about identity.

Absent of a formal curriculum that included his racial identity, Vinny learned most of his Asian American history from home and from his family. I had asked him to think about his early schooling experiences and what was formally taught to him in school. Vinny grew up in the San Francisco Bay area, an area known for its diverse Asian



and Asian American communities, as well as for diverse immigration stories living in proximity of Angel Island; yet, Vinny shared the following:

I don't remember a darn thing actually about any sort of ... Yeah, I can't. I'm thinking about all my projects, my essays, my research, term papers even lectures, I don't, actually. Oh, God, no. There was no mention of Angel Island at all. Everything that I learned was from talking with my parents. There was nothing about interments. I know there was nothing about interment because my parents talked to me about that. Wow, yeah, now that you mention it, I'm realizing that I never had any of that formal education.

Vinny's experience with a lack of formal curriculum about Asians and Asian Americans, especially given his proximity to diverse Asian communities, was a surprise to him.

And, for Irene, a Filipina American who grew up in predominantly white communities, the lack of Asian American history or information was not as much of a surprise. Yet, Irene had to seek out information on her own. She provided the following:

I didn't learn anything, well, other than negative things about Asians and Asian Americans, in my school. I think, for me, that made me feel like my people didn't really matter in history. So, when I went to college, where there were a few chances to take Asian American classes, I didn't take any classes about Asian American issues. Because of that, none of my professors were Asian. My entire college career I had one Black professor and that was it. My master's program in higher education was the same thing. My doctoral program was the same thing. I remember some time in my senior year of college all of a sudden becoming this

very Asian centric, and for me that meant reading. I read Amy Tan and I read Maxine Hong Kingston, but those were extracurricular and it was just me in a room reading it. I never discussed those books with anybody. I didn't have people to have conversations with. My entire education was just very, very White, very Euro centric. I didn't learn anything about my people at all.

Irene's reflection on how her early educational experiences shaped how she felt in college affirms the belief that students experience powerful first messages about how belongs and who does not belong.

**Undergraduate Ethnic Studies.** Museus (2008) stated that "The desirable course of action [to impact dominant cultural attitudes and beliefs] is to cultivate institutional cultures in which the salience of racial stereotypes and prejudice are minimized and students of color are ... believe themselves to be unique individuals and valued members of the broader campus community" (p. 8). Ethnic studies seeks to recover and reconstruct the histories of those Americans whom history has neglected; to identify and credit their contributions to the making of U.S. society and culture; to chronicle protest and resistance; and to establish alternative values and visions, institutions, and cultures (Hu-DuHart 1992). By increasing opportunity to, knowledge of, and experience with different racial and ethnic groups, colleges can positively impact the attitudes of students, who have not been given opportunities to study, learn and discuss their histories.

For two of the participants, being socialized in fields of ethnic studies and Asian American studies was a powerful turning point in their understanding of racial and ethnic identity in schooling. Patrick, a Vietnamese American man, and Kira, a Pacific Islander

woman, both chose to pursue coursework in Asian American studies and Ethnic studies respectively. In these programs, they learned to interrogate race and racialized perspectives. However, being involved in these programs also gave them access to scholars and practitioners who served as role models and guides to them in their academic journeys. Patrick provided the following:

While in undergrad, I got to know a Vietnamese American graduate student really well. She really gave me a lot of advice from the time I was nineteen until almost ten years later when I applied. During that whole time we've kept in touch, and I've seen her go through her journey of finishing her doctorate and initially not doing academic work. She worked for a labor union for a period of time and then eventually coming back into the field now. I've seen her go through her doctoral journey through the time when I was contemplating mine. So, it's really a lot of credit to her doing her best to have me avoid some of the trap falls that she might have found.

For Kira, she knows that her identity as a Pacific Islander is meaningful in the larger discourse on Asian American issues. She stated the following:

I think going to the undergraduate institution that I went to, and being a part of the Pacific Islander student group, and inhabiting a Pacific Islander identity was important to me. I think if I hadn't gone to that institution, I probably would have not really been involved at all. I probably wouldn't have had a desire to go give back to my community or even understood that was something that was there for me to do. I think I had a lot of internalized ideas about what it meant to be Pacific

Islander. My background in Asian American studies, I think, informed a lot of how I navigated this doctoral process. I'd been exposed to things like critical race theory, critical theory, and critical pedagogy. I consider myself an ethnic studies scholar. I always look through the lens of race.

The implementation of identity conscious curriculum, teaching and pedagogy are aspects of culturally responsive teaching. According to Gay (2010), "culturally responsive teaching is validating and affirming because it acknowledges the legitimacy of culturally heritages of different ethnic groups; builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and schools experiences as well as between academic abstractions and lived sociocultural realities; uses a wide variety of instructional strategies; teaches students to know and praise their own and one another's cultural heritages; and incorporates multicultural information, resources and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools" (p. 32). For Patrick and Kira, this opportunity to engage in culturally responsive teaching and learning occurred in their undergraduate experiences. However, for the majority of the participants in this study who did not choose to major in ethnic studies or Asian American studies, this lack of engagement in studies that could have affirmed their racial and ethnic identities continued to perpetuate an absence of Asian American-reflective curriculum, teaching and mentors in their experiences.

**Mentoring.** According to Sedlacek, Benjamin, Schlosser, and Sheu (2007), successful mentoring can help Asian American and Pacific Islander students in many ways, including "easing difficulties in transition to college, improving their satisfaction with college life and a chose major, and developing their professional skills, confidence,

and personal and professional identity” (p. 272). Participants in this study also noted that both the presence and lack of mentoring impacted their experiences in their educational journeys. Ravi, who did not have any mentors who identified as Asian American, shared the following:

There’s no one to tell you. If there’s no one to tell you, how are you going to learn unless you go through these hardships and you learn on your own. When people like you who are writing our stories and you’re having that information out there, that’s how we’ll know. That’s why it’s so detrimental that we don’t have other stories, and why it’s important that we have our narratives.

Similarly, Irene did not have mentors in her academic journey and felt alone in the process. And, she attributes this lack of mentoring to both her journey towards studying the experiences of students of color, broadly, and to her struggles identifying as an Asian American doctoral student. She shared the following:

I think that the lack of Asian American mentors in my life, and the presence of White allies and people of color, definitely led me to seek solidarity with racial groups of Black and Latino students. But, I never had anyone in my life that said, “Hey, what kind of work are you doing with Asian American students?” I mean, I don’t think those people in my life even thought that Asian Americans were a group that we should be thinking about. So, naturally they didn’t really point me in that direction, either. Then, of course, because I avoided Asian American spaces, I didn’t interact with Asian American people or professors or leaders. I

think it just kept this cycle going of denying who I was as an Asian American and within the Asian American community.

Mentoring that included Asian American identity was powerful for Vinny. Early in his student career, he had mentors who identified as Asian American and who nurtured his identity as an Asian American student. Vinny shared the following about his experiences with mentoring:

Glen's is one of my mentors. I always asked him, "What can I do to repay you for the time that you've given me?" He said, "The only thing you need to do to repay me is to spend as much time with someone else as I've spent with you." So, I did. Another Asian American student was the beneficiary of that. He was the first person I met who was looking for an Asian American mentor. I talked to him on a weekly basis almost either by email or Google Hangout or by text, checking in on him, really just trying to be a mentor to him and walking through some things. That's one of the ways that I do it.

For John, mentoring took the shape of connections. And, the connection to the Asian American Center at his college was important to his racial identity development. John's reflection highlights the role of mentors who had identified something they believed that John needed, even if he had not identified it yet for himself:

College for me was really transformative towards the end. Three years into college, I was still denying my racial identity. I'm like, "I'm not really Asian American." Then a student affairs advisor from the Asian American Resource Center on campus tricked me into coming to some stuff and turned me Asian

American. My senior year was really personally developmental in the sense. I spent a lot of time reflecting and being present. I met a lot of Asian American peers, and they would ask me questions out of their own curiosity, like, “Why wouldn’t you ever come to our stuff? We see you around campus for years and were always like, ‘Who is this dude, and why is he not here?’” and stuff. I’m like, “I don’t have an answer.” I really didn’t know how to articulate that.

I think that experience was the beginning of my racial identity development process.

Because of John’s connection to the Asian American Center, he discovered mentors who were willing to guide him in his path towards his doctorate, and as he traced his journey to the doctorate, he credits this type of mentoring to his success.

Though Henry did not have mentors in his life that identified as Asian American, he knows that his presence in a multicultural center, as a practitioner, is meaningful in terms of being a mentor to others. Henry talked about the work he is doing with current undergraduate students to help them navigate identity:

Growing up, I knew I was Filipino and I knew I was Asian, but I didn’t really have a lot of dialogue about that and what that really meant for me until I got into my graduate program. I remember that because when I was going through my graduate program, I started realizing all the racial incidences that happened to me before I got to that point. I just was not equipped to handle those situations, verbally, or to even come up to people and to challenge those ideas that they had as well. Now that I’m here, I’m in this space, and I’m at the multicultural center.

Now I'm positioned to do this; I'm positioned to train students to have these kinds of conversations, and I'm here to empower students and let them know that they don't have to deal with those kinds of situations, and these are other tactics that you could also think about. I love doing that.

Finally, Olivia identified ways in which her identity as an Asian American and her identity as a woman were important in her mentor's work. Olivia benefitted from direct questions that were rooted in culture and gender, and she reflected on those experiences with her mentor:

I think I didn't really think about identity as much except how marginalized it felt in a new state and program for two years. I had a supervisor who was Asian American. He would be very direct and we would talk about what it means for me to be an Asian American woman. How's that influencing my experience in the field? He would ask those questions and challenge and push me. I think that was one of the first times I think I started to really look at the intersections of being Asian American and being a woman. Particularly how I didn't fit a stereotype that maybe people were expecting. Like I wasn't quiet or passive. You know, those awful stereotypes? You know what it means to be an Asian American woman and the ways in which that influenced how people perceived me? Those are the conversations my supervisor was having with me.

Sedlacek et al. (2007) demonstrated that mentoring programs and relationships, to be successful, must be compatible with cultural values. Goto (1999) suggests that cultural reasons might explain why some Asian Americans are reluctant to seek guidance and



help from mentors who are White. Taken together, it is important to identify the structural characteristics of mentoring and mentoring relationships as well as the impact of racial identity on mentoring. The three participants mentioned that their mentors were Asian American. It is also important to acknowledge the ways in which race may or may not be an overt feature of the relationship, but that racial issues and racialized identities must not be ignored.

**Model minoritized.** As this study continues to demonstrate, the impact of the model minority stereotype has been pervasive in the lives of Asian American participants – both as internalized oppressive factors and external assumptions about their identities by others. These experiences occurred in course selection processes, exclusion in class discussions on diversity, and an over simplification of Asian American and Pacific Islander identity by peers.

It is important to note that foundational literature in this field has addressed the model minority myth by disrupting the ways in which Asian Americans have been set up to achieve honorary Whiteness. As a product of a racialized agenda to maintain anti-Black racism and White supremacy, the model minority myth was designed to shame other communities of color and disregard the lived experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (Poon et al, 2015).

The narrative excerpts included in this section address the ways in which participants were racially generalized based on stereotypes affirmed by the model minority myth. Participants shared ways in which the model minority myth was enacted upon them from outside agents such as teachers and peers and how beliefs about their

own agency were impacted by stereotypes. I chose to use the term “model minoritized” as a way to denote action. Where as “model minority” denotes a group or characteristic (e.g., “She is a model minority”), the term “model minoritized” suggests an action, decision or process that is placed upon individuals or groups. The shift in terminology acknowledges the systemic, political and social oppression that shaped the experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

For Ravi, a Desi American, the way in which the school enacted the model minority myth impacted the types of courses he was placed into and how his teachers perceived his abilities. Ravi shared the following:

I struggled in high school and didn’t do well with math and science. Those are my weakest subjects. In school, I feel like I was tracked. Even though I didn’t do well, I was placed in Honors Physics. I was clueless. I had no idea what was going on. I had to interject and be like, “Hello, hi. I don’t get this. I need to be in a lower level.” It was like I have no idea what was going on. I was in regular chemistry the year before, barely made it with a B, and I didn’t understand physics. When I saw my schedule, I changed it and put myself in remedial physics, and then the teachers had this big meeting. They were, like, “Oh my god, what’s going on?” Even math, I failed out of Algebra 2. I had to retake it over the summer. I just didn’t fit this stereotype.

Because the participants are doctoral students in both education and higher education programs, they have witnessed colleagues and classmates making comments

about Asian Americans, schooling and education. Gavin shared the following experience that he had in class one day in his doctoral program:

It happened first semester in our leadership class, no, our diversity class. We had a reading on the model minority myth, why it's problematic, and whatever. It's a great article. One of my classmates, who is a principal came up to me and was like, "Wow, that article was good. I do that to Asian American students. I totally do that to our Asian students." I looked at him, and I'm like, "You're a principal already. How many years have you been working here? Think about the impact you've made on a lot of these students, the detrimental impact to these students who you automatically stereotyped into this problematic framework." It was hard. I think there are still times where, even in class, people put the model minority stereotype on me -- where individuals think that I've all ready got the work done or that I'm all ready ahead of the curve. I'll do my papers right before the deadline kind of thing, but people automatically assume I'll have it done.

Gavin highlights two distinct and important experiences in his narrative: 1) the lack of awareness, critical engagement and thought about Asian American stereotypes that long-standing practitioners have been engaging throughout their careers; and 2) the experiences of Asian American doctoral students among their peers. As a student in a doctoral education program, Gavin assumed that there was a level of understanding about stereotypes; however, he continues to experience marginalization and activation of the model minority stereotype among his peers.

For Tae, the activation of the model minority stereotype also conflicts with her family's experience with the stereotype. For some Asian Americans, the model minority stereotype continues to be a positive association, a stereotype of hard-working, successful, and academically talented people who have succeeded based on merit. For Tae, who has been engaged in critical race work, the tension between acknowledging these different belief systems is found both in her classes and in her family home. She shared:

I think primarily we talk about this myth of meritocracy, American dream, and how it's all the solution. It's something that I butt heads with my father on a lot because he strongly believes in that. As an immigrant to this country, he did work his way up and he is financially comfortable and stable now as a result of his hard work and dedication. I grew up with the model minority myth that we often talk about, and I have to unlearn all of that in my doctoral program and try to figure out where my cultural identity fits into that. I don't want the lessons of hard work and perseverance that my family has taught me doesn't go by the wayside, but I also have to hold true to the values and the beliefs that I've developed through my doctoral program. As much as I study model minority myth and the impacts it has on students, sometimes I don't stop to think about how it affects me as a student.

In this interview, Tae continued to reflect on how her early messages and beliefs about the model minority label being a positive ideal has impacted her sense of self as a doctoral student:

I did face a little bit of impostor syndrome throughout my first year in the doctoral program. I think me being an Asian American female in a doctoral student space has certainly played a role in all of that and me questioning where my place has been in my doctor student journey and how I can develop my identity in relation to that. Initially when I came in to my program, my racial identity wasn't a part of my initial dissertation interest. That's certainly developed as I've taken more classes and as I've explored who I am through this program.

The model minority myth, though it is a concept that many are dismantling as truth, has strongly impacted many of the participants and their own understanding of self and agency. As the participants described, model minoritization has resulted in individuals being placed incorrectly in classes, has created frustration and tension in doctoral classes, and even causes tension within families and family identity.

**Multiracial Asian Americans.** Mixed-race individuals are virtually invisible in higher education research and discourse (Museus, Lambe Sariñana, Yee, & Robinson, in press). In fact, a review by Museus, Lambe Sariñana, and Ryan (2015) note that, of five of the most widely read peer-reviewed United States-based journals in the fields of higher education and student affairs (*Journal of College Student Development*, *Journal of Higher Education*, *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, *Research in Higher Education*, and *The Review of Higher Education*), less than 1% of articles published over the last decade included an explicit focus on mixed-race people (p. 331). In exploring how multiracial undergraduates experienced prejudice and discrimination, Museus et al. (in press) found that “participants frequently encountered several types of prejudice and

discrimination in college, such as instances of racial essentialization (i.e., others trying to force them into a racial category), the invalidation of their racial identities, the external imposition of racial identities, the exclusion and marginalization from racial groups to which they belonged, challenges to their authenticity as members of their racial group, exoticization, and the pathologizing of their multiracial identities” (p. 333).

As Museus (2015) noted, much remains to be learned about multiracial students, including “whether they face inequities in higher education, what factors influence their trajectories, how campus environments and agents shape their college experiences and outcomes, and how they experience and respond to various racialized experiences in college” (p. 343). In addition, while existing studies explore the experiences of multiracial undergraduate students, further research is needed in order to better understand the experiences of multiracial graduate students.

The literature most relevant to this study and the experiences of multiracial participants is the work by Renn (2004) and Wallace (2003) who found that cultural knowledge is a major factor in mixed-race college students’ identities. Multiracial students may come to campuses with knowledge that may be learned from parents, family, and community prior to college; extensive cultural knowledge of their diverse backgrounds; knowledge on one or two backgrounds but limited or no knowledge of others; or limited knowledge of any particular heritage background (Renn, 2000; Renn, 2004; Wallace, 2003).

Multiracial participants in this study added a different lens of complexity to identity. In the interview protocol, I had asked individuals, “How do you identify racially

or ethnically, and what does that mean for you?” Participants who identified as multiracial often spoke of the complexities of answering that question because of the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, culture and environment. For example, David responded:

I think, now, I do always identify as an Asian American person, specifically Vietnamese American if it comes up and biracial as well. But, sporadically, and I don’t know, maybe intentionally, I would identify as either Asian American or White on different forms, depending on whether or not I thought it would help me. I think when I applied to colleges, and this was 2000, I always checked AAPI. It didn’t hurt me, obviously, because I got in to all my schools. But I don’t know if it helped me, and I don’t even know if I knew why I was doing it, except to be like, “Oh I’m diverse. I’m not white.” Beyond that, I don’t know if I can think of any other times where I really thought about identifying as AAPI.

As evidenced in the literature, multiracial individuals may identify with one cultural background over another. For Olivia, a biracial Filipina and White American, her identity as a Filipina was salient due to family circumstances that kept her apart from the White side of her family identity. Olivia shared:

Yeah, so I racially identify as bi-racial Asian American. I was born in the Philippines, but grew up in Japan. My mom is Filipina, my dad is white, but I had always had like an Asian American experience. My dad’s family disowned him when he married my mom. His family didn’t even reach out to him until after I was born. My sisters are seven and five years older than me, and they didn’t even

know about my dad's family. His mom got sick, and she started to realize that she had grandchildren out in the world that she never met because she was a bigot. I think, for me, that shaped my identity pretty strongly as a person of color and as an Asian American because what it meant to be White was not something I experienced. I didn't typically present as white. My dad didn't bring this cultural identity around his whiteness either. I think some of the challenges that my parents faced as an interracial couple and being an interracial family, all of that, sort of influenced how we view the world.

Multiracial individuals in higher education are faced with more options for student organizations than in the past. Ethnic student organizations can be helpful in fostering positive racial identity; however, for multiracial students, finding an ethnic organization that honored their multiracial identities was often difficult. Therefore, Oscar founded an organization just for multiracial college students. When asked about how he identified racially or ethnically, Oscar answered:

That was a little difficult for me. Luckily, I was involved heavily with the multicultural office, and I had that space to explore identity. One thing that happened at the Student Activities Fair is that I went and signed up for the Chinese Student Association, but I just didn't feel welcome. I felt like I was getting some blank stares and questions of why I was joining. That led me to starting a group for mixed-race students. I really pursued that route and found that as a really strong identity. I think that even with a strong multiracial identity, though, I definitely identify more strongly with my Asian side. Being in NASPA,



being in the APIKC (Asian Pacific Islander Knowledge Community), that's like family and home. I found a greater appreciation for that. I think part of that might be just there's more roots there. There's more known about that side of my family. There's more to identify with than the white Southern former racist side of my dad. Yeah, that's informed a lot of who I am and how I identify and what I care about in the world.

While the three multiracial participants in this study did not share stories of prejudice and discrimination as part of their anticipatory socialization nor from their programs, cohorts, faculty or institutions, they did note that being multiracial impacted and informed their identity development. In the case of these three participants, their Asian American identities were salient in their lives through family structure, family engagement, social stereotyping in college, and exclusion from mono-racial clubs and organizations. This finding does not imply that all multiracial students do not experience conflict related to being multiracial; rather, this study simply did not illuminate such experiences of conflict in education as related to their multiracial identity. Regardless, it was important to include the experiences of multiracial participants in this study because of their community's underrepresentation in the literature. Including their voices in this study assists in providing a complex understanding of identity and experience.

### **Summary of Findings: Socialization of Early Experiences**

Life history methodology is particularly useful because it is “uniquely suited to depicting the socialization of a person into a cultural milieu and to make theoretical sense of it” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 121). In this process of life history interviewing, the

participants were given the opportunity to reflect on their earliest experiences in education and the characters that informed those experiences. At times, the participants were distant and unsure of how race and racialized identities were expressed in their earliest experiences. At other times, participants were clear, and could recall specific examples, of how race was expressed and experienced. In those examples, it seemed as if participants were actively remembering and reliving some of those moments.

Unique to this study is the opportunity to interview doctoral students engaged in research in higher education, and there were moments when the participants were surprised at their own reflections on their identities. For example, some of the excerpts above show that, in real time, the participants were realizing aspects of their formal schooling or of their family that they had not previously considered. They were becoming aware of what was left out of their curriculum, who was left out of their teacher and faculty core, and where they felt marginalized in different spaces.

In this first interview focusing on early messages and identity formation, participants did not often recall positive experiences or memories with being Asian American. In fact, most reflected on the lack of positive messages, role models, and opportunities to explore their Asian American identities. When there was representation of Asian Americans or discussions about Asian American issues in their lives, these messages were based on stereotypes of the community.

Finally, participants were able to provide more examples and reflections about when they felt marginalized than when they felt affirmed. And, for the two participants who pursued coursework in Asian American studies as undergraduate students, they felt a

deep sense of connection to the community and a clear sense of identity. In fact, their exposure to ethnic studies and Asian American studies propelled their work and scholarship in Asian American and Pacific Islander issues.

The narratives in this section demonstrate the impact of schooling, mentoring, curriculum, and family in the identity development of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders as well as the ways in which we can improve support for Asian American and Pacific Islander students. In order to best understand the formation of Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars, it was important to understand the early messages that Asian American and Pacific Islander received about their racial identities, racialized experiences, and the ways in which they learned, or did not learn, agency and voice as scholars.

### **Formation of Scholars: The Doctoral Student Experience**

*“As I’m saying this, it’s becoming clear to me, every moment was a racialized experience.” - Kira*

**Introduction.** In the first interview phase, the use of life history methodology gave unique insight into how Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experienced racial identity formation and developed early messages about themselves and Asian American and Pacific Islander communities through schooling, interactions with family, peers, and teachers. In this second interview phase, as a continuation of life history story telling, participants were asked to reflect on their experiences leading up to the doctoral student program and their current experiences as doctoral students, both from a personal development perspective and an organizational perspective. As a way of

understanding socialization, participants were asked to tell the story of how they became doctoral students: how they learned about the field of higher education; how they learned to be doctoral students; and their experiences with classmate or cohort members as well as experiences with their faculty.

Unlike the recalling of race from their earliest memories where participants struggled to recall racialized memories and experiences, the participants easily recalled experiences of race, racism, marginalization, and microaggressions as doctoral students. This section explores various aspects of the doctoral student experience through the lens of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in programs of higher education: anticipatory socialization, choosing the graduate school, cohort experiences, socialization to the organization, curriculum and pedagogy in the doctoral program, advising and mentoring and socialization to the profession.

**Anticipatory socialization.** The anticipatory socialization phase includes activities in which the individual makes the decision to join the organization and begins to learn about the organization through the recruitment and selection process (Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). This period of time included influences in their undergraduate and graduate experiences, as well as those leading up to the decision process to enroll in a doctoral program.

The pathways to graduate school were diverse. Some participants followed a career path by working their way from entry-level positions in higher education to mid-level positions. For these practitioners, the doctorate meant advancing in their careers or contributing to scholarship that would influence institutional change. For others, the

journey to the doctorate was the result of wanting to change careers from practitioner to scholar. Very few participants, like Patrick, knew they wanted to pursue the doctorate at an early stage. Patrick shared aspects of his journey towards the doctorate:

I think I knew I wanted to get my Ph.D. when I was nineteen. I was a sophomore in college. I took an Asian American studies class and, like so many other people, mind blown, my whole experience changed. I gained a new perspective of looking at the world, examining the world, and being critical. I realized that I had inklings of being critical but never the vocabulary or a way to organize it, theoretically. I guess I was searching for a theoretical framework to explain it all but it was always kind of bubbling in my mind when I was younger. Then finally taking a pivotal class in Asian American studies, I felt validated. It gave me a voice and it gave me agency. It was such a unique and wonderful feeling. At the end of my sophomore year I thought, I've got to do this. I've got to figure out I can keep doing this. Apparently, it could be sustainable so let's figure out how to do this.

Griffin (2012), in her study on Black faculty mentors, noted, "as we aim to improve the retention of Black graduate students and success of Black faculty, we must re-double our efforts to ensure these students are well mentored" (p. 51). Similarly, for Asian American doctoral students, active mentoring from faculty and other doctoral students was important to their decision to pursue doctoral degrees. For Eduardo, a first-generation college student, having access to mentors and doctoral students served as role models for him in the process. He stated the following:

A couple years ago, folks started planting the seed of, “You should consider this. This is something that you need to do.” Or “Have you thought about going into a graduate program and pursuing your Ph.D.?” Then as I saw more and more of my friends also pursue more and more of these programs I thought, “Wow. This is something that looks really interesting. There are some areas that I am finding that I’m really interested in studying.” As you get exposed to what your friends are studying or what’s out there in the literature you start seeing the gaps. You think, “I really want to be part of this.” Being able to hopefully contribute to the field, but then also pursue advance study in this field professionally or as a practitioner, I think those are all things that came together a couple of years ago. With the folks being encouraging saying, “Let me look into this.”

Similar to Eduardo, Oscar also saw other people in his life achieving the doctorate, but his messages were not as explicit. While Eduardo had mentors encourage him to pursue the degree, Oscar noticed people around him, in positions he hoped to have one day, and decided that was the path he would take. Oscar shared the following:

I when I was an undergrad and decided to go to Student Affairs, I knew even back then I had to get my doctorate one day because I saw the people around me -- my mentors and the dean of students and the dean of campus life -- I saw that they had that doctorates. They were not explicitly telling me, “You have to do that,” but I knew that would be a path one day in my master’s program, even though I thought about going straight through to the doctorate. I’m so glad that I didn’t,

because that would've been way too much, and I value the work experience I got so much.

Finally, for David, the pathway to the doctorate was about reconnecting with his scholar identity. As a practitioner in student affairs, David knew that he wanted to contribute to scholarships and influence the understanding of the field. When asked about pursuing his degree, David shared the following:

Really, the Ph.D. was the next step for me because there was no upward mobility in my office, so I needed to get the degree. I could also do some career discernment a little bit, but also to try and gain a new knowledge base in a very specific field. Clearly I'd been doing a lot of knowledge gathering across a bunch of different fields. I wanted to really focus in on higher education and reconnect with that researcher part of my identity, which had kind of faltered over time.

Austin (2002) noted that the anticipatory socialization period is when graduate students ask themselves key questions: "Can I do this?"; "Do I want to be a graduate student?"; "Do I want to do this work?" and "Do I belong here?" (p. 94). As taken from the excerpts above, the participants in this study reflected on messages about graduate work and their pathways to exploring whether or not they wanted to be a part of this community. Individuals were motivated by different types of influences; however the participants agreed that the pursuit of the doctorate signaled a new and next step in their careers and identities. It is important to note that, for each individual, there were messages about the doctorate that were significant in their lives – role models, mentors,

and faculty who played an integral role in their belief that pursuing the doctorate was possible.

**Choosing a graduate school.** Golde and Dore (2001), in their study examining the reasons why doctoral students choose to pursue a doctoral degree, found that when they asked students about their immediate career interests and desires, only half the students said that they were “definitely” interested in becoming a professor (47.9%), and over a third (37.3%) said “possibly” (p. 10). Similarly, the participants in this study were unsure about pursuing faculty careers, but were interested in advancing in their practitioner careers into senior student affairs positions with the option to teach if possible. Of the twenty-two participants in this study, eight people were interested in faculty positions exclusively; nine were interested in faculty-practitioner pathways; and five were interested in advancing in their practitioner careers. While the participants all identified a preference for these pathways, many of them referred to pursuing the doctorate as a way to keep their options open for future career pathways.

Career choice, in general, was a significant reason for pursuing the doctorate. When asked what participants were looking for when they chose specific graduate institutions, many commented on the demographics of the faculty and department. For example, Patrick, a second-generation Vietnamese doctoral student, engaged in a thorough process to find doctoral programs that had affirming practices for Asian Americans. As a student who was socialized through Asian American studies, Patrick understood, for himself, the importance of Asian American mentors, opportunities, and reflections of his identity as an Asian American male:



When looking at graduate programs, I made that whole spreadsheet about the Asian American faculty, male and female faculty, and their research interests. Basically, I did a whole scan of AAPI faculty in higher education all across the United States. I made a list of them, figured out what their research, if my research was related to theirs, just big spreadsheets. I looked at programs around the country. I didn't know any doctoral students in our field in education, really, until I started the application process. Prior to that, I was lucky enough as an undergrad to realize this is what I want to do and then let the teaching assistants in my undergraduate program know that. These teaching assistants, at the time, were doctoral students at the time, so they were so helpful in giving me a lot of advice and talking about the expectations.

Similarly, for John, the presence of Asian American faculty in the doctoral program was important to his choice. He shared the following:

Most of the faculty I applied to work with in different programs were all Asian American. I think that really was a consideration. I was like, "I think I just want someone who I feel like can understand or at least can connect in that way and understand what I want to study without me having to explain too much. They're intuitively like, "Okay, I get why that's interesting or important." I think the diversity of the faculty and students in the programs was definitely a consideration, too.

John's journey to the doctorate included a well-researched process to determine where Asian American faculty were teaching. Though John was interested in having Asian

American faculty in his program, he also acknowledged that the presence of and interaction with Asian American faculty would positively contribute to his socialization and development as a doctoral student.

For other participants, the presence of Asian American faculty did not factor into their decisions. For Gavin, the decision to attend his current institution needed to include the responsibilities he would continue to have outside of doctoral studies. For Gavin, his identity as the first-born in his family meant that his graduate school search was limited to the local community. Gavin stated:

I wanted to build my network in California. I have family here. I have family obligations here. There are certain things that, I feel like if I were to move out, would have been a lot harder for my overall family. Being the first born, being the oldest son, things like that, played not a substantial role in my decision, but it played a role in my decision at that time. I ended up choosing (a school in California) because of this.

One participant, Kira, was unsure of which course of study she wanted to pursue. She was considering either a doctorate in Education or a doctorate in Ethnic Studies. Kira had access to an Asian American scholar who gave her meaningful advice, advice that was rooted not only in “what do you want to study” but rather a more direct question of “What do you want to impact?” Kira shared the following reflection about that conversation:

I was debating between Ethnic Studies and Education. A good friend of mine introduced me to this scholar. And, she helped me figure that out. She told me that

if Ethnic Studies is something I wanted to do I should probably consider Ethnic Studies. If I wanted to change the institution and the way that they conceptualize specific issues around community, then it's probably more beneficial for me to have a language of higher education as opposed to Ethnic Studies. Ethnic Studies is definitely home to me. It's where I learned a lot about my community, about activism, stuff like that. From there, many more doors opened in terms of meeting scholars. And, because of that advice, I am where I am today.

The experiences of the participants in this study underscored the impact of ethnicity, race and culture in their decisions to attend a particular graduate school. This finding is important because existing literature has often addressed career decision-making as a result of student goals and student training (Golde and Dore, 2001). For example, in Golde and Dore's study (2001), participants stated that a "love of teaching, enjoyment of research and interest in doing service" were important factors in career-making decisions (p. 13); what gave participants pause, in their study, was "the problematic nature of the tenure process, onerous workload expectations, difficulty of obtaining research funding, and low salaries" (p. 14). While Golde and Dore's (2001) study examined that career choices of doctoral students are driven by factors such as goals, training, and the climate of securing faculty positions, it is clear from the narratives of the Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students who participated in this study that issues of race, family, and identity play a major role in their decision making processes to pursue the doctorate, to select the location of the graduate program, and to determine at what level they want to impact.

**Socialization to the organization.** While the choice of graduate institutions is an important factor for the participants in the study, the role of socialization to an organization, school, or program played a significant role in their development as scholars. The concept of organizational socialization helps to understand the structures and processes that exist within the broad landscape of higher education and the more specific attributes of a graduate program. Doctoral students may experience socialization through formal curriculum, opportunities for culturally relevant and responsive mentoring, development of research agendas, and the value to which faculty place on areas of research interest. The concept of doctoral student socialization is therefore used to understand the process that doctoral students go through towards developing an academic identity.

Participants were asked to reflect on how their doctoral programs were, if at all, attentive to organizational socialization. Nearly all of the participants were first-generation doctoral students, and navigating the doctoral student process meant relying on a broad network of people who could guide and mentor them. Participants noted key areas of their organizations that informed their understanding of doctoral studies: advising, peer-learning, faculty identity and orientation.

For David, a multiracial Asian American male who was also a first-generation college student, there were hidden aspects of doctoral study that were not clear to him until a faculty member in his program pointed them out. Specifically, one aspect of David's program was a focus on developing faculty:

Now, I am looking to go to faculty. But, that's not really what I came in to do. I did aim to come in to be a practitioner. My advisor actually said to me, "Why get a Ph.D. if you're not going to be a faculty member?" I think it's like one of those things where they say, like, "Oh you don't know that you can do it until you're told you can do that" type of thing. Like, "Oh, you should go to a Ph.D. program." So that made me think, "Oh yeah, maybe I should go to a Ph.D. program." Then, someone says to me, "You should be a faculty member." So, I'm like, "Oh yeah, maybe I should be a faculty member." I never thought about myself as a faculty member. When I applied, I never thought of myself as a faculty member. I always dive headfirst when there are like opportunities. When she said that to me, then I was like, "Oh yeah, I'll think about it," and then I started more seriously thinking about it and learning about it. Now, that's where I'm headed.

For John, a Taiwanese American male, his graduate program is also focused on socializing students to be faculty members. But, for John, there are organizational challenges to this because of the demographics of the faculty. John shared his reflections on the impact of full-time faculty and his relationships with them:

I think at this point, the majority if not almost all, of our faculty are full professors. They are a decade-plus removed from the experience of what it's like to be a doctoral student and getting tenure and stuff. They're well into their careers. I think in terms of what it means for current Ph.D. students who are encountering the academy now, and the job market now, and what you need to be competitive now, just looks very different than it was in the '90s. I struggled a lot

my first year, a lot, with this transition. It was the social-emotional transition.

What I realized through that process was being in the field, being a practitioner, I developed a really strong professional identity. Once I transitioned to a full-time doctoral student, I lost some of the professional identity and the foundation of what it means to be in the job market as a doctoral student.

Olivia, also a practitioner, shared similar experiences as John. For Olivia, she reflected that her program is so focused on the scholar identity that her identity as a practitioner, she believes, is not valued in the process. Olivia shared:

I don't know that my program creates space for the scholar-practitioner. I think at minimum they are at least all really open to that dialogue and the critique around it. Maybe it just isn't necessarily the focus as to where energy needs to go to, so that's like simultaneously great and challenging to me. It's challenging both just being a doctoral student in general, but also being a doctoral student in my program where people are there to be faculty. There are times when I'm just, like, "all of you are really critical thinkers, critical writers," but, like, we're all looking for scholarship and simultaneously still falling in line in many ways. I just think the doctoral process is about just staying in line a little bit.

For Gavin, a scholar-practitioner, the organizational support of his graduate program and his work supervisor are important aspects of his success. Gavin is also one of the few participants in this study who is pursuing the Ed.D. degree, one focused on the practitioner-scholar identity. Gavin shared the following about the intersectionality of his practitioner and scholar identities. He stated:

My boss is very, very supportive of the program. She's in it too so she totally understands. It just makes sense and she asked how I'm doing it. She knows, she's kind of gone through it. The division supports us pursuing our Ed.D. so there is not having to explain ourselves – it's for us personally and it's for us professionally.

For Jessica, an important aspect of organizational socialization is her peer group. While her program does not formally create or shape social experiences for the cohort, Jessica, as one of the few Asian Americans in the program, notes that social activities can prove to be affirming and isolating, impacting her socialization to the organization. Jessica shared the following:

My cohort is very diverse. I get along with my cohort members. Well, I actually heard that some of my cohort members are talking about me. Their feelings are a little bit hurt because I don't participate in a lot of their activities. Pretty much, they spend time drinking, eating pizza, hanging out, and watching football games. Those are the reason why I don't partake in those activities. I don't like any sports and I don't like loud rowdy spaces with drunk people. I don't drink because I'm a practicing Buddhist. There has been some misunderstanding that people think that I don't want to hang out with them as people. So, I show my face here and there sometimes at the appropriate places, but I don't try to force myself to go to places that make me uncomfortable. Honestly, it's also that they don't like to eat the same foods as I do. I'm mean, I eat stomach. I eat liver. I eat intestine. All Southeast Asian food. They don't like any of the stuff – you know, the good stuff!

Learning the culture of an organization is key to developing a sense of belonging and support in the graduate school process. And, as research has demonstrated, existing organizational socialization processes can leave students feeling isolated and frustrated and, as a result, possibly questioning and doubting their academic work and abilities (Austin, 2002; Gay, 2004; Fries-Britt et al., 2011; Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Golde, 1998; Mendoza, 2007; Weidman et al., 2001). Participants reflected on ways in which effective organizational socialization helped them to broaden their own understanding of their pathways. Participants also shared ways in which ineffective socialization to the organization created feelings of mismatch, especially in the scholar and practitioner identities. Finally, organizational socialization that does not take into account differences in racialized identities may leave students out of social events and activities that could prove to be helpful in persistence and belonging.

**Cohort experiences.** A number of the participants were involved in cohort-model programs. As the cohort model has been explained as a way to increase persistence and graduation, it is important to understand the role of cohort development in the support of Asian American students. As Sophea, a Cambodian doctoral student, noted, individuals within cohorts can impact the experiences of Asian American doctoral students:

I'm very aware of being the only one. Actually, my program in the college is the most diverse part of campus, the higher education department and the College of Education. We've got a lot of diversity, however, right now I am the only Asian woman, and not only that, I'm the only Cambodian. It's been interesting to kind of recognize that when I walk into a room, people have already these set, well I'm



assuming, people already have these set ideas about who I am, and what I am, and why I'm here. I was even asked, in a class where we were discussing critical race, 'What kind of Asian are you?'

As Sabina states, for cohorts with few people of color, particularly Asian American students, it is important to create cross-cohort relationships:

In terms of in the department, I think, there's a faculty member who identifies as a South Asian man. He's Bangladeshi originally, but he's lived all over. He has been very supportive in terms of being a person of color in the program. But, there are not a lot of us, of course. I think that in our particular cohort there was more than in some of the other cohorts. Across the cohorts a network of people of color developed, particularly women of color. Even though it's not a formal department support, it's definitely a part of the department and part of my experience, which has also supported my research interests.

For Mia, a Vietnamese American student in a racially diverse cohort, this cross-racial diversity of the cohort provides both affirmation and challenges. Particularly in her first year, when students were seeking both affirming spaces and opportunities to challenge racial affinity, Mia's cohort experienced tensions across racialized lines:

I am one of three API students in the program, and I think there was this one moment there was a breakdown in our cohort. It was so weird. I didn't realize it shifted down to because we were different ethnicities. Some people naturally connect with each other because they look similar or whatever. I was okay with that. I am friends with everyone. I didn't really form really close relations with

anyone. But, we had this intervention by the faculty where they broke us down by ethnicity group and asked us to think about privilege. When it got to me I was like, “I think I’m mostly privileged.” They looked at me and they were like, “No, no. You need to go over there with all the students of color.” I experienced a lot of tension based on being privileged but also being a student of color. The idea was that ethnicity played a part into this situation we were having in the cohort. Jessica, a Cambodian American student, often talked about the tension between being Asian American and also being from an ethnic community that was displaced and marginalized. She felt most people did not understand this identity, affirming to her that most people do not think about Cambodians in the larger context of dominant Asian American experiences, and she has felt the burden of being the educator of others:

My advisor, she’s Chinese American, and she’s like third generation Chinese American, so she hasn’t lived the experience of immigration, but she understands it. She told me that it’s okay to be mad at my cohort members or other people in your program, but that I shouldn’t isolate them. She said that I, instead, should use facts and statistics and knowledge and framing. Basically, she wanted me to use the fancy graduate school training to talk to them. It was, like, really hard not to get mad. But, what am I supposed to do when someone in my class, a doctoral student, says that she has never met a poor Asian person. Then, she met me. The White people in our program, they were like, “What’s Khmer?” The fact that they don’t understand the experience of being a Southeast Asian American makes it doubly marginalizing because they just don’t know where my people come from.

So, I become that obnoxious person, that obnoxious Asian person that talks about Asian people all the time. When I don't, people forget.

Olivia's experience in her cohort is very different from other participants in this study because her cohort, and the cohorts before and after her own, have representation of Asian American doctoral students. In addition, Olivia works closely with a faculty member who identifies as Asian American. Olivia reflected on this dynamic and the impact of this population:

You know what? I think it's really cool that we have so many Asian Americans in our program. I mean we kind of joke about it that there is this Asian American group of people. In the past five cohorts there have been just strong representation. Then, we have a faculty member who has research teams that she's created around either challenging the model minority myth and the way it's used in research or looking at law suits and being part of that history project. So, all of this is really awesome for me as an Asian American as well a doctoral student. I feel like in my doctoral program it had been pretty present both around sort of faculty interest but then also with other doctoral students.

In effective groups, the cohort model can help students develop a sense of belonging (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes & Norris, 2000). Students in productive cohorts tend to persist in their studies, demonstrate increased commitment and motivation (Hill, 1995; Norton, 1995) and have higher program or degree completion rates (Burnett, 1989; Norton, 1995). Yet, as the participants describe, Asian American and Pacific Islander students who are in isolation or who do not have affirming activities within the cohort,

feel marginalized and experience pressure to represent a larger Asian American and Pacific Islander identity. These social experiences are important because cohorts tend to take classes together until their coursework is complete, tend to socialize together, and tend to serve as a support system for each other. In the absence of positive cohort experiences, Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students may experience additional challenges to developing a sense of belonging in a doctoral program.

**Curriculum and pedagogy.** Ladson-Billings (1995) coined the term *culturally responsive pedagogy* as “a theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate” (p. 469). While much of the literature focuses on culturally responsive pedagogy in teacher education (Gay, 2002; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Villegas & Lucas, 2007) and in k-12 schools (Gay, 2002; Gay & Howard, 2000), the participants in this study noted that culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy was missing in their doctoral programs.

For Henry, the lack of inclusion of Asian Americans in his doctoral classes signaled to him that his experience was outside of the norm. However, Henry’s professors have slowly incorporated more Asian American articles and readings. Henry shared the following:

I see myself reflected in some of my classes, but not all. In most of the literature that is most recent, I see a little bit more of myself. But I’ve been critiquing about that with our faculty, saying, “I don’t see myself in any of this, and in fact, you’re

completely making me feel like the model minority again in a lot of these situations.” It just so happens that some of last night’s readings included Asian Americans.

I asked Henry what that meant for him to see his community reflected in his coursework.

Henry shared the following:

I mean, it wasn’t until I got into the grad school where I started learning about the community and learning about how Southeast Asian communities were different from Asian American, or a subset of Asian American community, that’s when it hit me. I was like, “Holy crap, this is me. I’m actually learning about myself.” I mean, before that, I felt like I was robbed. It was, like, I went to an undergrad institution that didn’t have Asian American studies. Then I went to a master’s that didn’t have Asian American stuff. And, now I’m in this doctoral program that’s not teaching me about my identity.

Henry reflected that, after he mentioned this lack of inclusion to his professors, his doctoral student classes were the first time he had seen himself reflected in the curriculum. And, for many of the participants in this study, they experienced similar frustrations. While the participants articulated that talking about Asian American and Pacific Islander issues was affirming in their programs, they also experienced frustration when interacting with their cohort members who, similarly, had not been socialized with culturally inclusive pedagogy and curriculum about Asian American and Pacific Islander.

For Jessica, discussions about race in her program leads to frustration because she feels, as an Asian American woman, her identity is often overlooked or marginalized.

Jessica shared the following about her experiences in class discussions:

I get frustrated when my cohort doesn't understand why we need to talk about Asian Americans in our curriculum. They have said to me that there's no reason why we have to talk about Asians in this class because they're not an oppressed group. Now, I'm okay with regulating my facial expressions but not my body heat. When I get angry I just get so hot and red, and my friend was like, "Jessica your face is so red." I was like, "It's because I'm furious, I'm furious!" In class, I'm like, are we going to play the oppression Olympics now? In the scale of oppression Olympics, the spectrum was only black and white and that was it. I was like, you just forgot Asians, Southeast Asians, Latinos, Native Americans, you just forgot everyone.

I asked Jessica what would have made this experience different. She articulated that her cohort members received an education just like hers – one that was devoid of information about Asian Americans. Because of this lack of inclusion of Asian American issues, she always feels like she is left out of conversations about diversity, perpetuating the feeling she has that Asian Americans are not part of the larger discourse on equity.

Just as Jessica reflected on how she physically reacts when she is angry in class, Irene felt similar feelings of frustration and anger. Irene stated that she was not sure how to engage in conversations about diversity because she did not actually know where she

fit into the dialogue. While Irene points to the lack of exposure to Asian American issues in her educational experience, she saw how that impacted her in classes today:

My socialization so far has been good I think. I've struggled to find my voice in the program. As loudmouthed and aggressive as I am, I'm always terrified to bring up Asian American issues. I remember sitting in my history class but not talking about anything Asian American. I remember just stewing in my seat, and it took me all of three hours – just when class was ending -- before I could muster up the courage to say something. When I did, the faculty member was fantastic, but it's still so hard for me to advocate for my own identity. I feel like I'm not supposed to say anything and just accept what's being taught to me.

Much of the literature on culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum has focused on teacher education and k-12 students. However, these excerpts demonstrate two points: 1) that the lack of culturally responsive pedagogy in early education impacts the way that students develop a sense of self, sense of belonging, and an understanding of who they are in the context of other racialized identities, and 2) that doctoral education continues to perpetuate this lack of culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum.

Villegas and Lucas (2007) note that

to teach subject matter in meaningful ways and engage students in learning, teachers need to know about their students' lives. Teachers need to know something about their students' family makeup, immigration history, favorite activities, concerns, and strengths. Teachers should also be aware of their students' perceptions of the value of school knowledge, their experiences with the

different subject matters in their everyday settings, and their prior knowledge of and experience with specific topics in the curriculum (p. 31).

And, as evidenced by Henry's narrative, the inclusion of his Asian American identity and experience affirmed participation in doctoral studies and contributed to a sense of belonging in the classroom and in the program. For Jessica and Irene, we see how the absence and lack of curriculum related to Asian Americans in their doctoral studies reinforced existing stereotypes within their classes as well as contributed to a sense of exclusion and invisibility.

**Advising and mentoring relationships.** Doctoral students are often viewed as apprentices, studying closely with faculty in their departments and disciplines and engaging in research. Unique to doctoral education is the opportunity to develop close relationships with faculty through in-depth advising, mentoring and guidance. The faculty advisor, as defined by Schlosser and Gelso (2001) noted that the faculty advisor "has the greatest responsibility for helping guide the advisee through the graduate program" (p. 158). Oftentimes, an advisor is instrumental in guiding the doctoral student in developing a dissertation topic and, in some cases, serves on the student's dissertation committee. Advising relationships may be determined by a shared research interest or may be assigned based upon a student's admission into a doctoral program.

The participants in this study traveled diverse paths to get to their doctoral programs; therefore there was not a consistent theme around the selection of mentors. However, the participants reflected on the experiences of being mentored and of



developing relationships with faculty that spanned the spectrum of being supportive to serving as a barrier to completion.

Carmen, a Filipina-American, chose a research topic that made race central to her thesis. Though she switched topics a few times, her advisor was supportive of her choice to keep race and identity central to her study. When I asked whether her advisor was supportive of her choice to explore leadership issues within Asian American communities, Carmen answered:

It's a hard enough journey to try to do the dissertation and the coursework, and now you're having to think about your own identity, and the way that's viewed, how you're treated, how that impacts the work that you're going to be able to do or not do. I feel really supported, my advisor is a person of color. I think because of her identity, if I want to do person of color work, I'm not getting push back. That makes a difference.

Melissa, a multiracial first-year doctoral student, has had a very positive experience with her advisor and in her program. Melissa's advisor identifies as Asian American and supports a research agenda that includes Asian American issues. Melissa was asked to reflect on whether she has experienced a racialized doctoral experience:

I think I don't feel that it's been racialized in a negative way. I think I've gained a lot of sense of empowerment and a stronger sense of my own identity as an Asian American woman and as a doctoral student researcher. I think a larger amount of that comes from the fact that I am working with a strong, Asian American faculty member. She's served as a mentor and she my instructor this

semester and she is now my research assistant group supervisor. All of that exposure to her own research and her own perspective and views has definitely, I think, has racialized my experience in a really positive way. I am also interested in looking at research that has to do with Asian Americans and Asian American communities and Asian American positionality.

While doctoral education is often a time for students to identify their individual research interests, Manathunga (2007) highlights the paternalistic nature and inclination for self-reproduction inherent in these relationships. That type of self-reproduction may also serve to affirm students who seek a similar research agenda as their advisor, particularly if that research affirms their identities. For Mia, when she chose a doctoral program, she did not consider the racial identities of faculty or her the salience of her own racial identity in the process. When asked about this dynamic, Mia reflected on the importance of having an Asian American mentor in her life:

I think I never really noticed how important it was to have a mentor who identified as AAPI until I started working. Growing up and going through school, I never realized what an impact it would be if there was an AAPI person present. It wasn't until I started working at a local college where the dean that I reported to was Filipino. I didn't realize how important it was to have someone that I could talk to about what I was going through as a doctoral student but also as an employee. Sometimes I'd just ask him stuff about how I was feeling, being one of the only people of color in the office, and he'd tell me that what I was feeling was a very natural feeling. Before he got there, I never really talked about it with

anyone. If he wasn't there, I don't think I would have ever had that conversation with anyone. I think I would've just thought about it to myself and just internalize it.

While the excerpts above directly highlight the impact of mentoring and support that participants received, John focused on how talking to his mentors and advisors helped him break through a barrier he was experiencing in his own identity as a scholar. John was used to the structured schedule as a practitioner, but when he became a full-time doctoral student, he experienced stress around this shift. When asked about how mentoring and advising impacted his identity as a doctoral student, John shared the following:

I was, like, just reading all day. What did I do today? Nothing. I just read. It was a little bit self-indulgent. I just read. Okay. I wrote this paper that no one's going to read. It's for a class. I feel like I had this momentum as a professional, and now I'm just spinning my wheels and just feel restless. Like, did I make the right decision? Am I on this detour that's not going to bring me back, and did I fall off this track I was on? I talked to some advisors and some mentors, and we were trying to reflect on whether this is tied up with my parents and what it means to be successful. I really got to thinking whether this was all related to some sort of internalized model minority thing. I had to continue to have markers -- tangible markers of success -- in order for me to feel successful. It had to come from external validation.

The external validation that John was referring to was from his mentors and advisors. As John was at a critical stage of questioning whether or not he had made the right decision to be a doctoral student – one who focuses on reading, writing and scholarship as opposed to a traditional practitioner environment – he needed support from mentors and advisors who understood what it meant to experience this tensions. As of the second interview, John was still struggling with his identity as a scholar and re-thinking measures of what it meant to be successful and productive. John continued to rely on advice from his peers, fellow doctoral students who were in graduate school full-time, and the support of his advisors and mentors.

Jessica did not have academic mentors in her life that understood what it meant for her to identify as Asian American. While she continued to struggle with receiving culturally responsive mentoring in her doctoral program, Jessica focused on the role and agency she could play in the lives of others. When asked what she hopes to do for other Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, Jessica provided the following:

Like, I keep thinking about how I can support AAPI students if I'm not at the table understanding their needs and sharing what their needs are? How do we expect other people to know when they don't identify in that way? The struggle is that you need to be able to be represented at the table and make sure that AAPI students and their needs are accounted for. I think, for me, going into higher education really was, well, it wasn't initially to help AAPI students, but it was more about the fact that I wanted to help students obtain a higher degree and better themselves for their career and their lives and stuff like that. That's why I

wanted to pursue a doctorate degree. I wanted to make sure that our needs are known.

Numerous studies point to the fact that faculty of color often privilege pedagogy, content, and topics related to communities of color (e.g., Fries-Britt et al., 2011; Umbach, 2006), and for some of the participants, having Asian American and Pacific Islander faculty advisors is important to their success. Because of this, doctoral students might receive different messages about pursuing or including an Asian American and Pacific Islander research agenda. Sophea, a Cambodian American doctoral student, reflected on how important it was for her to work with an Asian American scholar who actively includes an Asian American research agenda:

I think from the get-go, my advisor was a hundred percent supportive of my research interests. He was the one that validated me. When I said that researching Asian American communities is what I wanted to do, he encouraged me to come and work with him. I had never had that experience with someone. He has become an institutional agent as far as validating me, connecting me with people, connecting me with resources and opportunities, and just being there to talk me through some of my fears and things that I've had. It helps that he does work on API students, and his style is really great in that he doesn't ever impose any agenda onto me. He asks the right questions and cares, I think, critically and deeply, about what choices I make with my research. I think he's been super supportive.

While some participants reflected on the impact of having Asian American faculty, Mia reflected on the importance of having her faculty, who do not identify as Asian American or Pacific Islander, understand her cultural values and work towards her success:

I feel like we have very well rounded faculty that even though none of them identify as API, but they understand enough to make sure that I'm still successful. They understand my personality and how I identify and how to work with me. They really value me as an individual, as a doctorate student. I really appreciate that. That's why, for me, I don't have a problem going to any of the faculty that I find a connection with regardless if they are API or not because I know that they value my success and they want to help me get there. So however they do it, they do work together. I really appreciate that. That gave me a sense of support. They do care about me. They talk about me and connect me to other faculty. That makes all the difference for me to excel in this program.

For David, having a critical mass of faculty of color has been instrumental in his development and formation as a scholar:

Probably, our program's different, just because we have so many faculty of color. I would say that within our program, it's probably a little bit easier, just because most of our faculty come from critical epistemological backgrounds. They brought us in as people of color, and also pretty much everyone has some kind of minoritized identity, partially because of those identities. I think for those who wanted to engage in research, those opportunities were there. Also, because our

faculty had a wide range of identities, folks who identified with those groups, that wanted to do that work, were more easily able to engage in those areas. I have faculty who identify as Black, as Asian American. I have faculty who identify as Latino. Faculty who identify as gay. There's all these identities on our faculty where you can plug yourself in where you feel appropriate. It felt like, for the most part, if you wanted to get engaged in research on a particular topic, and the faculty were doing that work, that they would be open to entering those spaces with you.

I asked David to explore further what it meant to have faculty of color in the program, specifically. David reflected on how the participation of faculty of color impact the experiences of students in the doctoral program:

I think that where there are faculty of color, students of color are more easily able to plug into research opportunities. I don't know if I have an alternative view to that, that's just my experience. I can't say that if there's only White people, then only White people get the experiences. That just hasn't been my experience to be able to speak about. But, even in my research a little bit, faculty believe that if there are more faculty of color, that more students of color will apply to their programs, and, I would assume, do research with them, since less faculty are hiring for students to do work with them.

John considered the role of faculty of color as he was choosing institutions to apply to because he was looking for mentors and advisors that he did not have when he was in undergraduate or masters programs. John shared the following:

Most of the faculty I applied to work with in different programs were all Asian American. I think that really was a consideration. I was like, I think I just want someone who I feel like can understand or at least support me. I needed faculty who, intuitively, could say, like, “Okay, I get why that’s interesting or important.” I think the diversity of the faculty and students in the programs was definitely a consideration. I just didn’t want to be in a space where I have to explain my research to classmates or faculty in ways that I felt like I just didn’t have to explain. I shouldn’t have to explain the importance of researching Asian American issues. So, yeah, having mentors and advisors who would get that was really important.

Unlike David, Emily, a Filipina American doctoral student, does not have a support system of Asian American and Pacific Islander professors and peers. Her program is predominantly White, both in the faculty population and student population. Emily reflected on the experience, however, of having a faculty member who identifies as Asian American but who does not include Asian American or Pacific Islander issues in her research and teaching agenda. Emily provided the following about her relationship with her faculty member:

My relationship with my advisor? Well, I shouldn’t say she discourages me to study Asian American issues, but she doesn’t want me to limit my options. She’s not an Asian Americanist by any means. She’s not an ethnicities person by any means. Although, as the lone Asian American woman, she taught the lone Asian American class in all of our program. She had to adopt this identity. We’ve had



these really interesting conversations, you know, because we come from such different backgrounds in terms of our identity development as Asian Americans. It's not that she's not supportive, it's just that she never wants me to limit my options. But, she recognizes that looking at race and ethnicity are part of my training and my background and my passion, so she's definitely always supportive.

I asked Emily to elaborate further on what her relationship means with her advisor. While Emily did not find this sense of belonging with her faculty, in general, she did feel this sense of belonging with her advisor:

I have to say that I was really lucky to find a home in my advisor. If you are a doctoral student and you don't find that home with your advisor, then you could feel really out of place. I've been able to TA for her and do some research that was associated with her. I don't think I would feel as invested in my education and as invested in this program if I hadn't found that level of support and mentorship.

Though Emily and her advisor were socialized differently in their understanding of their racial identities, Emily noted that her advisor's identity as an Asian American was important to her. In particular, Emily was looking for affirmation about her experiences as an immigrant. Emily further connected her advisor's Asian American identity with her identity as an immigrant:

I think since my advisor is another Asian American woman, in a lot of ways it was easier to facilitate those initial conversations about belonging. My advisor

didn't initially identify as Asian American -- she didn't go through that kind of identity training. She felt like her Asian American identity was thrust upon her. She had to learn from the ground up what Asian American Studies was when she was told to put that class together. We've had conversations where we recognize we couldn't have this conversation if we weren't both Asian American women. I knew I could have that kind of conversation with her because I knew she would recognize my background as something that she had also experienced.

As a Pacific Islander, Kira recognized that there are challenges to finding and connecting with a Pacific Islander scholar and faculty member given the low numbers in the field. But, connecting with an advisor who understood her racial and ethnic identity is important to Kira:

I thought, and I still think, it would be good for me to have an advisor who understood that there was a need to increase research on Pacific Islanders. My focus has shifted a little bit because my advisor's interests have shifted, but I have not really let go of doing Pacific Islander research. I probably will be focusing more on institutions, change and transformation. Maybe, I'm also thinking too, I could maybe finish up my doctoral work in the next five or six years. When I have that capacity, then I can probably do more community based research, that kind of stuff, stuff that feeds my soul, right? I'm coming to a point where I can't do specific Pacific Islander stuff and then also institutional work. I have to focus. I haven't made the decision, yet. As of right now, I have been dedicating a lot of my coursework to understanding more about activist issues with Pacific Islanders,

immigration, Pacific Islander immigration to the US. So, I'm still getting it in there in a way that feels good to my soul.

The critical mass of faculty of color in Heena's program contributed to a greater sense of belonging. She also made recommendations for how to build upon these connections:

Our faculty is actually very diverse. There are Asian American faculty on staff. Everyone is so busy, so I don't think the connection has been made. Even though there is someone else who identifies as Asian American in program, I feel like she is often so busy, and we don't have that one on one type of relationship. I really think maybe a faculty member would be helpful just to make me feel more comfortable in the setting. It doesn't have to be academic related and she doesn't have to critique my dissertation. But, I feel like I just to feel more included and appreciated in this program.

For Sabina, a Desi doctoral student who feels isolated from faculty and students who identify as Asian American, an emerging platform for advising and mentoring has been her source of support: social media. Social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, have given her access to Asian American mentors, faculty, and students who help her feel connected. While she has not participated directly in these groups, Sabina noted that her passive following of posts and comments has affirmed some of the experiences and feelings she has had as a doctoral student:

One of the most helpful things was that a friend added me to the Asian Pacific American Network through ACPA, and another Facebook group for Desi

Americans. I don't know these people in the groups because I haven't been to any of the conferences yet. But I see these Facebook posts, and, well that's always ... that's been very affirming. I think that that's the best way to describe it. That it exists, it's just fabulous to me. I really enjoy it even if I don't know a few many here.

The participants in this study reflected on a range of experiences when asked about mentoring and advising. The majority of the participants identified their relationships in this way: nine (9) identified as doctoral students with mentors and advisors who both identified as Asian American and who also included Asian American research issues; four (4) identified as doctoral students who had Asian American mentors and advisors but who did not specifically include Asian American issues in their research agenda; five (5) identified as doctoral students who did not have mentors who are Asian American but who were supportive of Asian American issues; and four (4) identified as doctoral students who did not have mentors who are Asian American and who were not sure if their advisors would support issues related to Asian Americans. These dynamics are important in exploring the impact of advising and mentoring on Asian American doctoral students because, as Hall and Burns (2009) note, faculty must recognize when students' efforts try to maintain their sense of self even when it may not align with the norms of the academy. Many unexpected themes emerged in these narratives, including the environment in which doctoral students experience sense-of-self in relation to others as well as the opportunities to build connections with others, especially if one is in relative isolation of other Asian Americans.

**Socialization to the profession: learning to be a student.** Walker et al. (2008)

proposed three principles for student formation: 1) progressive development towards independence and responsibility; 2) integration across contexts and arenas of scholarly work; and 3) collaboration with peers and faculty in each stage of the process (p. 61). The premise of these principles is that doctoral students are better served by processes that explicitly address the roles they will assume upon graduation. Based on the framework that socialization to the profession is an integral part to formation as a scholar, the participants were asked to reflect on the processes, people and opportunities that were teaching them how to be successful students, scholars and practitioners. For some of the participants, their goals were a match for the academic program in which they were students. That is, there was a match between students who were interested in becoming full-time faculty members with programs that focused on preparing full-time faculty. On the contrary, there were participants who were in doctoral programs in order to advance as senior-level practitioners but were experiencing socialization as faculty. Further, some participants experienced both alignment and mismatch with their racialized identities and the sense of support within the graduate program.

When asked about formal opportunities for learning what it means to be a doctoral student, the participants overwhelmingly noted that they relied on doctoral students in their program who were ahead of them. David mentioned that his program does not offer any official orientation, so it was important for him to develop relationships with other doctoral students. He provided the following reflection:

I think one of the ways I learned to be a doctoral student was through watching older doctoral students, or students who had been in the program a little bit longer. In a few of our classes, the way they're set up is that we would be in classes with second year students in our first year. Then that would change in our second year – we'd be with first year students. I think watching them, and seeing how they worked, and how they acted in class, and what they were reading for. That was part of it. I remember that first semester was just like a whirlwind, I didn't know what was going on, and I didn't know what I was doing. So getting to know older students gave me a resource to go to.

Ravi, a Desi American doctoral student, reflected on a similar relationship with doctoral students who were already established in his graduate program. While David's relationships were built through intentional coursework structuring, Ravi experienced a summer program that provided him opportunities to meet other students:

One of the things that my school has is this summer program, they like have this grad mentorship where you're going to work with faculty, and you have this cohort that you can rely on. But what I've really looked at is learning from my elders, as I call them. They are students who are further along in their coursework. They're a huge ... They don't know this, but they are my mentors. I've given them that role, but they just don't know it. They don't know that they're mentoring me, but I love it. I always slip in a question here and there and they won't even notice.

Similarly, Jessica also looks to other students in the program as she begins to formulate her identity as a doctoral student. However, she has intentionally developed

relationships with students of color as well as first-generation students with whom she shares those identities. Jessica shared how she is learning to be a doctoral student:

For me, I surrounded myself also with people who knew because they came before me who were also students of color. Also, I have cohort members who are also first-generation doctoral students and we talk to each other and trade ideas and thoughts. Sometimes when we talk about fellowship and stuff like that, I try to come up with the appropriate language or craft the appropriate image that a fellowship might want. But, that's not even really who I am because I'm not from the type of backgrounds that people want. That was really how I learned to do school, in a way, by doing a lot of observations. Sometimes I would get shut down or laughed at by people. I could probably count the one or two instances where I said something and other people laughed like because I sounded stupid. As a doctoral student, I learned that sometimes you had to feign knowing shit and sometimes it's more beneficial to be vulnerable in a sense.

Eduardo is not alone in his program. He has a number of other Asian American scholars and practitioners who have included him in research projects on Asian American issues. Eduardo, in contrast to other participants who do not have a strong support network, noted that he is learning how to be a doctoral student in an environment that is racially affirming for him:

There are some days I feel like if I look at the sea of literature, the sea of people who work in administration, or who are faculty members I think there's so few of us and I feel like, being Asian-American and studying higher education, we're

almost like pioneers. Some days, it feel like there aren't a lot of us doing it. At the same time, when I get to spaces where I get to interact with other Asian American doctoral students in my program or see who's out there in terms of faculty or who's writing, it makes me excited that there are actually people who are able to do this and that there have been people who have been successful in becoming faculty, and publishing, and a becoming administrators. I feel like something can happen for me as well.

While Eduardo has peers and faculty who affirm his identity as an Asian American doctoral student, he still believes in critiquing and interrogating systems of graduate education that feel restrictive. Eduardo provided the following:

We talk about breaking down these systemic structural expectations that are so normative and dominant, but at the same time, we hold on to them because it gives us legitimacy as a faculty member, as a graduate school, or whatever that is. That's been something that always irks me, this idea that we're so about wanting to tear down these hegemonic kinds of experiences, these norms that are very exclusive to a specific population, but at the same time, they're holding on to them and reproducing them. It's like we have to adhere to what makes us legitimate in these constrictive guidelines of what it means to be a graduate student. I think the whole doctoral program is, the process itself, is very much set up as these hurdles and as this dominant narrative of this is how it's supposed to be. We buy into it, because this how we're going to become legitimate knowledge makers and knowledge producers and researchers.



Eduardo furthers his reflection by exploring the idea of bidirectional socialization.

Though he critiques the hegemonic system of doctoral studies, Eduardo did not realize that he had agency as a doctoral student:

I don't know if it's a characteristic of me in terms of my personality, just how it was brought up. I don't feel like I have yet gotten to a place where I can use any type of agency to disrupt what these norms are, because perhaps internally I bought into them as well, or because maybe I've witnessed or experience situations that have reinforced these norms. Like, these are the norms that you have to maintain. Then if you want to stay in this program then you have to maintain these norms. I don't know if we can get to a point where we can. So, when you say socialization is bidirectional, for me, that's new. This idea of, "Okay. I have some agency in this."

John is a doctoral student who had a career in administration prior to enrolling in the program. While he is open to a faculty career, John is unsure which path he would like to take. He is still interested in an administrative career, but he is experiencing socialization from a faculty lens. This socialization is challenging because many of the younger faculty were in non-tenure track positions and have left the program to pursue tenure-track positions. These were individuals he connected with because of their proximity to the doctoral process, and he is receiving strong messages about what a faculty life might look like for him. John provided these observations:

A lot of our junior faculty have left, or are leaving, I think that is also, for me I'll speak for myself, I think having mainly think about do I want this experience I see

them going through or just getting a sense of the culture for tenure-track faculty who have not reached tenure. What does it mean that all our junior faculty will have left by the end of this year, and the only non-tenured faculty member is not on the tenure track? Everyone else is a full professor, like literally a full professor. We don't have a lot of folks in sort of the middle tier so to speak, to provide us with, sort of like, visual role models of what is it like to be in that space. I think for me coming in, I thought being a doctoral student means I need to write, I need to research and need to publish. I need to do all these things. I need to do it immediately. Hit the ground running. I think now that I'm in the space, this is about self-exploration around what is it that I really want to be doing in higher education. I don't even know what my life would look like when I finish. It's not going to be a full professor's life, but that's all we see. I think that my classmates and I have been talking a little bit more openly and feel a little bit more comfortable talking about the fact that maybe I don't want to be a tenure-track professor at a Research 1 institution.

For Olivia and Eduardo, their experiences as practitioners and their desires to advance as administrators in higher education feel like a mismatch for their academic program, one that privileges faculty careers over practitioner careers. Olivia, a full-time practitioner and doctoral student, states that her socialization to the profession has been overwhelmingly from a scholar and researcher/faculty lens:

I mean, the thing that I think sucks is that I have mostly learned how to be a full-time faculty track doctoral student. No one's teaching -- at least for me, so this is

my own experience -- no one is teaching me how to be a scholar-practitioner. In many ways, not that I need someone to teach me what that looks like, but in some ways, what does it look like to be a scholar practitioner? I don't know that people know. The folks who have maybe taught me how they do it, they're not my faculty members. From my faculty and even from my peers, what I learned is how to be a full-time doctoral student who wants to be a faculty member. That's pretty loud and clear. But that's not what I want to do -- not in the least. So, how am I learning how to be a scholar-practitioner? I'm not. I went to a dissertation defense a couple of weeks ago and heard faculty ask the student about how many articles he planned on getting out of his dissertation, and how they really wanted him to turn his work into a publication, and all. That's all really awesome, but when I defend, am I going to get the same sort of feedback?

In Olivia's case, she had already been a working practitioner when she chose her doctoral program. Given her work as a practitioner, Olivia did not engage in a national search for a doctoral program that would meet her needs as a practitioner. Instead, she enrolled in a program that was in her community.

Eduardo, also a full-time practitioner in a doctoral program, experienced the same frustration as Olivia. As a practitioner, Eduardo enrolled in a doctoral program to enhance his work. Now, as a doctoral student, Eduardo has to navigate the socialization of his program with his professional pathway:

My identity as someone who wants to go into administration, I'm supported in the program in general, but there aren't opportunities within the program that support

my pathway to administration. I'd like to hear people say "let's support you in this and here are some opportunities." My faculty and the program are much more focused on the faculty route. They often present opportunities to be on some research teams or getting us teaching in the classrooms. There is a bit more focus of, "This is what you need to do to prepare for your tenure track process in the future."

Based on the framework that socialization to the profession is an integral part of formation as a scholar, the participants were asked to reflect on the processes, people and opportunities that were teaching them how to be successful students, scholars and practitioners. The participants noted very few organizational activities that contributed to their socialization to the profession. For example, some programs offered one-day orientation programs and advising sessions. Others provided a few opportunities to meet students in social gatherings or in brown bag lunches. However, most of the socialization to the profession occurred informally between cohorts and other doctoral students.

The excerpts above demonstrate how networks can be facilitated by cultural identity and also can be marginalizing for some identities. This informal socialization can be difficult if individual students do not feel connected to others in the program. For example, in a previous excerpt, Jessica shared that she did not share characteristics and identities in common with her cohort that excluded her from socializing with them. This type of informal gathering can be instrumental in building relationships and getting to know other students. It is important to identify ways in which individuals may be marginalized from experiences that build both social networks and professional networks.

## Microaggressions in the Doctoral Program

*“Just because they’re our professors doesn’t mean we can’t disagree with them or tell them that ‘This is bad,’ you know. Essentially they’re undervaluing our experience, right, and saying that we’re doing really, really, really well. We know that’s not the case, and they’re smart enough to know that’s not the case either, but for whatever reason, they’re doing it.” -- Patrick*

Participants in the study often talked about microaggressions they experienced in their classes, with faculty and with fellow students. The combination of power dynamics of faculty coupled with the underrepresentation within the classroom contributed to feelings of frustration, particularly around wanting to speak up and address the microaggressions but also acknowledging the power that faculty, advisors and possible dissertation chairs might create. As Patrick stated:

I remember going back and forth, because it’s like you really want to represent.

You really want to call out and explain this if it’s going on, and faculty need to kind of rethink this and rework it, but then again, they’re also your faculty.

They’re going to be, potentially, your advisor and they’re going to be on your committee, whatever, so how do you do it? How do you walk that fine line? It’s an impossible line to walk.

Vinny shared that microaggressions did not just come from faculty but also from being a student in a predominantly White environment.

I realized that every single day at this predominantly White institution that I was facing microaggressions everywhere I went. We had a graduate student lounge.

Every day I sat in there, people always asked me if I was Chinese, if I was Korean or if I was Japanese. Actually, there was one day that I sat there that a White woman came up to me and asked if I was busy. I said, I wasn't. Then she said, "Well, I'm hoping that you could help me out with my statistics homework then." I said, "Excuse me?" She said, "Well, I met another Asian person and he was really good at math so I'm hoping I could get lucky again."

Gavin noted that the microaggressions occur within the class time as well. In conversations about diversity, he notes that he is often skipped or left out of the conversation as an Asian American:

There were instances where when it was talking about Asian Americans. I'm one of two, I think, Asian Americans in that class. But I'm the louder, more outspoken one so they always look to me when everybody needs Asian American stuff or they would always look to me when he was talking about issues of model minority and whatever else. It was playing that role, like sometimes I would step back and not talk and let everyone else have the opportunity. Yes, I know the answer, but is that learning for everybody else? There were times, not necessarily being Asian America, but I think there were times where the professor would purposely skip over me in diversity. I remember this whole section, we went through every single person class and then he skipped over me and about providing some commentaries about something. I understood, but it also was like that sucked.

For many of the participants, they are one of only a few Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in the program. So, the presence of microaggressions can be amplified. For Henry, microaggressions takes the shape of being called the wrong name during each class and not feeling safe to correct the professor:

The only issue that I have is that I have a teacher right now, and it's kind of a microaggression, and I don't think he means it in any kind of a way, but he gets me and the other Asian guy in our class mixed up a lot. I kind of joke about it because the other guy that's in my class, he's a student, he doesn't realize that he does that, and it's only me. A Black woman, who's in my class, she's like, "Is there a reason why he gets you mixed up with him?" And I'm like, "I know why he's getting mixed up, but that's because we're both the Asian guys in the class." He can't remember which one's our name. He gets both of our topics mixed up all the time when we're bringing things up. I kind of just roll my eyes at that too, but it's also because he's just not aware that he's doing that. I'm not in a place to scold him on that, like, because I don't know if that's also going to affect my grade. I'm also worried about that too, if he's going to take offense to that.

For Oscar, experiences with microaggressions have also come from faculty who do not understand the implications of Asian American and Pacific Islander identity on problematic assumptions. Oscar recalled an incident that occurred in the classroom with other doctoral students:

My mouth just dropped open. Then the professor proceeded to say, "And we can all joke about it, right? Like, we all know the 'Asian' joke. Like, you can't go

home to mom with a B+, because you're not a Bsian. You're an Asian. I was just talking about the culture of saving face, and Asians are doing better. They do want to save face. Like, they are achieving at higher rates." He was like, "Do you have anything to say about that?" I said, "Yes. Actually, I think it's a problem that you are aggregating Asians all together." My professor then told me that the statistics are right, and he offered to show me his PowerPoint. I told him that the chart wasn't the issue, but it's what he said that was the issue. Yeah. I don't think I'd ever been so triggered in my life, actually. I was shaking. I was mad for the rest of class. I think it was also the week after I went to NASPA, so my Asian American identity was very salient. I wrote to him the next day. I was like, "This is why you offended me. I shut down for the rest of class because of you, and here is an article about the model minority myth that I think you should read." He responded. He first apologized, but then I think he missed the point.

Olivia, a multiracial Filipina American, shared her experience with expectations about research. She viewed this as a microaggression given that her classmates who are White do not experience the same expectations:

I think that there's this expectation that you're going to research your community, which I do have interest in that. I've never felt bad about that pressure, I guess, because I do have interests and I particularly am thinking about multiracial, multi-ethnic, APIs, and their experience in higher ed. I've always had a very strong lean towards student affairs professionals, generally. I definitely know Asian



American people who do not want to do Asian American research. And, that's fine. But, it's just that nobody says that to white people.

### **Summary of Findings: Formation of Doctoral Students through Socialization**

This section explored various aspects of the doctoral student experience through the lens of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in programs of higher education: anticipatory socialization, choosing the graduate school, cohort experiences, socialization to the organization, curriculum and pedagogy in the doctoral program, advising and mentoring and socialization to the profession. Baker, Pifer and Griffin (2014) recommend implementing the framework of identity in academic careers to better understand the decisions students make as they form mentoring relationships in doctoral education. As the participants described above, positive and inclusive mentoring, advising and peer relationships contributed to a greater sense of belonging. Supported by the literature, these positive relationships have also been shown to promote student outcomes such as persistence in graduate school and commitment to the disciplinary field (Baker, Pifer & Griffin, 2014).

Walker et al.'s (2008) work affirms three principles for student formation: 1) progressive development towards independence and responsibility; 2) integration across contexts and arenas of scholarly work; and 3) collaboration with peers and faculty in each stage of the process (p. 61). These three principles are evidenced in the ways in which participants reflected on their stages of anticipatory socialization; choosing the graduate school as influenced by family and faculty; cohort experiences as informed by inclusion and exclusion; socialization to the organization through learning the behaviors and

expectations of each program; curriculum and pedagogy in the doctoral program as informed by faculty praxis and student agency; advising and mentoring as influenced by structures within programs, opportunities available, and relationships with faculty; and socialization to the profession as informed by mentoring and guidance from those who have been through the process.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

*“Especially for an immigrant group we are a new immigrant group. We can’t really talk about ourselves without talking about the people that came before us.” - Jessica*

The intent of this narrative inquiry was to explore, from a critical race perspective, the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education programs through the following question: How do Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experience socialization, as informed by the intersections of race, ethnic identity, and social stereotypes in higher education programs?

In addition, the following sub-questions were used to narrow the focus of the study:

- How do Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experience the anticipatory stage of socialization in higher education programs?
- What organizational factors of doctoral programs impact or inform the development of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education programs?
- What role do Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students play in shaping their socialization experiences in higher education doctoral programs?

- In what ways do higher education programs, including curriculum, pedagogy, peers, faculty advising, etc. shape the socialization of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students?

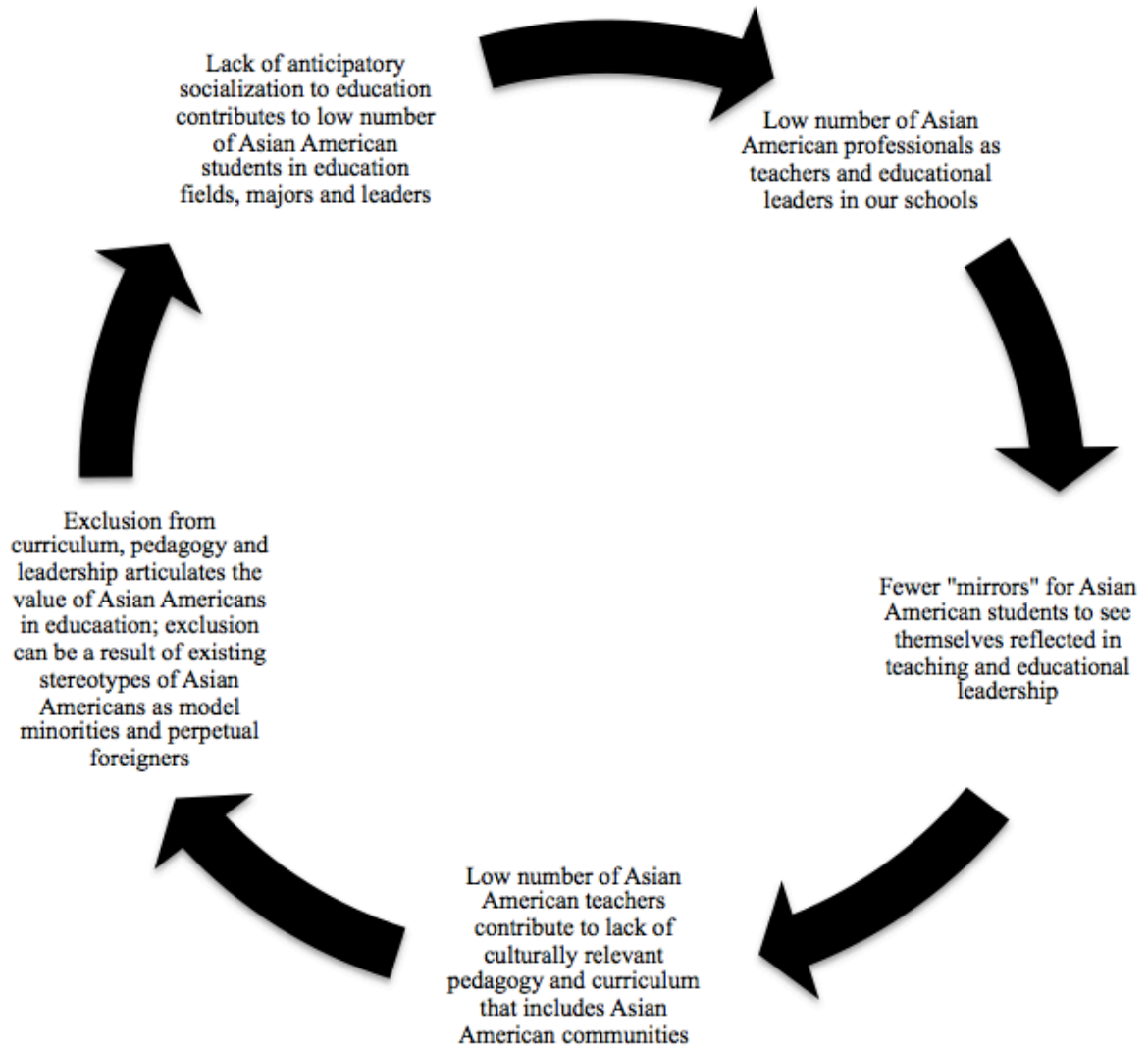
Increasingly, the focus of examining doctoral study has shifted to include the experiences of doctoral students, the role of organizational socialization, and the experiences of underrepresented populations. As it currently exists, there has been little acknowledgement in the literature of the ways in which these three factors – doctoral student development, doctoral student socialization, and racial identity – have informed and impacted the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students.

In 2001, the National Commission on Asia (as cited in Kiang, 2004b) in the schools released the following statement: “... all elements of K-12 education – from curriculum frameworks and material resources to teacher pre- and in-service courses and programs – should reflect current scholarship on Asia and Asian American content” (p. 202). Despite this recommendation, few schools have adopted curricular content on Asia and Asian Americans (Kiang, 2002). Kiang (2004b) makes recommendations for increasing and providing culturally relevant and responsive curriculum that addresses Asian and Asian American communities: 1) provide curriculum resource development; 2) provide teacher training to provide culturally responsive curricula; 3) validate student experience through advocacy, 4) identify positive changes, such as cross-racial understanding and positive racial identity development, that result from exposure to Asian American studies; 5) provide networks for families to build community and identify resources; and 6) focus on youth development and youth development programs

that build capacity for Asian and Asian American youth (p. 210). As Kiang (2004b) noted, these recommendations have positively impacted both educators and students in K-12 communities as well as teachers of color.

As informed by the narratives in this study, there is a clear cycle of socialization that has taken place related to individual understanding of identity for the participants. This cycle, as depicted in Figure 2, shows the relationships between representation, pedagogy and curriculum, role modeling, and mentoring in the lives of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students. With the exception of a few participants who experienced culturally relevant curriculum through Asian American studies or Ethnic studies, there has been little disruption in the cycle of the lack of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who serve as role models and mentors in education, to the lack of windows and mirrors for Asian American and Pacific Islander students from whom to receive culturally inclusive pedagogy and curriculum, to the low numbers of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who choose to enter into the field of education and higher education as a field of study, to the low numbers of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who persist to achieve leadership-administrative positions or faculty positions in higher education programs (Figure 2). As confirmed by the narratives in this study, the role of curriculum, mentors, and a community in which to build a strong, racial and ethnic identity are important components to development. And, at each section of this cycle, there are opportunities to disrupt existing practices that have devalued and made invisible Asian American and Pacific Islander identities. This cycle is relevant to our

understanding of how scholar formation can be informed and impacted by the lack of culturally reflective and reflexive socialization.



*Figure 2: Cycle of socialization to education of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.*

In addition to exploring socialization of individuals to education, this study explored the organizational barriers Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders face in pursuing degrees or positions in education and environmental conditions in which Asian

Americans and Pacific Islanders might engage in affirming racial identity. Considered individually, doctoral student socialization, doctoral student development and even student development theories have failed to consider the role of race and racialized environments on the formation of scholars. As Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are also subjected to racialized environments in which their identities are informed by existing problematic stereotypes such as the model minority myth or the perpetual foreigner myth, it is important to consider an interactional model between and among processes of socialization, student development and racial identity development with this racialized climate in mind.

### **Identity-Conscious Interactional Model of Scholar Formation**

Doctoral student development and doctoral student socialization are often discussed as one process; however, there are distinct differences between these two concepts and should be addressed as such. Doctoral student development, when considered as part of the larger literature on student development, refers to a positive growth process in which the individual becomes increasingly able to integrate and act on many different experiences and influences, incorporating intellectual, cognitive, social, moral development and moral reasoning (Evans et al., 2010). Doctoral student socialization refers to the process through which new members learn the values, norms, knowledge, beliefs, and the interpersonal and other skills that facilitate role performance and further group goals (Mortimer & Simmons, 1978). More simply, identity development is a process by which an individual develops a sense of self, sense of value, sense of agency and an understanding of who they are in the context of being a doctoral

student; doctoral student socialization is the process of learning about the profession and organization through tasks, orientation, and information in the context of the field and discipline and whether the individual fits into the larger membership.

Based on the findings from this study, I have presented an “Identity-conscious Interactional Model of Scholar Formation” (Figure 3). This model was developed using research grounded in Asian American and Pacific Islander experiences from this study. In this section, I will discuss each aspect of scholar formation -- racial identity, doctoral student development and doctoral student socialization – as bidirectional processes that, until now, have been discussed in the literature as separate components; yet, as evidenced in this study’s findings, these three components influence each other directly. Further, rooted in AsianCrit and TribalCrit, these three bidirectional components are framed within an understanding that a racialized environment is always present in the lived experiences of people of color. Within that racialized environment, I have provided themes that the Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in this study have identified as salient in persisting in a racialized environment.

While this model was constructed using information from Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, it is important to explore whether or not this model is suitable for other racialized groups in higher education. It is important to understand the extent to which this model addresses opportunities for higher education to be inclusive of other racialized and marginalized groups in higher education who have, similar to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, experienced socialization from a Eurocentric framework. Further research is required to better understand if the interactional model of



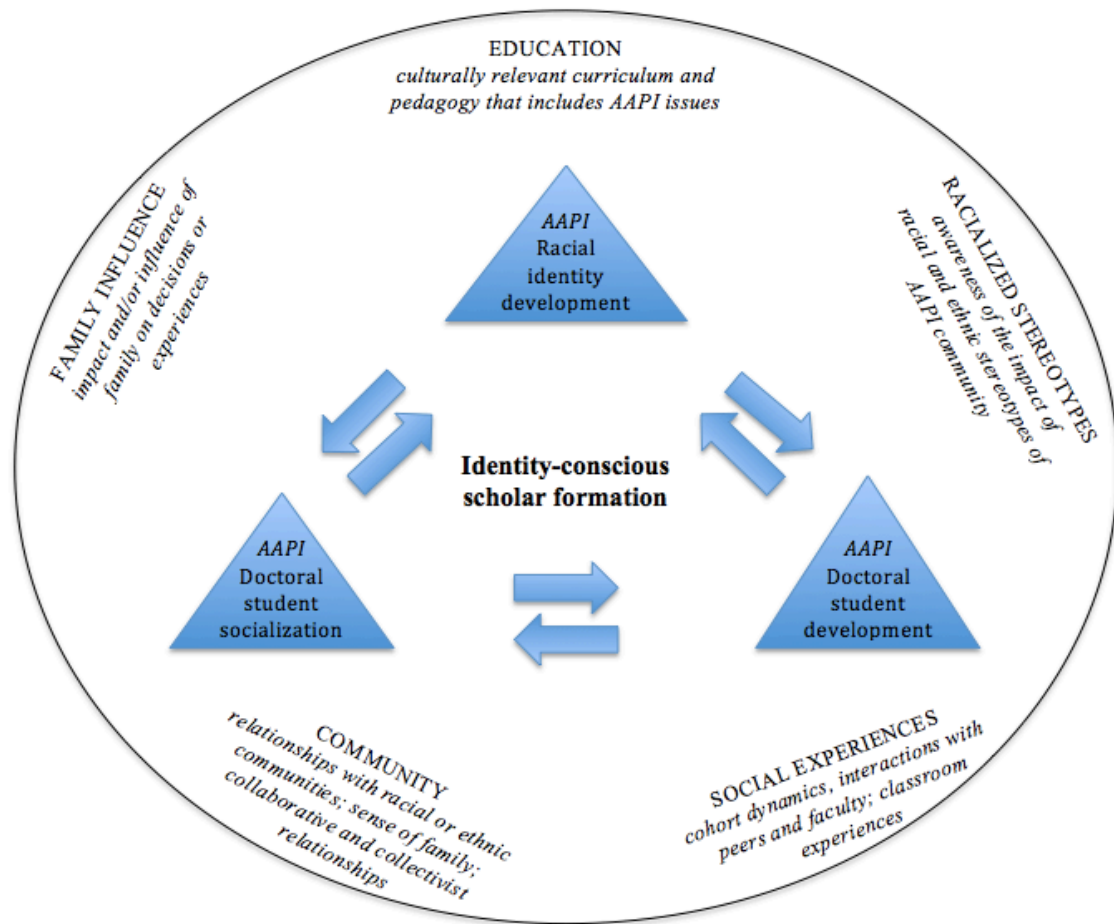


Figure 3: Identity-conscious interactional model of the formation of scholars.

identity-conscious socialization can be used more broadly than for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

**Racial identity as bidirectional and interactional.** Racial identity describes a person’s identification with membership in a racial group, and this identification is largely influenced by socialization around race (Alvarez, Juang, & Liang, 2006). As Kim (2012) noted, “the saliency of a person’s ethnic and racial identity may also vary depending on the social context and individuals’ stage of identity development” (p. 140).

The development of identity, and the socialization processes that are influenced by identity, are largely influenced by messages about Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and affected by the social environment.

Conflict in racial identity can exist individually, and unresolved conflict can impact doctoral student development and doctoral student socialization. For example, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who may see themselves as being rejected or not included because of the White, dominant narrative, curriculum and social networks may experience identity conflict in scholar formation, one that segments racial identity rather than includes it. When examined from a sociological perspective, identity conflict can occur because of the pervasive structures of institutional racism that privilege Whiteness, White history, White ways of knowing, and a Eurocentric curriculum.

The findings of this study suggest that engaging in coursework and curriculum that affirmed Asian American and Pacific Islander identity was important in contributing to persistence in doctoral studies for Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students. In undergraduate ethnic studies courses, individuals experienced a classroom environment that affirmed Asian American and Pacific Islander identity, providing a supportive, relevant, and connected community. Kiang (2009), in his study exploring the experiences of students who engaged in Asian American studies, noted that “contrary to dominant models of college student persistence, ... reference points motivating (Southeast Asian students) to persist in college against formidable odds were family and community-centered rather than college-related” (p. 37). Asian American studies courses, therefore, served as references points in the curriculum, in building strong relationships

with faculty, and developing affirming peer relationships that could understand and relate to family stories, refugee stories, and discrimination stories that impacted educational persistence.

For students who did not engage in Asian American or ethnic studies, they articulated that they felt more conflicted about their racial and racialized identities. In this area, some participants were able to find affirmation in peer networks such as organizations that were Asian American and Pacific Islander focused. Some participants were able to find mentors or faculty who affirmed their identities and their interests. Through these opportunities, participants engaged in spaces that contributed to their positive growth and development. The participants who were experiencing doctoral studies in isolation of other Asian American and Pacific Islander students, faculty, mentors or identity-conscious curriculum articulated the struggles with developing a sense of belonging and agency in their doctoral studies and did not believe they could contribute to shaping their doctoral programs and experiences without conflict.

Understanding racial identity as a bidirectional process acknowledges that race and racial identity play a significant role in socialization and development. The model aligns with the tenets of Asian Critical Race Theory (AsianCrit) by highlighting the ways in which racialization of Asian Americans influences identity and experiences. In turn, racial identity and the empowerment of Asian Americans can influence doctoral student socialization by providing a more nuanced understanding of the role of race in socialization, including interactions with mentors, faculty, cohort members, departments, and approaches to research. Positive and affirming racial identity also impacts doctoral

student development because a culturally engaging environment provides opportunities for cognitive, interpersonal, personal, moral and professional growth.

Positive engagement with racial and ethnic communities coupled with identity-affirming curriculum, such as those found in ethnic studies or Asian American studies, culturally inclusive mentoring and advising, and awareness of racialized experiences, are important factors in the development of positive racial identities. Kim (2012) noted that developing an Asian American consciousness contributes to positive self-concept and sense of belonging. For these reasons, it is important to present a more comprehensive theory of scholar formation for Asian Americans, one that takes racial identity development, doctoral student development and doctoral student socialization together in the context of a racialized society.

**Doctoral student development as bidirectional and interactional.** The findings of this study demonstrate that doctoral student development interacts with racial identity and doctoral student socialization. As doctoral student development is defined as cognitive, interpersonal, moral and professional growth, these findings indicate that race and socialization are both impacted by and intersect with doctoral student development. Consistent with studies on culturally validating student development in undergraduate populations (e.g., Rendón, 1994; Rendón, Jalomo & Nora, 2000), students believe they can be successful when others take the initiative to validate them academically and interpersonally. Students have fewer doubts they will succeed; they become more involved in the institutional or departmental life; and become powerful agents in both in- and out-of-classroom environments. As evidenced in this study, students who were

learning, working and researching in culturally responsive and reflexive environments felt a greater sense of agency in their doctoral studies.

As evidenced in the critical narratives, doctoral students who felt they could be successful were more likely to pursue research agendas that were both affirming and supported by their advisors or faculty. For these Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, their confidence as researchers and scholars who were pursuing Asian American agendas allowed them to contribute to the growing literature and scholarship on Asian American issues in higher education. Further, this growth and development served in a bidirectional relationship with socialization as they learned about the roles of the profession and the expectations of them as scholars in an identity-affirming manner. As a bidirectional relationship with racial identity, positive growth and development meant that these students could pursue research that affirmed their Asian American and Pacific Islander identities and allowed them to continue their path to learning about both their own and other racial identities.

**Doctoral student socialization as bidirectional and interactional.** The findings of this study underscore the importance of supporting socialization processes as bidirectional and interactional. That is, in order for identity-conscious scholar formation to occur, socialization processes must include both the socialization of the student to expected norms and values of the profession as well as a bidirectional process that allows for the student to influence the norms and values of the profession and organization. To the extent that socialization is a social transmission of values through instruction, explanation, role modeling, and group reinforcement (Snarey & Pavkov, 1992), identity-

conscious scholar formation occurs when curriculum, culture and environment also influence socialization.

Through existing socialization processes, it has been understood that the established group determines the values of the profession, organization, or the group itself and teaches the new member about those values and goals. An identity-conscious environment also allows for the student to influence the environment, perhaps in the form of influencing curriculum; creating inclusive spaces for socializing and community building; and affirming identity-conscious research agendas. It is in this manner that identity-conscious socialization can influence the type of academic pathways doctoral students pursue.

Identity-conscious socialization also occurs through interactional relationships with racial identity and doctoral student development. For example, existing organizational socialization processes that devalue and marginalize teaching, research and service in communities of color can leave students feeling isolated and frustrated and, as a result, possibly questioning and doubting their academic work and abilities (Austin, 2002; Fries-Britt et al., 2011; Gay, 2004; Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Golde, 1998; Mendoza, 2007; Weidman et al., 2001). This doubt impacts the development of doctoral students as their process of development includes building confidence in their personal attributes. Further, Antony (2002) stated that “socialization should instill an awareness of the field’s values and norms without expecting a student to accept those values and norms as one’s own; that there is more than one method for socializing graduate students; and that socialization should enhance and encourage intellectual individuality” (p. 373).

Through identity-conscious processes, doctoral students are provided a supportive environment in which to develop intellectually.

Participants in this study experienced different socialization processes based on the willingness and openness of their departments, programs and faculty. Participants who felt that socialization was a unidirectional process expressed more frustration about their socialization than those who felt that their identities were valued in the process. This interaction between socialization and racial identity was particularly salient in this participant group. For example, according to participants, advisors or faculty members who were supportive of the student's racial identity process were more likely to support research agendas that affirmed racial identity. Participants in this study who did not have faculty who supported their racial identity and racial identity development found themselves discouraged from pursuing research related to Asian American and Pacific Islander communities.

Bidirectional socialization is key to identity-conscious scholar formation because it decenters Eurocentric hegemonic approaches to socialization and centers a more inclusive and engaging process, one in which students experience agency in influencing their programs, departments, curriculum and overall experience. Bidirectional socialization, however, does not occur in isolation. It is important to acknowledge the ways in which socialization interacts with doctoral student developmental and racial identity in order to influence positive identity-conscious scholar formation.

Socialization as a bidirectional process means that the program, field and organization must ensure that the values, norms and beliefs are articulated and passed

down to doctoral students as well as giving students agency to impact and influence their graduate program, the field of higher education, and the organization as well. To engage in a bidirectional process means that both agents – the field of higher education and the doctoral students that inhabit those spaces – must seek reciprocity. In order for doctoral students to experience positive formation as scholars, they must have agency to impact the field. For Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, this means influencing the ways in which Asian American and Pacific Islander are represented in the literature, curriculum, class discussions, teaching practices, opportunities for mentoring, and engagement in research that affirms their identities.

**Impact of racialized stereotypes on identity-conscious scholar formation.** It is important to understand the ways in which existing stereotypes related to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders create a racialized environment. For Asian American participants in this study, the pervasive model minority myth impacted the ways in which others treated them. From early memories of being assigned difficult classes that were above their learning level in high school, to being approached by a student in graduate school looking for help with a math assignment, to expectations around being quiet and submissive, Asian Americans have been largely grouped into a single, monolithic stereotype. Further, the model minority myth has historically informed the types of research that have included or not included Asian Americans, distancing them from resources that are assigned based on quantitative data.

Recent literature by Poon et al. (2015) provided a critical review of how the model minority myth has informed our understanding of Asian American experiences,



specifically through works of research. Similar to this current study's repositioning of Asian American narratives from counter-narrative to critical narrative, Poon et al (2015) proposed repositioning research focused on addressing the model minority myth based on a counter-model minority narrative (i.e., one that seeks to prove that Asian Americans are not a model minority) to addressing the model minority myth as a "discursive tool that maintains White dominance" (p. 24).

The Pacific Islander participant in this study provided important insight into the impact of Pacific Islander identities and communities being aggregated with Asian American identities and communities. Doing so masks the needs of Pacific Islander communities and falsely represents the diverse needs and experiences of Pacific Islanders. Further, aggregating experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders largely ignores the political, social and historical oppression of Pacific Islanders and decenters their experiences. These factors contribute to the racialized environment in which Pacific Islander doctoral students experience identity-conscious scholar formation.

To provide effective identity-conscious scholar formation, it is crucial that individuals, programs and departments responsible for socialization processes understand the impact of race, racism and racialized stereotyping that occur for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Steps towards minimizing the impact of a racialized climate include educating oneself about both the different and shared experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in order to understand how early socialization, development and racial identity may have been formed. Faculty, in particular, should be aware of how

racialized stereotypes may impact the decisions, approaches, and responses of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders during the doctoral program.

**Impact of social experiences on identity-conscious scholar formation.** The cohort, or classmates, provide a source of feedback in coursework and a source of relief in managing the demanding responsibilities of doctoral studies. In effective groups, the cohort model can help students develop a sense of belonging (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes & Norris, 2000). Students in productive cohorts tend to persist in their studies, demonstrate increased commitment and motivation (Hill, 1995; Norton, 1995) and have higher program or degree completion rates (Burnett, 1989; Norton, 1995). Yet, as the participants describe, Asian American and Pacific Islander students who are in isolation or who do not have affirming activities within the cohort, feel marginalized and experience pressure to represent a larger Asian American and Pacific Islander identity.

Though faculty and students have distinctly different social interactions than peers, it is important to note the impact that positive faculty interactions have on identity-conscious scholar formation. Participants in the study who had faculty who invested in their personal development reported more positive interactions and sense of self. These actions included being invested in the life of the doctoral student outside of the classroom; making efforts to connect with or ask about a student's family; and feeling an overall sense of care for the student as an individual.

As racial identity, doctoral student development and doctoral student socialization operate in a bidirectional and interaction process, they do so in the climate of social experiences. These social experiences, whether influenced by cohorts, classmates, or

interactions with other peers, influence the ways in which identity-conscious scholar formation may occur. In the absence of positive social experiences, identity-conscious scholar formation may be more difficult as peers tend to serve as support systems for persistence in doctoral studies.

**Impact of community on identity-conscious scholar formation.** The role of community, namely a community of Asian American and Pacific Islanders, was important to identity-conscious scholar formation. For some, this community was built around ethnic studies or student organizations that affirmed ethnic and racial identity. For others, especially those who experienced socialization in isolated communities, having social networks of people online was an important aspect of building community. Participants often spoke of the need to develop family or family-like relationships with others. While these family and family-like relationships were not always racially or ethnically specific, there were participants who were actively seeking racial and ethnic connections as way to reduce isolation and loneliness during doctoral studies.

But, community also was a source of tension for some participants. As Sophea noted, “I’m Cambodian but I was never raised within the community, so I feel uncomfortable when I’m around the community, even though I try and want to be a part of this space, but because my identity development was outside of that space, I don’t have that same connection that other people might have.” For Irene, finding community was a process. She spoke about how she felt uncomfortable around groups of Asian Americans, but she knew that it was important for her to stay connected.

For individuals, faculty, and departments, it is important to understand the role of community in identity-conscious scholar formation. For some students, community has been a vital way to persist in doctoral studies; for others, finding and building community is an ongoing process. Still, for others, community is only found on online spaces due to geographic or program isolation. It is important for individuals responsible for effective socialization to understand how a doctoral student perceives community and what that student needs in order to persist. Early connections should be made if individuals are searching for community, and these connections might need, at first, to be initiated by a faculty member in the form of an introduction or outreach. If a student is resistant to developing racial or ethnic community connections, it is important to understand that decision and provide resources or support if needed. However, community, as with the other aspects of the identity-conscious scholar formation model, is interactional and fluid rather than confined and fixed.

**Impact of family influence on identity-conscious scholar formation.** For many of the participants, family identity and responsibility informed and impacted their decisions to pursue graduate school and begin the journey towards scholar formation. This influence, for some participants, informed which types of graduate schools they applied to and the geographic proximity to family. Participants who had strong ties to family responsibility often chose institutions that were closer to home, allowing access to their families if they needed to come home. While some participants created elaborate spreadsheets and metrics to determine whether or not a doctoral program had components that would affirm their racial identities, other participants were more limited in their

search and could not dedicate the same level of salience to identity issues. The participants who were not in institutions or working with faculty that affirmed racial identity reported being less satisfied with their doctoral student socialization processes. It is important that individuals responsible for identity-conscious scholar formation understand this aspect of the model as some Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students did take family and family proximity into account when choosing a graduate program. Programs might benefit from asking doctoral students what aspects of identity and affirmation are missing from their current environments and how they, as program faculty or directors, might support a more identity-conscious community.

Participants in this study were also asked about the role of family in choosing to pursue careers in education. Contrary to existing stereotypes that Asian American and Pacific Islander families do not support careers in education, all twenty-two of the participants indicated that their families were supportive of their career choices. Some participants did mention that their families desired for them to be doctors or engineers, reinforcing existing stereotypes that these are culturally respected career choices; however, all participants felt supported in their pursuit of careers in education.

One area that was salient related to family was responsibility. This factor was amplified in participants who identified as coming from a) families of refugees, and b) ethnic identities that face barriers to educational attainment. For the participants who identified as Khmer American, Cambodian American and Vietnamese American, the role of family and amplifying the needs of refugee communities was important in their narratives.

It is important that the impact and influence of family be considered in identity-conscious scholar formation. While there are variations of the extent of impact and influence, overall the Asian American and Pacific Islander participants in this study noted that family and family influences were important in their decision-making processes to pursue doctoral education. Individuals responsible for doctoral student socialization should be aware of the impact and influence of family in doctoral students and provide opportunities for support in the process of scholar formation.

**Implications of education for identity-conscious scholar formation.** The participants in this study discussed the impact of ethnic studies on their racial identity development as well as their understanding of higher education. As Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are often left out of general research involving diversity, equity and inclusion, it is important for faculty to include readings and discussion that include Asian American and Pacific Islander issues in order to support identity-conscious scholar formation. To do so may also require faculty to deepen their understanding of the complexity of the Asian American and Pacific Islander racial group, including literature that disaggregates Asian American and Pacific Islander groups and discusses relevant issues within the community.

To foster identity-conscious scholar formation, doctoral courses should address issues of educational disparity, diversity, equity and inclusion that include Asian American and Pacific Islander experiences. While there are Asian American and Pacific Islanders who have achieved success, and those stories should also be told, there are Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who face institutional and organizational barriers

to success. These nuances must take social, political and environmental issues into account.

The participants in this study overwhelmingly reported that their early educational experiences were void of Asian American and Pacific Islander issues, including history, politics, social issues and contributions. As they progressed through their master's degree programs and into their doctoral programs, this educational deficit continued. As programs seek to develop identity-conscious practices that support scholar formation, it is important to understand the ways in which this void impacted the identities of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Museus (2008) stated that "The desirable course of action [to impact dominant cultural attitudes and beliefs] is to cultivate institutional cultures in which the salience of racial stereotypes and prejudice are minimized and students of color are ... believe themselves to be unique individuals and valued members of the broader campus community" (p. 8). Ethnic studies seeks to recover and reconstruct the histories of those Americans whom history has neglected; to identify and credit their contributions to the making of U.S. society and culture; to chronicle protest and resistance; and to establish alternative values and visions, institutions, and cultures (Hu-DuHart 1992). By increasing opportunity to, knowledge of, and experience with different racial and ethnic groups, programs can positively impact the attitudes of students, who have not been given opportunities to study, learn and discuss their histories.

## **Implications for Shaping Identity-Conscious Scholar Formation**

Doctoral student development, doctoral student socialization, the personal development of racial identity, and the context of a racialized environment influence each other separately as well as collectively to impact the formation of scholars. As previous literature has considered these separately, taking these concepts together creates a fuller picture of the formation of scholars in today's racialized society. Using these three concepts, all within the understanding of a racialized environment, are useful to an individual doctoral student's understanding of oneself as a scholar and are also useful to those concerned with doctoral education. Our current practice treats these individually. This study suggests that it is important to consider all three of these aspects as bidirectional events that impact one area can have an effect on another area.

As evidenced by this study, Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experienced socialization in educational, community, social, and family experiences that reinforced hegemonic ideology in which Whiteness was central, valued and aspirational. The critical narratives in this study stand alone as evidence of race and racism in education, curriculum and pedagogy, and organizational socialization which, taken together, impact development and identity. Further, these critical narratives serve as a disruption to the dominant racial framing of the diverse population of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, one that has treated the community as a monolithic group.

The identity-conscious interactional model highlights this bidirectional and interactional relationship between development, socialization and identity in the context of a racialized society. This model provides a framework for understanding the



experiences within the diverse Asian American and Pacific Islander community, recognizing that race, racism and a racialized society are experienced in different ways both within and among different ethnic communities. This framework provides the broad context for understanding the relationships between doctoral student development, doctoral student socialization, racial identity development and a racialized society and the ways in which they intersect.

Through life history methodology, participants highlighted ways in which their early experiences with race, schooling, education, curriculum, family, peers, and mentors impacted how they individually understood their pathways to the doctorate from a racialized perspective. These experiences were often influenced by stereotypical treatment of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders – both as a result of external processes as well as internalized oppression – and informed how Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders shaped their identities in the context themselves and others. Participants described ways in which community served as a protective agent against developing internalized racism and how understanding the research on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders affirmed their identities.

Many of the participants described the role of mentors and advisors in their lives. Some of the participants benefitted from having mentors and advisors in their programs, as their faculty, and as research partners. Others described feelings of isolation from being the only Asian American, or one of few, in their programs. The role of mentoring and advising is important to understanding the development and formation of Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars. It is important for the field to explore ways to

increase the number of Asian American and Pacific Islander faculty, staff, advisors and mentors in order to support the growing population of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students. Concurrently, it is important to explore pathways of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in order to identify opportunities to increase the understanding of higher education as a field of study.

Theories of doctoral student socialization, for the most part, have not addressed issues of race and ethnicity; thereby, situating the theoretical framework of socialization as being absent of race. However, literature on identity and critical race theory requires that we explore the ways in which the absence of race actually positions our understanding of socialization using a White, Eurocentric framework as a dominant narrative. By exploring the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students from a critical narrative perspective, we see that, in fact, doctoral students do experience socialization from a racialized lens.

### **Implications for Organizations and Departments**

Prewitt (2006) noted, “if we do not take care of our students, we do not take care of our disciplines. If we do not take care of our disciplines, we fail as stewards of knowledge generation, which is, after all, why we were once students ourselves” (p. 32). The voices and critical narratives of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students has shown us that they experience doctoral education in a racialized climate, one that has kept their experiences in the margins of our own curriculum and research in higher education. While our programs must be responsible to our universities, our

financial stewardship, and to the overall expectations of the field, we are also responsible to our students.

The Council for the Advancement of Higher Education Programs was designed to enrich the teaching and learning experiences of students and faculty in the Association's constituent Higher Education Programs within North America and around the world (Council for the Advancement of Higher Education Programs [CAHEP], 2015). Of the seven core values that the Council values, there are four key values that speak directly to the findings of this study:

- (We value) research that informs program delivery;
- (We value) the critical role of coordinator/director leadership in achievement of our mission and vision;
- (We value) the unique and varied needs essential to the preparation of administrative leaders, public policy leaders, and teacher-scholar leaders;
- (We value) the graduate student voice in our work and efforts (CAHEP, 2015).

Walker et al. (2008), in their work with the Carnegie Initiative, noted that departments often have a hidden curriculum that impacts a doctoral student's education. This hidden curriculum presents itself as the culture of the department, one that "sends powerful messages about purpose, commitment, and roles and creating (or not) the conditions in which the intellectual risk taking, creativity and entrepreneurship are possible" (p. 10). The work of the Carnegie Initiative did not address the needs and experiences of Asian American students; therefore the purpose of this study was to

contextualize and complicate our existing understanding of doctoral education and doctoral student experiences.

As such, a recommendation of this study is for department chairs, faculty, mentors and advisors to ask themselves difficult questions about how Asian American and Pacific Islander students in their programs engage in their formation as scholars in culturally relevant and reflexive ways. How are Asian American and Pacific Islander students developing a professional identity that will support their scholarly agendas? What strengths and weakness contribute to the formation of a professional identity as a scholar in the field of higher education? How does the program send signals about the importance of Asian American and Pacific Islander students in higher education and how do the behaviors of the department demonstrate this importance to doctoral education?

### **What They Want Programs to Know About Them**

One of the strengths of this study was that the participants, as doctoral students in higher education programs, were instrumental in co-creating the questions in the second interview. For example, one of the questions that the participants created was to ask what they hope would change in their doctoral student experiences or what change might come about as a result of this study. What follows are recommendations made by the participants in this study, Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, who have a unique lens into what they identify as organizational needs.

Kira, a Pacific Islander doctoral student, hoped that this study would complicate our understanding of doctoral student socialization:

I hope that we can say something new about socialization. I think that the way that I've experienced being a doctoral student is different. The most powerful element for me in terms of feeling like I belong, like I persist, is building family. The programs can provide that for doctoral students. I think would be really important for any student, of course, not just the API or students of color. But, I think we don't know enough about API students. We just don't, hardly at any level. Grad students in particular, what do we know about us? Yet, we read these reports about the demographics and I think we can foresee a time where more API scholars will come into a lot of fields of studies. Including higher ed, hopefully. I think it would be great for graduate programs to be prepared, how to best look for these students. What's it called? Augmented by the findings of your study.

While we still have much to learn about the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, there continues to be ethnic identities and experiences that are underrepresented. For example, Sophea, who identifies as Cambodian American, often experiences marginalization in her program because of the lack of knowledge and experiences that faculty and others have of her identity and background. This lack of knowledge and understanding is further complicated as she navigates the complexity and her own formation as a scholar:

I'm at a point where I'm trying to deal with all of the internalized racism that I developed for the community. In some ways it still affects how I engage with the community now. Me, being a doctoral student now, I've always considered myself in the margins, because I'm Cambodian but I was never raised within the

community, so I feel uncomfortable when I'm around the community, even though I try and want to be a part of this space, but because my identity development was outside of that space, I don't have that same connection that other people might have.

As the number of doctoral students from underrepresented backgrounds increase in higher education programs, we must develop organizational and professional structures that support their formation as scholars. These students, like Sophea, are looking for role models and mentors who can understand this experience and who can support her persistence in graduate work. For Ravi, the opportunity to co-construct an overall narrative of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students was an important one for him to contribute. As he has had to navigate a doctoral program that he feels, at times, privileges communities of color other than Asian Americans, he wanted to make sure that his experience contributed to the discourse on doctoral student socialization. He provided the following:

I want people to know, it's not the same for everybody. I don't think I've read a piece on Asian American doctoral students, and, you know, I've read a lot. But, I haven't read a piece about their experiences in doctoral programs. You read a lot about the other minority groups, like Black students and Latino students. But, you don't really read about the API students. You hear about the court cases, and affirmative action. You don't really hear about their racialized experiences. I want, especially professors who work with us, to read to know that we come from a different background. That sounds cheesy. Just to understand that this is a

different group of students, with culturally diverse experiences. Hopefully it has impacts on research that probe us more, to study us more. That's what needs to happen and then the information needs to be out there.

As stated earlier in the study, Patrick, a doctoral student who was socialized through Asian American studies, acknowledges the role that Asian American studies and access to mentors had in shaping his socialization process. He states:

My experiences, in terms of, you know, growing up through Asian Studies and having, in a world with very few Asian American mentorship, having a lot of it means that I really want students who don't have really the AAPI mentorship to have it. Because just for something as simple as geography that might serve as a barrier of where they have to live and where they have to go to school, or where they grew up, to have this as a resource to help navigate this very tricky, tricky path, I think would be very important for me. I don't know. I guess that's just something I think about regularly, which is "Why do I get to have these great levels of mentorship and not everyone else gets to have it?" I feel very lucky, so how do we ensure that other people have as much, or some, or I don't know? How do we ... it's almost like a guidebook for other doc students, is what I think you're sort of working on to a certain extent.

Sabina, one of only two Desi students in the study, emphasized the importance of complicating the Asian American identity and experience by highlighting intersectionality of race with other identifiers. Sabina stated the following about her participation in the study:

I think that I'm really excited about it. I think in terms of the narrative, this study will show the complexity of identities. We're not just Asian American doctoral students, but we have so many multiple identities in terms of gender, sexuality, mental health and that's something that I want to get out there. To further dismantle the model minority type that we don't need support. That's what I hope comes of this and my participation in it.

As Emily is in the process of writing her literature review for her dissertation, she notes that there is not much literature on the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander students in higher education. As an emerging scholar, Emily is experiencing the challenge of wanting to produce original knowledge but needing to ground it in existing knowledge. She shared the following:

I would say 99.9% of the articles out there that cover students of color are not including Asian American experiences at all. And, you're lucky if maybe Pacific Islanders are included, and even then it's like, "No. We're completely invisible in that literature." Also, that in and of itself is going to be such a huge contribution and highlight to institutions and other researchers that this is a population that needs to be included in research. I think that is a huge implication. Those two are the big things I've been thinking about: 1) highlighting the diversity in the community, and 2) highlighting the need for this kind of research. Then I think, like, I was talking earlier about intersectionality of different identities and how that face out in our community. Certain people forget. It's like, how many years



later and we're still talking about model minority. I'm tired of using that in my background of my papers.

Vinny, when asked about the implications of the study, focused on the work of faculty in higher education programs. In his own experiences, Vinny had a good understanding of his racial identity; however, he experienced numerous microaggressions in his doctoral program. His focus for the implications included drawing attention to the complexities of the community. He shared the following:

Specifically for this project, I think that the implications of actually having faculty understand the experience in a way that they may think that they understand is important. The other challenge is to be able to write these findings in a way that actually has so many dimensions and complexities to how we experience a doctoral program. There are the stresses that come with it, outside of the psychological stresses of just doing the work, and rationing the time, and all of that. We need a better understanding of the way identity actually complicates everything in ways that we don't really pay attention to. I think that's probably the biggest implication there, is the idea that stories actually aren't unknown, and that stories really can't be aggregated in a way that just says, "Here's a story of AAPIs," but, really, the complexity that you have to listen to individual stories, you have to understand how all that intersects with that individual.

Melissa contributed that she wanted to see more Asian American voice in qualitative research. When asked what she hoped people would understand after reading this study, Melissa responded:

One of the most valuable parts about your study is that it is giving voice to people, to an under-represented population in this field and level. I don't feel that it is done very often, especially with Asian Americans. I think there is a lot of quantitative stuff that is out there and that's great but, you know, I feel like a lot of API research says, "oh, more qualitative research should be done to give voice", but then it's like, okay, who is really doing that? You know? You are doing that and I think that's incredibly valuable.

Jessica's reflection focused on curriculum, coursework and formal education that included the experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. As an emerging scholar-practitioner, Jessica offered ways that the study could inform practices in higher education programs to expand our understanding of Asian American and Pacific Islander experiences:

I wish there were more courses on theories of race and racial formation, actually, and how we can interrogate that further beyond conceptions of race being Black or White. I actually think racial formation theory that we use in our coursework is too Black and White. We don't get an opportunity to sit down and discuss how racial formation may affect different populations and how it may look in different populations. For me, in that way, I wish that there were more spaces for Asian American Pacific Islander graduate students to talk to one another and to share our experiences rather than when talking about diversity talks or diversity dialogue we're often overlooked. I think programs need to look at resources that should be distributed among students of color equally. As an Asian American, I'm

not seen as someone who should be at the top of that pile and that really bothers me. That's what I'd like to see happen ideally.

Henry expressed his desire for the implications to address different stakeholders in higher education. He provided the following reflections on his participation in the study and his hopes for what people take away from these narratives:

For doctoral students, I would hope that this is a point of validation for us because, for me as a doctoral student, the morale gets really low. It's pretty low. It gets lonely sometimes as well too because there aren't a lot of doctoral students at my level. There aren't a lot of students getting the type of education I'm getting at my level and at my age either. I want students to know that there are students around that are experiencing what you're experiencing as well too. For program directors, I'm hoping that they understand that they need to do a better job at equalizing the playing field and explore access issues as well too. They need to see, if you were to accept us into your programs, that there are cultural needs that need to be met as well, too, such as financial support or even academic preparation. I think that's another thing as well. For just the general public, and this would be great for me, is just to know that there are other Asian Americans in this field of higher education. It's important to know that we exist, and that you could be a part of this as well too.

The recommendations and implications addressed by the participants in the study align with the Council for the Advancement of Higher Education Program's recommendations for practice. By preparing our graduate faculty, enhancing our

curriculum to be more culturally responsive, including voices of Asian American and Pacific Islander in our discourse on education, and providing access to culturally responsive mentoring, graduate programs can shape more positive experiences for Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in their programs. As a product of socialization, we must also acknowledge that providing more culturally responsive education and experiences of our Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students creates more positive opportunities for them to mentor, teach, and lead future generations of scholars and practitioners.

### **Implications and Recommendations for Practice**

One of the benefits of this study was the opportunity to co-create community within the Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral student community. One of the interview questions in the formal protocol was “What changes would you recommend?” Therefore, what follows are the implications and recommendations for practice as suggested by the participants in this study.

#### **Implications for Curriculum**

- Include Asian American and Pacific Islander scholarship in the general content of curriculum. As Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are often left out of general research involving diversity, equity and inclusion, it is important for faculty to include readings and discussion that include Asian American and Pacific Islander issues. This also requires faculty to deepen their understanding of the complexity of the Asian American and Pacific Islander racial group, including literature that

disaggregates Asian American and Pacific Islander groups and makes relevant issues within the community.

- When addressing issues of educational disparity, diversity, equity and inclusion, provide the context for Asian American and Pacific Islander experiences. While there are Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who have achieved success, and those stories should also be told, there are also Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who face institutional and organizational barriers to success. These nuances must take social, political and environmental issues into account.

Change in the curriculum will require faculty, program chairs and department chairs to do a comprehensive review of what they are teaching and whether or not their curriculum reflects the diverse landscape of higher education. Faculty, program chairs and department chairs could begin to understand what is missing by attending sessions at conferences that address Asian American and Pacific Islander experiences in higher education; get involved or subscribe to newsletters or blogs that include Asian American and Pacific Islander research; or invite a scholar into class (e.g., Google Hangout, Skype, in-person visit) to connect Asian American and Pacific Islander research to the course or curriculum. Further, for courses that include statistics or quantitative approaches to education, include course material, examples or issues that impact Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Additionally, include robust discussion on the challenges of data representation and the push to disaggregate data for communities. For courses that address student development; access and equity; history of higher education; and legal issues in higher education, Asian American and Pacific Islander communities are often

left out of the canon on higher education. Without intentionally including these issues into curriculum, students will not see how Asian American and Pacific Islander identities are a part of the fabric of higher education. Faculty must actively and intentionally include Asian American and Pacific Islander communities into the coursework. Finally, Asian American and Pacific Islander issues are current and emerging in our current climate; faculty should draw on current events in higher education that relate to these communities.

### **Implications for Advising and Mentoring**

- While same-race mentoring does not, in and of itself, assure fit, it is important that Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students have access to advisors and mentors who are culturally responsive and inclusive of Asian American and Pacific Islander identities. This includes having an understanding of why research in Asian American and Pacific Islander communities is important and relevant to the examination of higher education as a whole.
- Asian American and Pacific Islander students may be learning in isolation from other Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Faculty and programs should develop culturally relevant and inclusive opportunities for Asian American and Pacific Islander students to decrease feelings of isolation.
- For some Asian American and Pacific Islander students, the feeling of community and family are important to their overall sense of belonging. Program directors and faculty should be aware of opportunities to build relationships (e.g., across cohorts, within cohorts, with other doctoral students, with organizations that

affirm AAPI identity) that strengthen sense of belonging for Asian American and Pacific Islander students.

- Decrease feelings of isolation by connecting Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students with those who can understand the intersections of family, culture, expectations, and identity. Many of the participants noted that it was important to their development to know where to look to, to discuss their struggles, and who can affirm both the challenges and the milestones in the doctoral process.
- Understand that Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students experience microaggressions based on identity, stereotypes, and expectations. Compounded by isolation, it is important for faculty and program directors to recognize these experiences, validate identity, and to help minimize the impact of microaggressive behaviors, comments, and actions.
- Understand that Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students may also experience isolation related to research and research interests. While there is a growing understanding of the importance of research that includes Asian American and Pacific Islander issues and identities, there are still faculty advisors who do not understand this importance. For Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students interested in these issues, this lack of validation may feel isolating and impact their sense of self.
- Connect Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students your program with other Asian American and Pacific Islander faculty, students, and peers in

other programs. Participants in the study articulated that it was important for them to know that there were other Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in the field. These connections might also be within Asian American studies departments or with Asian American faculty outside of the department.

Mentors and advisors are key agents in the socialization of doctoral students. As Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students come from diverse backgrounds, it is important for mentors and advisors to understand the pathways to the doctorate.

Through this process, mentors and advisors can gain a better understanding of the barriers that the individual student might face and anticipate some opportunities for support.

While same-race mentoring and advising is not essential to successful and effective mentoring, it is important for mentors and advisors to provide opportunities for individuals to gain exposure to or support from communities. As evidenced in this study, racial identity, doctoral student development, and doctoral student socialization inform the formation of scholars; therefore, it is important for mentors and advisors to understand how these components influence individual students. With Asian American and Pacific Islander students, in particular, it is important to understand the factors of a racialized environment, one that may be unique to Asian Americans, that impact identity, development and socialization and to ask helpful questions in order to provide support.

### **Implications of Community**

- Understand that a choice to enter a career in education may not be culturally congruent with some families. These influences may be informed by family educational status, family immigration history, language, cultural expectations



around family responsibility, and general understandings about productivity.

While this is not the case for all Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, many of the participants in this study noted that their families did not necessarily understand what it meant to be a scholar in the field of higher education.

- Given the changing demographics of doctoral students, in general, Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students also represent diverse stages in life. Understand that, for some, family responsibility extends beyond their immediate family and into extended family expectations. For students who come from large, extended culturally communities, there may be a cultural investment beyond what we see in the individual doctoral student.
- Provide opportunities for Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students to discuss community and the impact of community. For some Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, the tension between being rooted in community and the ways in which a doctorate moves one away from community is a unique experience. Provide opportunities for students to explore what this might mean, if at all, for them.
- Create and support academic families for graduate students. Many Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars have been in collectivist communities or come from collectivist orientations. Support graduate students in making meaningful connections with others as they bridge the divide between the culture of academia and the culture of their communities.

Developing a community of scholars is key to persistence in a doctoral program. For some programs, the cohort model is one way to develop community. Other programs focus on cross-cohorts or other ways to create networks of learning and support. The Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in this study reflected on the importance of community and the identity-conscious approaches to community. For example, while a program might develop a strong cohort model, this cohort might not engage in social events or practices that are supportive of all of its members (e.g., ethnic identities, racial identities, religious and faith based traditions, family structure and status). Therefore, program directors, faculty chairs, or individuals charged with leading or building community must be intentional about opportunities that are offered. Individuals charged with building community might diversify opportunities such as hosting events (e.g., social gatherings, study groups, community events) that fit the needs of classmates with partners, with young children; that are comfortable and safe locations for people of different identities to go to or socialize; that offer food or beverages that include different health, religious, or identity-conscious practices; or that occur at times that do not conflict with responsibilities outside of the doctoral student role. While it is challenging to meet the needs of all people all the time, intentional and thoughtful community building should be at the forefront of planning.

Individuals involved in building community should also be mindful of the ways to build relationships online. Currently, there are a number of different online and social media groups that support the experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders; Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars and practitioners; and Asian American and

Pacific Islander doctoral students, in addition to a few others that focus on field- or job-specific areas. For doctoral students in isolation of an Asian American or Pacific Islander community, an online presence or engagement with an online group might help to reduce isolation. Program directors, department chairs, faculty mentors and advisors should provide these lists or opportunities to connect to their students.

One of the ways to develop opportunities for community in doctoral programs is to increase the number of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, faculty, staff and administrators. While the cycle of socialization to education for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (see Figure 2) indicates that this is a complex system in which Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are underrepresented in educational leadership, teaching, curriculum, and education programs, increasing the representation, engagement, persistence, and continuance of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in education can help to disrupt this cycle. Faculty, program directors and department chairs could be instrumental in transforming structures to increase the number of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and also shape culturally inclusive environments.

### **Implications of Research Interests**

- Provide guidance and flexibility in exploring what studying Asian American and Pacific Islander issues and identifying as Asian American and Pacific Islander might mean for individuals. Some students may arrive with clear understanding of what identity, community and research mean to them while others are still in the process of exploring what it might mean for them. Reduce assumptions that Asian

American and Pacific Islander students will choose to study issues about the community.

- Concurrently, understand that some Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students are committed to studying issues within the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. For some participants in the study, it was important to have mentors and advisors who understood the student's individual commitment to contributing to scholarship and research on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.
- Some Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students who are interested in studying underrepresented Asian American and Pacific Islander ethnic groups may find that there is not a depth and breadth of existing research available on the topic. Many of the participants relied on the support of their faculty members and advisors before continuing to pursue these topics. They identified that pursuing research related to underrepresented groups was culturally affirming for them, and participants noted differences in how faculty responded to their individual desires to pursue this research area.

In this area, the focus on doctoral student socialization, doctoral student development and racial identity are particularly salient because of the emphasis on research interests and research agenda. Oftentimes, the interest of the faculty or faculty advisor, as well as the climate and culture of the institution, can shape the research agenda of a doctoral student. Some of the participants in the study chose graduate programs based on the alignment of this interest; some chose a graduate program for

issues other than faculty-alignment such as proximity to family, tuition remission, or geographic preferences. Some participants in this study articulated frustration around the development of a research agenda related to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders; therefore, it would be helpful for faculty, advisors, program directors and department chairs to have a deeper understanding of the complexities that Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students might face related to scholar formation. Further, Asian American and Pacific Islander students might find that there is a lack of research related to a topic of interest in their communities. As critical research continues to emerge in the area of Asian American and Pacific Islander scholarship, doctoral students may require further support and guidance from faculty and advisors related to identifying, developing and supporting their research agendas and interests. As with previous recommendations, it may be helpful to connect students with existing communities and groups that engage in research on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

These are only a few suggestions for supporting the formation of Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars in higher education programs. The strength of these recommendations is that they come directly from the twenty-two participants in this study who are actively experiencing socialization to higher education. As this study interrogates whether bidirectional socialization is occurring in organizations, as well as the impact of bidirectional socialization, the experiences of these twenty-two Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students provides concrete suggestions for ways in which programs, departments, faculty and peers can develop and support culturally relevant environments and practices.

## **Future Research**

As a result of this study, an interactional model of identity-conscious scholar formation was presented. This model was rooted in the study that sampled Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students; thereby, this model in its current form relates only to this population. This is evidenced in the environmental factors that were expressed as unique to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, such as the role of family influence; education; racialized stereotypes; social experiences; and community. However, future research is needed to understand whether this model may also support the identity-conscious scholar formation of other racialized groups that have experience socialization and development in a White, hegemonic framework. Further, this study was focused on the experiences of doctoral students in higher education; therefore, future research should be conducted on whether this model is applicable to other disciplines and other stages of educational attainment.

Although this research has created new knowledge on understanding the formation of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education, considerable room for further research remains. The twenty-two participants in this study represent a limited number of ethnic identities, and little is known about further underrepresented communities. Additionally, not all Asian American and Pacific Islander ethnic identities were represented in this study, leaving a limited picture of Asian American and Pacific Islander identities in higher education. Further research should seek to include Asian American and Pacific Islander ethnic identities in higher education that were not included in this study.

It is not clear the role and impact of institutional racism in program development and organizational practices as it relates to the development and socialization of doctoral students. While this study shed light on how individuals are impacted by programs and practices, there is still not a clear answer as to why are there not more Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education. While this study provided individual insight into the ways in which scholars have been impacted by the organization, further research must explore what organizations are and might be doing that create barriers to recruitment, retention and persistence of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students.

Existing research on student development exists predominantly in the undergraduate environment. Though an emerging body of research addresses adult student development, little is known about the development of doctoral students. Further, little is known about the development of doctoral students within a racialized society. As the understanding of racial identity was foundational to this study, it is clear that affirming racial identity was key to positive socialization and development of the participants. The participants who expressed positive racial identity development were ones who had taken courses in Asian American studies and/or Ethnic Studies and those who had been actively involved in cultural centers, cultural based groups and cultural communities. Therefore, further research is needed to understand the impact of affirming socializers such as ethnic studies, identity-based studies, community support, and factors that contribute to positive racial identity. Understanding this process will give insight as to how organizations, schools and programs can further encourage positive identity

development in students. Further research is also needed to understand how existing departments and programs commit to student development at the doctoral level and how identity is incorporated into those processes.

While existing research has made connections between indigenous education and experiences with Native Americans and Native Hawaiians, there is a need for research that also addresses these communities separately. Only a few studies (e.g., KCHS, 2012; Wright & Balutski, 2013) have explored the impact of indigenous knowledge, such as the Hawai'i inuiakea School of Hawaiian Knowledge (HSHK), on the educational experiences of Hawaiian students. Further studies need to explore the ways in which indigenous knowledge shapes identity and socialization.

Furthering the above need to research the impact of cultural communities and affirming programs, it is important to examine the ways in which an Asian American and Pacific Islander inclusive curriculum impacts identity development and sense of belonging. As many of the participants articulated, there was a lack of exposure, education and schooling with messages that affirmed Asian American and Pacific Islander identity. Further research is needed to understand what aspects of curriculum and schooling, specifically, contribute to shaping identity. As schools seek to diversify their curriculum through measures such as multicultural education, further research is needed to understand what aspects of multicultural education are effective and impactful. In addition, there is no quantifiable data on whether, or to what extent, doctoral programs include issues of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. This information would be important as programs seek to provide more culturally relevant research, to develop



scholars and practitioners who think critically about race and multiple racialized groups, and to continue to prepare researchers who can engage in critical race work.

Existing research on student development, identity and socialization often use bracketed time – a snapshot of undergraduate years, timing leading up to an event, or a limited slice of an experience. Life history methodology, on the other hand, requires the use of a more complex, long-term, expanded view of how one's experiences are informed. Using life history methodology and presenting critical narrative was central to this study. As Asian American and Pacific Islander voices are often left out of the discourse of education and educational experiences, it was important to make central the voices of Asian American and Pacific Islander students in articulating their own racial identities, socialization experiences and development. Life history methodology also provided an intimate look into the lives of Asian American and Pacific Islander as told by them, privileging their voices, interpretation and agency in shaping the research process. Therefore, further research should be conducted using life history methodology as a way to shape a more complete picture of Asian American and Pacific Islander lives.

While this study broadly examined the experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students, this study does not represent the entire Asian American and Pacific Islander diversity. As evident in this study, only two participants identified as Desi and only one participant identified as Pacific Islander. While the identities of Asian Americans differ with ethnic groups, both Desi and Pacific Islander ethnicities have been even further underrepresented in the literature. In fact, little is known about the identity development, socialization and student development of Desi and Pacific Islander

students. While this study attempted to shed light on the broader Asian American community, there are unique differences within the Desi and Pacific Islander communities that may not be generalizable from overall Asian American research. Future research is needed in order to be more inclusive of these communities and to more responsibly represent their experiences.

Within this study, the majority of participants identified as second-generation, meaning their parent(s) or guardian(s) were the first in the country to immigrate to the United States. Few participants held identities outside of second-generation. Therefore, it would be important to consider the impact of generational-status on racial identity development, socialization and development. Many of the participants noted that their relationship with community was informed by the relationship their parent(s) or guardian(s) had in community; therefore, it would be important to understand whether further generational status (e.g., third-generation, fourth-generation) impacts the role of community and the role of race in their lived experiences. Further, a few of the participants in this study had family who immigrated to the United States because of refugee status. As these students are only within a second-generation of refugee status, it would be important to understand the role of this status on the lives of these students.

Within life history storytelling, participants often highlighted intersectional identities of race with sex, gender, sexual orientation, class, language and family structure. While these were important aspects of their identities and their stories, there were not enough participants to develop thematic patterns. Therefore, future research should include these areas of identity by including more participants who identify with

salient, intersectional identities. Expressed individually, these identities were important in their racial identity development, student development and socialization to the field of higher education and to the organization and deserve to be further explored.

While the different doctoral degrees (i.e., Ph.D. and Ed.D.) were intentionally sampled, there revealed no distinct differences in the pathways to these doctorates. However, as this line of interrogation was not central to the study, future research is needed to explore how these differences are expressed through socialization and development. It would be important to explore how the environment of executive doctoral programs, and even the shift from some programs to eliminate the Ed.D. (such as Harvard) or to include new Ph.D. programs (such as University of Massachusetts Boston), might be an area to explore in terms of organizational socialization. Further, the participants in this study indicated that, for some, the choice to attend a particular institution or pursue a particular degree was largely informed by their roles outside of being a doctoral student (e.g., family responsibilities, proximity to support system); for others, the decision to enroll in a Ph.D. versus Ed.D. program were predicated on the racial makeup of the faculty.

While this study intentionally sampled students at different phases of doctoral study, the phases did not appear relevant in this line of inquiry. I had initially wondered how the phase of study impacted doctoral student development, doctoral student socialization and racial identities of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students. I had wondered if Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in Phase I were given specific messages about their identities through curriculum,

mentoring, advising, and interactions with cohorts that may have changed over time as a student progressed through to Phase III. While participants in this study noted that they experienced changes and growth, these changes were not necessarily tied to phase of study. This, however, does not imply that phases are not relevant as they signal passing of time and milestones in the life of a doctoral student. Rather, this was not a focus of the study that emerged as relevant. Future research should focus on whether or not the distinct phases of doctoral study align with development, socialization and identity.

Existing theories used in higher education, student development and organizational socialization have largely been built using homogenous population samples. We are only beginning to understand the impact of race and racial identity on existing theories in higher education. Many existing theories do not take into account race, racialized environments, and racialized experiences. Therefore, future research is needed to further explore the ways in which race impact and intersect with existing theories. Aside from racial identity theories that have begun to be more inclusive of race in identity development, few theories (e.g., Accapadi, 2012; Kim, 2012) exist that directly address the experiences of Asian Americans. Therefore, future research is needed to explore whether existing and dominant theories used in higher education are inclusive and representative of Asian American and Pacific Islander experiences.

Overall, future research must include the impact of race and racism beyond an existing diversity binary that has limited discussions, research, conversations and inquiries within a White/Black binary. To that point, the impact of race is complex and pervasive in U.S. society and should be treated as such. Including Asian American and

Pacific Islander identities as part of a complex, historical, political, social, educational and personal system of race requires that we, as educators, expand our definitions of identity and identity-consciousness. As this study demonstrates, groups such as Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders experience race and racism in ways that are important to understanding and essential to developing identity-conscious processes that support scholar formation. Therefore, future research is needed to further complicate and amplify the experiences of other groups that have experienced inequitable educational processes and engage in critical interrogation of systemic processes.

### **Conclusion**

*It's very validating to share my story, because I went through school being the silent person, the silent girl. I just didn't know about the good girl, good student. I think I'm starting to find my voice, as a doctoral student, and in finding that voice I'm sharing my story. And the more I share it, the more I'm able to process it. That's important -- to share it with people and to have that validated is really important. – Sophea, Cambodian female*

The purpose of this study was to examine existing processes of socialization, development and racial identity. One of the questions that emerges as a result of this study is, “Is socialization then, in fact, bidirectional?” The answer is: it should be. However, existing processes that privilege Eurocentric, hegemonic approaches often reinforce socialization as a unidirectional process, one in which the student is shaped to fit into the profession. However, as this study highlights, socialization must, in fact, be bidirectional in order to support identity-conscious scholar formation. By including Asian

American and Pacific Islander doctoral students as participants, this study promotes socialization as a bidirectional process – one that will inform process that our profession has previously ignored. Therefore, the purpose of the study was, in fact, to create a bidirectional and interactional process of identity-conscious scholar formation.

The dominant literature on student development, socialization, and development of doctoral students is based largely on White, Eurocentric approaches to our understanding of the formation of scholars. Whenever I was asked what I was studying or what my research topic addressed, I always replied with, “I’m looking to understand what it means to be an Asian American doctoral student in a higher education program.”

Nearly every time, someone’s response to me would be, “So, you’re studying you?”

Why was it important to study *Me*? Why was I so driven to understand what I was going through, what pointed me towards success, and what kept me from moving forward each time I wanted to quit? I believe it is because I never saw myself reflected in education. I never saw myself and my people included in the story of our nation’s history. I never learned from teachers who shared my racial or ethnic background, and I never knew what it meant to be Asian American outside of my own family. As a practitioner and scholar in education, I was operating without knowledge of an entire community that I had been called to serve through my work with multicultural affairs and through my research as an emerging scholar. I was a leader in higher education, serving students as they navigated their own identities in college, but had not done the work of interrogating my own identity. When it was time for me to begin my journey as a doctoral student, I

felt lost. I experienced tension between wanting to dive into the Asian American community while also feeling like an outsider to an experience I had never known.

For the past year, being in a collective community with twenty-two doctoral students, I have learned more about Asian America than I had in my nearly three decades of combined formal schooling and work in higher education. These participants became my teachers, my guides, and my mentors through a process of uncovering my own insecurities about being an Asian American doctoral student. Their courage, and their struggles, gave me agency to move forward and affect my own doctoral program. Because of their stories, I sought out ways to impact my own racial identity, socialization and development. And, I wanted to do the same for others. During the course of the academic year, I taught the first-year doctoral cohort and incorporated literature, research and scholarship on Asian American and Pacific Islander students. I actively reached out to other Asian Americans in my program to provide opportunities for shared research and community. I worked closely with the faculty to provide resources for including Asian American and Pacific Islander scholarship and readings into their courses. And, I pushed for them to include disaggregated data on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

I believe, through this work, that I have, indeed, highlighted a bidirectional socialization process that was not present when I first started this doctoral program. Through our shared work, the many participants in this study found voice and activism to do the same in their programs. I have since seen many of the participants at academic and practitioner conferences, and they have found community among other Asian Americans

and Pacific Islanders who are interested in pursuing teaching and research related to Asian American and Pacific Islander communities.

While this work contributed to a more complicated and complex understanding of socialization, development and identity in higher education, my own personal transformation as a scholar, practitioner and as an Asian American was, in many ways, made both visible and audible. For example, I remember sitting in my first History of Higher Education class in fall of 2011. In a room of my cohort-sisters and my professor, I picked up our 800-page, maroon-colored book on the history of higher education, and said, “Eight pages? Eight pages? That’s all we get in the history of higher education? Asian Americans get eight pages in the history of higher education?” I wondered why I was so angry. I wondered why everyone was avoiding eye contact with me. I wondered why I cared so much.

Little did I know, that moment in my second semester of class would be the beginning of the pathway to this dissertation. My professor, who would later serve as a member of my dissertation committee, responded to my anger. She responded to my confusion. And she responded to my needs as a doctoral student. She acknowledged that she, as a faculty member, had failed to provide culturally relevant material. She had failed to provide a context for how my own people were left out of the fabric of higher education – the field that I was going to dedicate the next four years of my life researching. But, my professor also responded by providing opportunities for me to explore my development and my racial identity. She encouraged me to research and write about my community. She talked openly about how that moment in her class changed



her. She showed me that socialization could be bidirectional. She showed me that, in fact, I had something to contribute and that her own practices were shaped by that moment.

My professor recognized, even before I could articulate it, that I needed mentors and a network of people to support me through this journey. As a White woman, she knew that she had limitations to what she could offer me in terms of racial connectedness and context. Within a few days, my professor introduced me to an informal, small community of scholars of Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars who were meeting up at an annual conference. She found out what time they were meeting. She sent me the location. And, she connected me to the organizer. This organizer, four years later, would also be a member on my dissertation committee.

In the next semester, my socialization, development and racial identity would, once more, be visible. As I struggled to develop a research topic for a qualitative methods class, my professor advised me to use this time to explore my racial identity and to expand my network of mentors. I developed the research question, “Does racial identity influence how Asian American scholars develop research agendas?” And, through that research question, I was connected to five Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars in higher education. I learned about their pathways, their identities, and their own socialization (although I did not know that term at the time).

I learned more about their stories as Asian American and Pacific Islander scholars; developed confidence in my own cognitive, emotional, and professional growth; and became more conscious of my own racial identity. I joined the leadership team of an Asian American and Pacific Islander Knowledge Community (NASPA), and I gained

more comfort and fluency in Asian American and Pacific Islander spaces. I volunteered to be the Graduate Student Representative in an organization that focuses on research and the education of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AERA), and I have helped to organize online scholarly webinars for Asian American and Pacific Islander researchers. I signed up to serve on a council focusing on ethnic participation at a leading research conference (ASHE). Each time I met with my community, I felt more courageous in my actions and in my words. I felt like I belonged in a community that needed me to be present.

I eventually felt courageous enough to impact my doctoral program, my courses, my class discussions and my own research agenda. I began to send articles about Asian American and Pacific Islander research to the faculty in my program, hoping they would include these articles in their syllabus and course discussions. As a graduate assistant, I partnered with a faculty member who was doing research on the impact of federal financial aid policies, and I asked if we could include the experiences of Asian Americans, a group that was underusing campus resources. The following year, I asked to co-teach the doctoral course for incoming, first-semester doctoral students, and my professors allowed me to shape the syllabus to focus on doctoral student development, socialization, and racial identity, including underrepresented literature on Asian American racial identity and racialized experiences. I co-taught the class for two summers, impacted the socialization experiences of doctoral students and taught them to interrogate the marginalization of communities. One of those co-instructors for the doctoral course would serve as my dissertation advisor and my chair.

Though I can trace my transformation over the course of the last four years, I am even more convinced that identity-conscious scholar formation is impacted by identity, development and socialization in a racialized context. I am also convinced that our doctoral practices and organizations need to be responsive to identity-conscious scholar formation if we care about including Asian American and Pacific Islander voices in our field. I think of all the ways in which I could have faced roadblocks and barriers to effective development and socialization. I can think of many ways in which my racial identity development could have been denied or made invisible in my pathway to the doctorate. And, through the critical narratives of the participants in this study, I have seen how those barriers are still firmly in place for some of my peers.

In that first qualitative study of scholars where I was trying to better understand research agenda formation, one of the seasoned scholar-participants asked, “Liza, I’m curious about why you are asking this question of research topic and identity?” I answered, “That’s what I’m trying to find out, I guess. I don’t know. Sometimes I feel like I’m not Asian enough or that others will see me as an imposter. I’ve never been part of an Asian American community. Sometimes I just feel like I don’t belong. I worry whether or not I’m enough.” He paused and made direct eye contact with me. His eyes narrowed, making sure I knew he was serious. I saw the corners of his mouth turn up slightly in a smile. And just for an instant, I thought that, maybe at one point in his life, he felt the same way. He replied, “Liza, you are Asian. Therefore, you are Asian enough.” Those words stayed with me even through today.

Four years later, during the interviews with participants in this dissertation study, I asked similar questions of my participants, “Does your racial identity influence or inform your research agenda?” And, I received similar answers to the one I gave back in my second semester of study. They told me about feeling disconnected or feeling like an outsider. Whenever I heard those phrases in their answers, I paused. I made direct eye contact. My eyes narrowed to make sure they knew I was serious. The corners of my mouth turned up slightly in a smile. And for more than an instant, I remembered that I had felt the same way. To each participant, I replied, “You are enough.”

As a result of this study, I was, indeed, transformed. I have confidence in my ability to be a scholar and to contribute to the field of higher education. I believe my work and my words have value, have a place in our scholarship, and are meaningful for those who seek meaning. I have seen how socialization, in my own case, can be bidirectional; but, I am well aware of the many instances in which it is not for others. I have witnessed a change in my doctoral program, in what faculty are offering in their curriculum, and in the ways in which Asian American students in our program are pursuing research interests in a culturally and identity-conscious way. I have heard from professors in the Asian American studies department at the university propose ways to collaborate with the Higher Education program as a way to make more meaningful connections to research and practice. And, with a long list of implications for department chairs and program directors, I believe that there is a new awareness of the needs of Asian American and Pacific Islander doctoral students in higher education programs.

While I am hopeful for the ways in which our programs, our field and our discipline can change to be more inclusive, I am transformed in a way that I had not anticipated. I have been transformed as a mother. This experience has shaped me to be a better mother, partner and teacher. I have been able to teach my own children, who started this doctoral program with me before they could walk, read or talk, about being Asian American and Multiracial. I have been able to share with them what it means for me to be part of an Asian American community. My children have accompanied me to Asian American programs, events, and festivals and have been exposed to the vibrancy and diversity of our/my people. They are growing up learning about Asian American activism, Asian American activists, and solidarity movements that focus on building coalitions among communities of color. As multiracial Asian Americans, my children are growing up, in their earliest anticipatory years, being surrounded by Asian American educators, scholars and role models. They are in a school where I have influence in curriculum, teaching practices and policies that affirm Asian American identities. They are learning from teachers who include Asian American issues in their classrooms. They are meeting other Asian American children through affinity groups I have created. And, they are able to explore what it means, for them individually, to be multiracial Asian Americans in today's world.

I end this piece as a scholar, as an Asian American educator, and as a mother who is committed to identity-conscious education. In the first days of my doctoral journey back in 2011, I did not anticipate the transformation that I would go through writing this dissertation, hearing the stories of others, and experiencing socialization and development

in higher education. I never imagined that I would help to shape a program that would be responsive to my community, play a role in affirming the identities of our Asian American and Pacific Islander community, and contribute to identity-conscious scholarship. There are still days when I feel like that student waving the 800-page, maroon-colored textbook in the air demanding to know why my people were missing from the history of higher education. There are days when I am impatient about the lack of research or the misuse of data or the marginalization of my people. There are days when I wonder if we have made any changes in how we understand Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders – when I eagerly await scholarship or a new publication or book that helps us to understand the needs of our community. There are days when I wait for that change, and there moments when I realize, I am a part of that transformation.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### **Academic identity**

the complex identity which includes how one who works in academia comes to be or develops; how an academic comes to know or learn what one must know; and how an academic behaves in relations to one's professional environment (Quigley, 2011)

### **Asian**

person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. The Asian population includes people who indicated their race(s) as "Asian" or reported entries such as "Asian Indian," "Chinese," "Filipino," "Korean," "Japanese," and "Vietnamese" or provided other detailed Asian responses (Hoeffel, Rastogi, Kim and Shahid, 2012).

### **AsianCrit**

a conceptual lens that builds from the existing Critical Race Theory framework and offers an understanding of the ways that racial oppression affects Asian American people and communities (Museus and Iftikar, 2013).

### **Counter narrative**

perspective that often arise out of individual or group experiences that do not fit the master narratives, running opposite to the presumed order and control (Stanley, 2006).

**Critical narrative**

methodological approach concerned with power and language in society where individuals can concretely question their own realities and identify socio-ideological influence of systems on their practices and beliefs (Souto-Manning, 2012).

**Critical race theory**

framework that draws from and extends a broad literature base in law, sociology, history, ethnic studies and women's studies. This framework offers "insights, perspectives, methods and pedagogies that guide our efforts to identify, analyze and transform the structural and cultural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions (Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000)

**Doctoral student development**

a positive growth process in which the individual becomes increasingly able to integrate and act on many different experiences and influences, incorporating intellectual, cognitive, social, moral development and moral reasoning (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton & Renn, 2010)

**Doctoral student socialization**

process through which new members learn the values, norms, knowledge, beliefs, and the interpersonal and other skills that facilitate role performance and further group goals (Mortimer & Simmons, 1978)



**Ethnicity**

socially constructed subcategories of racial groups that emphasize the shared geographical, historical, and cultural experiences of different groups of people (Wijeyesinghe, 2001).

**Higher education program**

as a field of study, higher education includes research, service and formational organized programs on postsecondary education leading to various degrees; programs that focus on these issues may include masters degree programs and doctoral degree programs (Dressel and Mayhew, 1974)

**Multiracial**

individuals with two or more racial groups (Wijeyesinghe, 2001).

**Race**

socially constructed concepts that divide the human population into subgroups based on real or perceived differences in such aspects of a person's background as physical appearance or ancestral origin (Wijeyesinghe, 2001).

**Racial identity development**

a sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he or she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group; therefore, racial identity development concerns the psychological implications of racial-group membership (Helms, 1990, p. 3)

**Pacific Islander**

Pacific Islander refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. Using the U.S. Census definition, the Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population includes people who marked the “Native Hawaiian” checkbox, the “Guamanian or Chamorro” checkbox, the “Samoaan” checkbox, or the “Other Pacific Islander” checkbox on the US Census. It also includes people who reported entries such as Pacific Islander; Polynesian entries, such as Tahitian, Tongan, and Tokelauan; Micronesian entries, such as Marshallese, Palauan, and Chuukese; and Melanesian entries, such as Fijian, Guinean, and Solomon Islander (Hixon, Hepler, and Kim, 2012)

**Socialization**

a process of active social engagement in which an individual (or organization) directly influences the perceptions, behaviors, and skill acquisition of another individual (Antony and Taylor, 2004).

**TribalCrit**

a conceptual lens that builds from the existing Critical Race Theory framework and offers an understanding of the ways that racial oppression affects Indigenous people; this framework has been offered to provide examination of experiences of Pacific Islanders in the context of the United States (Brayboy, 2005).

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## APPENDIX A: Demographic Survey

**1. Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Graduate Institution and Program:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Please choose the phase you are currently in:**

- ☐ **Phase I (entry)** – you have entered the doctoral program and less than halfway through your coursework
- ☐ **Phase II (integration)** – you have completed considerable coursework leading up to your comprehensive exam or what your program considers to be approximately your halfway point through the program
- ☐ **Phase III (candidacy)** – you have completed your comprehensive exam or your program considers you in the candidacy phase, usually marked by the independent research phase

**4. Please indicate which terminal degree you will complete:**

- ☐ Ed.D
- ☐ Ph.D.

**5. Please write in your racial and ethnic identity in the space below:**

Racial identity/identities \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnic identity/identities \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Please write in your current age (in years):** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Please write in your gender or preferred gender identity:** \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Please write in your undergraduate major:** \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Please write in your graduate degree/major:** \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Please write in your immigration status:** \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Are you a first-generation college (undergraduate) student?** \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Are you a first-generation doctoral student?** \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Has anyone else in your family completed a doctoral program in higher education?** \_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: Interview Questions (1<sup>st</sup> round)

### Background information

- 1) Tell me a little bit about how you came to be a graduate student in this program.
- 2) What are your research interests?

### Racial Identity

- 1) Tell me about your racial and ethnic identity. What does it mean to be that racial and ethnic identity?
- 2) Tell me the story of when you first understood you were Asian American.

### Experiences in Education

- 1) Describe your educational experiences.
- 2) In what ways, if any, has your ethnic/racial identity informed or influenced your educational experiences?
- 3) What were your first messages about education as a career?
- 4) Describe how you knew you wanted a career in education.

### Decision to apply to and enroll in a doctoral program in higher education

- 1) Tell me about the personal experiences that motivated you to enroll in graduate school.
- 2) Tell me about the reaction of your family or those close to you when you decided to enroll in graduate school in education.
- 3) Tell me about your reasons for applying to your particular graduate program in higher education. Why did you choose the particular doctoral pathway you chose (e.g., PhD or EdD)?
- 4) What do you hope to do after you complete your graduate degree in higher education?

### Anticipatory Graduate Student Socialization

- 1) Describe your orientation process to your graduate program. What important messages did you receive about being a doctoral student?
- 2) Describe your opportunities to interact with individuals in the Asian American/Pacific Islander community during your doctoral program.
- 3) In what ways, if any, does your ethnic identity inform or influence your experience as a doctoral student?
- 4) What were some, if any, obstacles you faced adjusting to graduate school?
- 5) What kind of support, if any, do you have as a doctoral student? If you have support, tell me about who they are and their impact or influence on your experience.
- 6) Tell me about the relationship between you and your cohort/classmates.
- 7) Tell me about the strengths of your doctoral education. Tell me about the areas of weakness in your doctoral education. What are some examples of these?

## APPENDIX C: Interview Questions (2<sup>nd</sup> round)

### Doctoral student socialization

- 1) Where and how are you learning to be a doctoral student?
- 2) Personally, what does it mean to be a doctoral student in your program?
- 3) To what extent do you feel like you belong in your doctoral program? What factors contribute to your sense of belonging or sense of exclusion in your graduate program?
- 4) Tell me about the highlights of your doctoral experience so far.

### Developing your research agenda

- 1) Describe your research interests. What has influenced you to identify this/these research interests?
- 2) In what ways, if any, does your Asian American identity influence your research agenda and/or interests?
- 3) To what extent have your research interests been supported in your doctoral program? How are those research interests being shaped by your doctoral program?

### Social and academic experiences in graduate school

- 1) What does it mean to be an Asian American doctoral student?
- 2) In what way, if any, have your faculty, advisers, and/or peers influenced your research agenda?
- 3) In what ways, if any, has your racial/ethnic identity shaped your classroom experience?

### Formal and informal socialization processes during graduate school

- 1) Do you have relationships that connect you to Asian American mentors, communities, or support networks? What role has your graduate program assisted in those relationships?
- 2) What ways, if any, have you pursued support (e.g., mentors, networking) on your own or independent of your graduate program? What are examples of that support?

### The role of graduate school

- 1) What are the strengths of your graduate program?
- 2) What are the areas of weakness of your graduate program?
- 3) How does your graduate program demonstrate value related to your racial and ethnic identity?
- 4) What does the term “academic identity” mean to you?
- 5) How has your graduate experience, thus far, shaped your academic identity?
- 6) What role has race/ethnicity played in shaping your academic identity?
- 7) What does the term “scholar-practitioner” mean to you? Do you relate to that term?

## APPENDIX D: Consent Form

Consent Form for *The role of socialization in the development of an academic identity for Asian American doctoral students in higher education*

### **Introduction and Contact Information**

You are asked to take part in a research project that examines the ways in which the Asian American doctoral students, who are currently enrolled in programs in higher education, develop their identities as scholars and practitioners. The researcher is interested in how existing social stereotypes have informed how Asian American doctoral students choose careers in higher education as well as the type of research they choose to conduct.

The researcher is Liza A. Talusan, doctoral candidate in the higher education program at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Please read this form and feel free to ask questions. If you have further questions later, Liza Talusan will discuss them with you. Her telephone number is 516-984-0711 and email is [Liza.Talusan001@umb.edu](mailto:Liza.Talusan001@umb.edu).

### **Description of the Project:**

This study seeks to develop a better understanding of how Asian Americans develop an academic identity related to being doctoral students in higher education. Participants will be asked to share their experiences from their own educational backgrounds that have influenced their decisions to pursue careers in higher education, including but not limited to experiences with family members, teachers, educators, mentors, and advisors. Participants will be asked questions about their own educational experiences as students as well as their transition into doctoral education.

Participation in this study will be approximately 2 hours and will be completed in two phases (approximately 1 hour each session). Interviews will be conducted in a method that is most convenient for you and may include in-person interviews or interviews via a video conferencing (e.g., Skype, Google Hangout).

### **Risks or Discomforts:**

You may speak with Liza Talusan, doctoral candidate, to discuss any distress or other issues related to study participation. If you wish to discuss concerns with a professor in the program, you are encouraged to contact Dr. Dwight Giles, Jr., Professor of Higher Education, University of Massachusetts Boston at [Dwight.giles@umb.edu](mailto:Dwight.giles@umb.edu) who serves as the faculty advisor and dissertation chair for this study.

Risks or discomfort may include experiences of discomfort or distress that may arise as a result of recalling experiences related to academic development as a doctoral student.

**Confidentiality and Anonymity:**

Your part in this research is **confidential**. That is, the information gathered for this project will not be published or presented in a way that would allow anyone to identify you. Information gathered for this project will be stored in a locked electronic file that is password protected and only the research team will have access to the data. This data will be destroyed no later than August 2016. To protect your anonymity, the information collected will not include information that specifically identifies you such as your name or telephone number. Upon completion of your interview, a pseudonym will be assigned to you and you will from that point on only be referred to by your pseudonym.

**Voluntary Participation:**

The decision whether or not to take part in this research study is voluntary. If you do decide to take part in this study, you may terminate participation at any time without consequence. If you wish to terminate participation, you should directly contact Liza Talusan at 516-984-0711 or at [liza.talusan001@umb.edu](mailto:liza.talusan001@umb.edu). Whatever you decide will in no way penalize you.

**Rights:**

You have the right to ask questions about this research before you sign this form and at any time during the study. You can reach Liza Talusan, doctoral candidate, at [liza.talusan001@umb.edu](mailto:liza.talusan001@umb.edu) or her dissertation chair and advisor, Dr. Dwight Giles, Jr., at [Dwight.giles@umb.edu](mailto:Dwight.giles@umb.edu). If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact a representative of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, which oversees research involving human participants. The Institutional Review Board may be reached at the following address: IRB, Quinn Administration Building-2-080, University of Massachusetts Boston, 100 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, MA 02125-3393. You can also contact the Board by telephone or e-mail at (617) 287-5374 or at [human.subjects@umb.edu](mailto:human.subjects@umb.edu).

**Signature for in person interview.**

*I HAVE READ THE CONSENT FORM. MY QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. MY SIGNATURE ON THIS FORM MEANS THAT I CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY. I ALSO CERTIFY THAT I AM 18 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant    Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Typed/Printed Name of Researcher

**Consent for online or phone interview.** As this consent form is being shared through video/online methods, if you agree with the information within this consent form, please state aloud the words, "I consent."

## APPENDIX E: Description of participants

Number of Participants: 22

Phase at time of first interview: 7 in Phase I; 12 in Phase II; 3 in phase 3

Terminal degree sought: 16 PhD; 6 EdD

Number of institutions represented: 15

Ethnicities represented:

- Multiracial Japanese-White (1)
- Taiwanese American (3)
- Khmer (1)
- P/Filipino American (5)
- Vietnamese American (3)
- Multiracial Filipino-White (1)
- Indian American (2)
- Multiracial Chinese-White (1)
- Cambodian American (1)
- Chinese (3)
- Samoan (1)

Age: Mean age = 30.3

Gender: Men = 10; Women = 12

Generation status:

- (14) Second Generation (parents/guardians are immigrants)
- (5) 1.5 generation (immigrated to the United States at a young age)
- (1) first generation (individual immigrated to the United States)
- (1) third generation (grandparents immigrated to the US)
- (1) fourth generation (great-grandparents immigrated to the US)

College-generation status:

- (10) identified as first-generation college students
- (12) identified as not first-generation college students

Doctoral-generation status:

- (16) identified as being the first in their immediate family to pursue a doctorate
- (5) identified as not being the first in their immediate family to pursue a doctorate
- (1) was unsure

Higher Ed Doctoral Student generation status

All participants stated no one in their families had pursued or completed a doctorate in Higher Education

## APPENDIX F: Sample Narrative Outline

### CODING EXAMPLE: VINNY

**FOCALIZATION:** Told from Vinny's point of view, which included relevant intersecting identities.

#### CHRONOLOGY

- Elementary Age
- Middle School Age
- High School Age
- College Age
- Graduate School Age

#### EPIPHANIES

- Exploring racial identity as informed by family
- Moments of racialized identity and impact
- Mentoring choices
- Imposter syndrome

#### PLOT

- Understanding of racial identity as traced through his parents and grandparents

#### CHARACTERS

- Self, Parents, Mentors, Peers, Faculty

#### SETTING

- Home; Predominantly White Institutions; Graduate School Setting

#### PROBLEM

- Feelings of otherness in groups of people (including school and work); conflict of racial identity; conflicting feelings of confidence and insecurity

#### ACTION

- Varied depending on situation

#### RESOLUTION

- Varied depending on situation

#### THREE DIMENSIONAL SPACE

- Interaction: Personal and Social Interactions
  - Peers, Family, Cohort

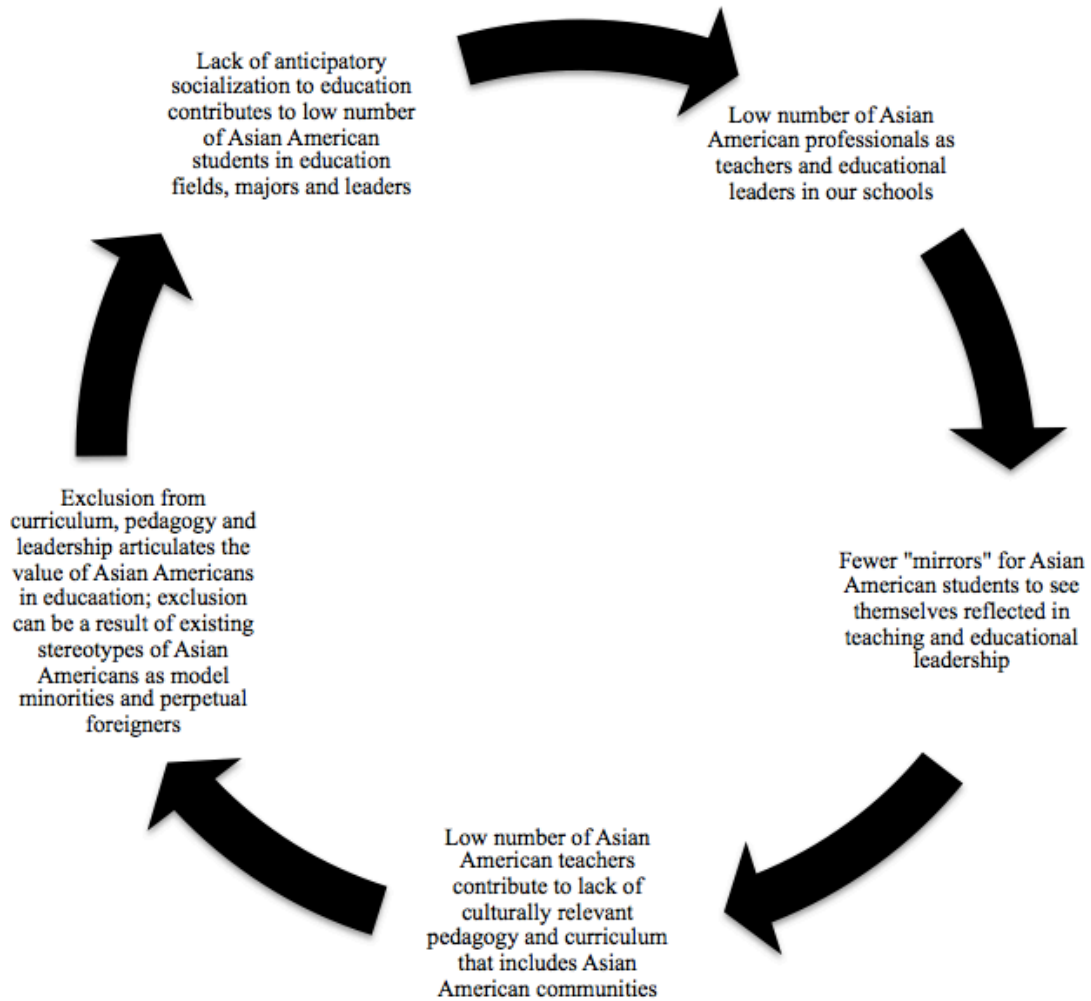


- Continuity: The past, present, future
  - Individual critical narrative as Vinny developed identity
- Situation: Place
  - Elementary school, college, and graduate school

#### THEMES

1. Role of race
2. Role of mentors and racially inclusive mentoring
3. Role of education and peer experiences
4. Formation as a scholar as informed by past experiences

## APPENDIX G: Cycle of socialization to education of Asian Americans



APPENDIX H: Identity-conscious interactional model of the formation of scholars

