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Leadership (API)phanies: A Comparative Case Study of Asian/Pacific Islander Women
Developing Leadership Identities

A dissertation submitted in the partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor
of Education

in
Educational Leadership
by
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Chair

University of California San Diego
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2019

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to all the people who do not see themselves currently represented in history books, politics, literature, movies, music, and media. I encourage you to find your inroads, your advocates, and your voice. Write your stories, tell your stories, and encourage new voices to do the same. Continue to insert yourself and your stories into the narrative. You matter. By sharing your story, you are part of legacy of change towards creating a more inclusive world where all narratives are valid and valued.

EPIGRAPH

Ho‘okahi leo ua lawa.
One voice is enough.

Ma Ka Hana Ka Ike. Ma Ka, Ike Ka Mana
Through work comes knowledge. Through knowledge comes power.

E kūlia i ka nu‘u.
Strive to reach the summit.

‘A‘ohe pau ka ‘ike i ka hālau ho‘okahi.
All knowledge is not learned in just one school.

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Since my doctoral journey began in January 2016, we have entered an incredibly tumultuous, yet beautiful time. Destructive narratives and a resurgence of isolationism have dominated our policies and our national dialogues, yet in the darkest of these times, beautiful rays of hope have entered the zeitgeist. People of historically marginalized identities have strengthened their voices, and challenged the status quo demanding their voices, stories, and perspectives be heard and honored.

This dissertation is a product of that shift of consciousness as it seeks to uplift and illuminate narratives that are often ignored in educational research. The writing that follows is a story of pain, challenges, love, support, and encouragement. It outlines how twenty women discovered themselves and became leaders in their communities. Highlighted in this dissertation is the role the community played throughout their personal and professional growth. Every woman I interviewed had people who encouraged her, provided opportunities, and cared for her. I would like to take a moment to honor and acknowledge those who did the same for me.

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PUBLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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by

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Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

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California State University, San Marcos, 2019

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Leadership skills continue to be a priority for the economy, therefore it is imperative for colleges and universities to meet this demand by developing leadership skills in their students. Although concepts of leadership have been explored throughout student development literature, there remains a lack of research on the process by which an undergraduate student develops a leadership identity. The Leadership Identity Development (LID) model was created using grounded theory research to provide guidance on this development process. Various studies have used the LID model as a theoretical framework to explore the leadership identity development of specific populations of undergraduate students including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender students and Hispanic female students. Asian/Pacific Islanders (API) are the second fastest growing racial population in the

United States and most reside in California, however, less than 1% of research articles in the most popular peer-reviewed journals of higher education pertain to API students, few of those pertaining to API leadership. This comparative case study utilized the LID model to better understand the leadership identity development of twenty API undergraduate female students in Southern California. Data analysis of the qualitative interviews revealed the women experienced leadership identity development trajectories that followed the progressive stages of the LID model. The influences of the participants' Inner Circles, Outer Circles, and Environmental Circles were critical to their leadership development. Additionally, the women developed personal styles of leadership that emphasized advocacy, care, and service, further proving that API women develop leadership identities in unique ways.

Keywords: Leadership, college, student leaders, Asian/Pacific Islanders, women

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

For decades, colleges and universities across the United States have emphasized the need for leadership development within the undergraduate experience through the participation in curricular and co-curricular activities (Astin, 1993; Kuh, 1993; HERI, 1996; Komives, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005; Haber, & Komives, 2009; Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, Osteen, 2009; Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). Curricular activities include experiences completed in the classroom or through academic work, whereas co-curricular activities, or the co-curriculum, are “experiences that contribute to a college student’s learning but are not part of the structured academic curriculum, which is traditionally credit bearing” (Martinez & Renn, 2002, p. 302). On average, co-curricular activities make up 30% of a student’s waking hours and can positively affect student’s development, self-concept, and persistence (Martinez & Renn, 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Astin, 1993). When undergraduate students engage in co-curricular leadership activities, they experience benefits such as: increased leadership abilities (Astin, 1993; Kuh, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), psychosocial development and higher levels of self-esteem (Chickering & Reisser, 1993), and persistence in college (Berger & Milem, 1999). In addition to the holistic, individual benefits of leadership development, the leadership development of college students also assists colleges and universities meet the changing demands of a globalized, knowledge economy.

In today’s interconnected world, the need for people to effectively work with one another has increased. Leadership was ranked as one of the top five soft skills every college student needs, alongside communication, interpersonal skills, time management, and problem solving (Holmes, 2014). In 2015, employers ranked leadership skills as the most important skill they sought in their future employees, with over 80% of employers seeking job

candidates who had proven leadership ability and experience through their university co-curricular activities (NACE). The World Economic Forum wrote that “the skills most sought after by employers will include problem solving, creative thinking, emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills. Such skills can be directly gained through leadership education” (Brookes, Wong, & Ho, 2017). Leadership proficiency continues to be a priority for the economy and therefore it is imperative for colleges and universities to meet this demand by developing leadership skills in their students.

Statement of the Problem

As the global workforce increases its need for college-educated leaders, it is important to explore how college students develop a leadership identity. There is an abundance of research on leadership theories (Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989), the ways in which college students practice leadership (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Dugan, Komives, & Segar, 2008), and how leadership intersects with other socially constructed identities such as race and gender (Arminio, Carter, Jones, Kruger, Lucas, Washington, Young, & Scott, 2000; Eagly, 2007, Kezar & Moriarty, 2000). However, there is very little research on the process by which college students develop a leadership identity, which is important to understand if institutions of higher education are to meet the economy’s identified needs.

Current research demonstrates that college student leadership development often relies on traditional, hierarchical paradigms of leadership. However, this paradigm does not resonate with the way women and student of color understand and define leadership (Eagly & Carli, 2004; Ely & Rhode, 2010; Eagly & Chin, 2010). There are very few studies that focus on the impact race and/or gender have on the practice of leadership (Arminio et al., 2000; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000). In the few studies that do explore how women of color experience leadership development, much of the research focuses on the

experiences of African American women (Martinez, Aleman, & Renn, 2002). There is very little research exploring the unique experiences of Latina and Asian American women. (Li, 2014). This research project seeks to fill that gap in the literature.

The Asian/Pacific Islander (API) population is one of the fastest growing racial populations in the United States. The 2010 U.S. Census Bureau found the Asian American population grew 46% between 2000 and 2010 and 10% between 2010 and 2013. This was a faster growth rate than any other racial group nationwide (API-GBV, 2017). Looking to the future, the U.S. Census Bureau projected that between 2014-2060, the Asian population will more than double, at a growth rate of 129%, making it the second-fastest growing racial population in the U.S. after the multiracial population which is expected to triple in population, growing at a rate of 220% (Frey, 2014). California, the state in which this study was conducted, is home to the nation's largest Asian American community (6.3 million people) and second largest Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander community (347,501 people) (API-GBV, 2017). More than one in seven Californian is either Asian American or Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander (CCO, 2015).

With the rapid growth of API populations, there has been, and will continue to be, a significant impact on public education systems in California, specifically impacting the systems of higher education of California, as 87% of Asian Americans and 73% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders (NHPI) begin their college careers in California's community colleges or four year universities (CCO, 2015). Although API enrollment in higher education has increased steadily over the past decade, the API college student experience remains severely understudied. Less than 1% of research articles in the most popular peer-reviewed journals of higher education pertain to API students (Museus & Kiang, 2009).

With a lack of academic research on the API college student experience, misperceptions and stereotypes have been perpetuated regarding API students, thereby making it more difficult for API populations to receive the resources and support they need to break through the “bamboo ceiling” and into leadership positions (Chang & Kiang, 2002; Hune, 2002; Museus & Chang, 2009). This gap in the literature demonstrates there is still much to be learned about the academic and personal development of API college students, including how they develop their leadership identity.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore Asian/Pacific Islander (API) female college students’ lived experiences as they developed their leadership identity. Although concepts of leadership have been explored through student development literature (Astin, 1993; Kuh, 1993, Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), there remains a lack of research on the process by which an undergraduate student develops a leadership identity (Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, Osteen, 2009). Using grounded theory research, the Leadership Identity Development (LID) model was created to better understand process of developing an identity as such (Komives, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005). Various studies have used the LID model as a theoretical framework to explore the leadership identity development of specific populations of undergraduate students including Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender students (Bilodeau & Renn, 2005) and Hispanic, female students (Onorato & Musoba, 2015). No studies in the extant literature addressed the unique leadership identity development of Asian/Pacific Islander, female, undergraduate students. If society is to become a place where API women are not underrepresented in leadership, we must begin by understanding their unique experiences of developing a leadership identity. Only then will we have an education system that promotes and prepares API women to

become leaders of the future. This study sought to fill that gap in the leadership literature by conducting a comparative case study exploring how the lived experiences of twenty API college women leaders affected their leadership identity development.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study included:

RQ1: What were the lived experiences of API female college students that influenced their leadership development process?

RQ2: Which of these experiences helped the API women progress further along in their leadership identity as outlined in the LID model?

Theoretical Framework

The LID model is a six-stage, progressive model that demonstrates how a person evolves in their conceptualization of leadership and their ability to be a leader (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella & Osteen, 2005). The LID model was developed through grounded theory research of thirteen undergraduate college students from a mid-Atlantic university. The study's participants had a racial composition of eight White students, one Asian American student, three African American students, and one African student, and a gender composition of eight men and five women. The LID model informed the data collection and data analysis for this study as it provided guidance for the individual interview questions and was used in secondary data analysis after initial coding was completed and the study's themes were identified.

Significance of Study

The role of educational systems is to create leaders of the future. Additionally, education systems should be developing research and practice that is inclusive of the needs of the rapidly changing student demographics. Currently, leadership development research, is

absent of research that helps us understand how diverse populations conceptualize and practice leadership, as well as how they develop their own leadership identity. With the rapidly changing identities of student bodies across the P-20 education pipeline, diverse perspectives are needed in leadership education and research, so that populations are not marginalized by current leadership pedagogy. With a rapid increase of women of color in education, particularly Asian/Pacific Islander students, there must be more research regarding the process by which API women develop a leadership identity. Only in doing so will we continue to build culturally proficient leadership education models that are inclusive of different ways of knowing and being.

Definitions

Asian/Pacific Islander

For purposes of this research project, participants identified as API per the definition by the Federal U.S. Census Bureau (2000) which defined Asian American to include “persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent” and defined Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander to include people who identified as “Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Guamanian or Chamorro, Fijian, Tongan, Marshallese peoples and encompasses the people within the United States jurisdictions of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia” (API-GBV, 2017).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Leadership was once understood as a fixed trait, an ability that one is born with or not. It was also once understood using a monolithic paradigm, that there was only one way to be a leader. However, researchers continue to demonstrate that leadership is a socially constructed paradigm heavily influenced by values, experiences, and cultures (Eagly & Carli, 2004; Klenke, 1996; Liu, 2010). Researchers have also found that there is a process by which people come to understand themselves as leaders thereby developing an identity as such (Komives, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005; Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, Osteen, 2009; Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, Osteen, 2006). Therefore, a leadership identity can be thought of as a socially constructed identity, similar to other socially constructed identities, such as race, gender, and sexual orientation. Socially constructed identities develop through people's interactions with peers, families, and societal and historical norms (Weber, 1998; Omi & Winant, 2015).

As colleges and universities continue to develop leaders of the future, it is important to understand how college students form their leadership identities and how this process impacts their view of themselves as leaders and their participation in college leadership opportunities. This following literature review explores the extant literature on socially constructed identities (including gender, race, and ethnic identity), intersectional identity development as well as leadership research including, the Leadership Identity Development model (Komives et al., 2005), and the intersections of leadership, gender and culture.

Social Construction of Identity and Student Development Theories

The social construction of identity, or social constructionism, posits that an individual's personal identity must be understood relative to the fluid nature of relationships, society, and history (Weber, 1998; Omi & Winant, 2015). Social constructionism has become a paradigm that student affairs practitioners and scholars have used to understand the development of college students' identities. Through theoretical constructs like intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1993) and models like the Multiple Dimensions of Identity (Abes, Jones, & McEwen, 2007), student affairs researchers can better understand how a person's experiences affect the development of their socially constructed identities. Research has shown that people inhabit multiple identities and those identities interact and influence one another. Furthermore, the salience of those identities change depending on the lived experiences of that person (Abes et al., 2007).

Student identity development research has not always been explored using the paradigm of social constructionism. College student identity development began with the use of principles of psychology. Early college student development research focused on the exploration of the moral, intellectual, psychologically changes one experienced (Chickering, 1969; Kohlberg, 1969, 1976; Perry, 1968; Erikson, 1959, 1963, 1968, 1980; Marcia, 1966). Student identity development theories and models were, and continue to be, heavily rooted in psychology.

Erikson (1959, 1963, 1968, 1980) explored how individuals experience psychosocial crises, or turning points, in their lives, and how the subsequent reflection on these turning points informed the psychological growth of an individual. Erikson's research on the psychosocial development of humans across a lifespan built the foundations from which many college student theories emerged. A core element of this research was the importance of

understanding the role of the person's environment on their development (Erikson; 1959, 1963, 1968, 1980). Building on Erikson's research, Chickering (1969) applied the principles of psychological growth and development to the experiences of college students. Chickering developed an understanding of how different "vectors" within the student experience developed simultaneously and contributed to a student's growth psychologically. Kohlberg (1969, 1976) explored the development of moral reasoning amongst college students. Perry (1968) examined the intellectual development of college students. Together these four researchers, developed the foundational theories that explored college student's growth intellectually, psychologically, and morally (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2009).

In the decades that followed, college student development research grew tremendously. As college student populations began to diversify, so did the research. As a result, there was an emphasis to explore the progression of socially constructed identities including: gender, race, sexual orientation, religion and spirituality, and the how these identities intersected and influenced one another. The following sections explore the details of socially constructed identities that may be most prevalent in this study.

Female Identity Development

To study female identity development is to study how a woman comes to understand her gender. Whereas sex is the biological assignment of male or female through their biological traits, gender is how a person perceives and exhibits their "maleness" or "femaleness". Gender is a socially constructed identity and the expression of one's gender is influenced by cultural norms. At times, a person's gender and gender expression do not align. If a person is "cisgender," her sex, gender, and gender expression align in the "traditional" sense (Bilodeau, 2009). If she identifies as "transgender," her sex, gender, and

gender expression are not congruent (Lev, 2004). Due to the complexities of sex, gender, and gender expression, there is not consistent terminology or agreement of what “masculinity” and “femininity” consists of. Because of the interpretive nature and definition of gender and related concepts, there are a wide range of theories related to gender identity development, all which approach the subject in a slightly different manner. Due to the subjective nature of socially constructed identities, there is no correct or incorrect way to be female or male.

Female ego development. Josselson (1978, 1991) is often cited as the first researcher in college student development who explored the unique identity development processes of women. In her cornerstone lifespan development study, Josselson selected 60 college women, ages 20 to 22, from four different universities, and followed their development over a 22-year period. Josselson interviewed the women during college, their thirties, and their forties, looking to understand how the women’s egos and their sense of self-esteem or importance, changed throughout their lives. She concluded that as the women developed their sense of self, they focused more on the person they wanted to be and they depended on relationships for relationship sake (Josselson, 1978, 1991). This was the first study to find that women and men differ in their development of identity of self.

Female moral development. Gilligan (1982) researched the moral development of women and published her findings in her seminal piece, *In a Different Voice*. Her study was conducted in reaction to Kohlberg’s research (1981) on the moral development, which concluded women were unable to develop as fully as men. Gilligan disagreed with Kohlberg and believed that Kohlberg’s moral reasoning model, which valued autonomy and universal justice (Romer, 1991), was an inappropriate standard of measurement to explore women’s moral reasoning. Gilligan believed women understood morality differently than men and,

through her research, found there was evidence to support this claim as the women cited care and responsibility as their moral compass when decision making. She concluded men and women develop differently in their moral reasoning.

Gender Schema Theory

Bem's (1983, 1993) research on "gender schema theory" explored the process by which men and women are socialized to practice gender appropriate behaviors. She concluded gender schema develops through the constant flow of interpersonal, intrapersonal, and epistemological development and that these three processes guided a person's gender socialization. First, Bem argued that individuals learn their society's culture of maleness and femaleness during childhood as they interact with society, and this learning of gender norms is influenced by the strength at which that society defines maleness and femaleness. Second, people begin to place ideas and concepts into gendered categories, or schemas, through their cognitive sorting mechanisms. Bem found the individual's perception of maleness and femaleness was a process of perception which developed from a constructive process between incoming information and pre-constructed categories. Lastly, individuals construct their own personality, identity, and self-concept within these gender-based categories. Bem (1982) concluded these three processes complete a gender schema, which guides how a person is socialized into their gender, thereby affecting their thoughts and actions about themselves, resulting gender identity development.

Bem's gender schema theory in college. Examples of Bem's (1982) research on gender schema are prevalent on college campuses and are evidenced through college students' academic major selections, career aspirations, and participation in student life. Studies show that men are underrepresented in careers such as teaching, nursing, and social work, whereas women remain underrepresented in science, technology, math, and engineering fields

(National Center for Education Statistics, 2008). These gendered trends are not just evident in the students who select these majors, but also, in the professors who teach these subjects (Li, 2007).

Within college student career aspirations, researchers found women believe they will be successful in careers “assigned” to their gender rather than in “cross-gender” careers (Phillips & Imhoff, 1997; Coogen & Chen, 2006). Within the rates of participation of undergraduate co-curricular activities on college campuses, almost twice as many women than men expressed interest in participating in leadership opportunities such as study abroad and community service. Researchers believe this finding occurred because study abroad and community service included more the “feminine traits” of “cross-cultural appreciation and taking care of the community” (Desoff, 2006; Hurtado, Griffin, Arellano, & Cuellar, 2008). Within the rates of college student conduct and discipline, men have been involved at much higher rates than women in student misconduct, which some researchers have attributed to the gender schema of men having stunted emotional development (Ludeman, 2004).

Research shows that gender influences the way a person develops intellectually, morally, and psychologically, and as Bem (1982) posited, much of this difference is due to the way in which men and women are socialized in their society. This socialization, in turn, affects the ways in which men and women participate in college, including the subjects they study, the jobs they apply for, and the leadership opportunities they participate in. Therefore, to understand leadership identity development, it is critical to explore the impact of gender.

Racial and Ethnic Identity Development

In addition to gender identity development, student development research on racial and ethnic identities has increased and provided insight as to these factors affect a person’s

understanding of themselves and their performance in education. While racial identity models explore how an oppressed person navigates their reactions to the dominant group's oppression, ethnic identity models explain how characteristics of one's identity are gained and sustained (Helms, 1995).

Racial identity development. Racial identity development models are rooted in the psychosocial ego identity development models (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966). Seminal research on the identity development of a racial/ethnic minority college student can be found in the five stage Racial and Cultural Identity Development model (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1979, 1989, 1993, 1998) located in Table 1 below. This model explores the progressive development of a racial and cultural identity and has become the framework from which many other individual racial identity development models are based.

The model provided guidance in the development of other racial identity development models which have examined Black (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001), White (Helms, 1995), Latino/a (Gallegos and Ferdman, 2007), Native American (Horse, 2001) and Asian (Kim, 1981, 2001) identity development processes. Racial development models continue to be used within student affairs to better understand the role that race plays in a person's' self-identity.

Table 1: The Five Stages of Racial and Cultural Identity Development

Stage	Description
Stage 1: Conformity	The individual identifies with White culture and does not identify with their own racial heritage and cultural practices and values.
Stage 2: Dissonance	The individual begins to explore their own culture or heritage and questions the White cultural norms they have been assimilated into.
Stage 3: Resistance and Immersion	The individual begins build their new identity by learning more about their own culture while distancing themselves from White culture.
Stage 4: Introspection	The individual seeks to integrate their new identity into the dominant culture without compromising their cultural values.
Stage 5: Synergistic Articulation and Awareness	The individual feels confident in their ability to define their identity, appreciate other cultures and balance their heritage with the dominant culture.

Asian racial identity development. Currently, there is only one prominent racial identity development theory focused on the Asian population and no theory illuminating the experiences of Pacific Islander students (Kim, 1981, 2001). A limitation of having an Asian identity development model, is that the Asian race is one of the most ethnically diverse groups in the country (Huang, 1997), therefore comparing the “Asian” experience across ethnicities may not be completely representative of the diversity within the racial group. In order to capture the intricacies of individuals’ cultures on their identity, some have used ethnic identity models to provide light on those differences.

Ethnic identity development. Ethnic identity has been explored through many different fields of study including anthropology, sociology, and psychology. Due to the subjective nature of the ethnicity, there is currently no universal definition of what ethnic identity means. Ethnic identity can refer to many facets of identity within a culture including

“nationality, ancestry, religion, language, culture and history to which personal and social meaning of group identity are usually attached” (Cokley, 2007, p. 518).

One way ethnic identity has been understood has been to separate ethnicity into external and internal components (Breton, Isajiw, Kalbach, & Reitz, 1990). External components include cultural behaviors such as language, media, traditions, and friendship groups, whereas internal components are more complex and can include self-images, knowledge of cultural heritage, and moral obligation to group, and feelings of attachment to ethnic group (Breton et al., 1990).

Other theories explore how the ethnic identity of a person of color is formed when they live in a society where Whiteness is privileged and where non-White cultural practices are subordinate to Whiteness. For example, Berry (1993) outlined the four distinct stages college students of color pass through while they navigate their subordinate culture within the dominant culture of Whiteness. The stages include: 1) assimilation- an individual identifies with only the dominant culture and rejects their own culture, 2) marginalize- an individual separates from the host culture and native culture, 3) separate- an individual identifies with only their native culture, and 4) integrate- an individual balances the host and native cultures and integrates aspects of both in their identity. Torres (1999) agreed that students from a non-White ethnicity must learn to navigate the majority White culture as well as their own cultural values, and therefore report they must learn to navigate a bi-cultural value system in college.

As students navigate this bi-cultural system, they can experience and internalize negative messages about their culture. This racism can be communicated overtly through racial slurs or attacks, or covertly, through subtle microaggressions, or invalidations of one’s culture (Sue, 2010). All of these factors can negatively affect self-esteem, however,

researchers have found that positive ethnic identity is an important factor in healthy self-esteem and psychological well-being (Umaña-Taylor, 2004; Umaña-Taylor & Shin, 2007). With ethnic identity research in its infancy, more research is needed to understand the impact of ethnic identity development on college student development (Phinney & Ong, 2007).

Intersectional Identity Development Models

Every individual inhabits multiple identities at any one time, including but not limited to, gender, ethnicity, religious/spirituality affiliation, and sexuality. The development of these identities is in constant motion, occur simultaneously, and affect a student's participation in college activities (Dessoff, 2006; Hurtado, Griffin, Arellano, 2007), their levels of self-esteem (Umaña-Taylor, 2004; Umaña-Taylor & Shin, 2007), and can dictate how they navigate social systems (Berry, 1993). Intersectionality research explains how people embody various socially constructed identities at a specific moment in time and therefore, each socially constructed identity does not exist in a vacuum.

Reynolds and Pope (1991) were the first student development theorists to explore how multiple identities interacted and affected a college student's identity development. Using several case studies, Reynolds and Pope (1991) explored identity resolution for individuals who belonged to multiple oppressed groups. This research challenged past identity models, which were one dimensional models, and acknowledged the simultaneous impact of multiple identities on a person's lived experience.

Deaux (1993) believed that people embodied social identities and personal identities and that these identities were distinct, yet related. He stated, people embody "social identities" (such as the role of a parent or a friend), "membership categories" (belonging to a

religious or racial group), and that a person's "traits and behaviors" are "typically linked to one or more of the identity categories" (Deaux, 1993, p.6). Reynolds and Pope (1991) and Deaux (1993) were the first theorists in college student development research to acknowledge the importance of understanding identity development through a wide lens, exploring multiple identities at once. They did not, however, provide a conceptual understanding of how these multiple identities worked together to develop one another. Their research was foundational to the development of the model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity which outlined the process by which multiple identities influenced a student's development (Abes et al., 2007; Jones, 1997, Jones and McEwen, 2000).

Multiple dimensions of identity. Using pillars of Reynolds and Pope (1991) and Deaux (1993), Jones and McEwen (2000) created the Multiple Dimensions of Identity (MDI) Model (Figure 1) which became the first conceptual framework to help student affairs practitioners understand the relationship between the simultaneous development of multiple socially constructed identities. Using data collected through open-ended interviews from ten diverse undergraduate college women, they explored the internal and interpersonal processes the participants believed influenced their identity development. The core finding that emerged was that contextual influences including: "race, culture, gender, family, education, relationships with those different from oneself, and religion" (Jones & McEwen, 2000, p.408) influenced the construction of one's identity. The research findings also solidified that identity development relies on an interplay between the intrapersonal (internal socialized identified) and interpersonal (a person's environment), therefore, internal identities are affected by external contexts. Jones and McEwen (2000) also noted that sociocultural conditions (i.e. sexism or racism) affected the levels of salience, or commitment to, one or

more identities. They found the “salience of an identity dimension was rooted in internal awareness and external scrutiny (e.g. Race for Black women), and lack of salience seemed prevalent among those more privileged identity dimensions (e.g. Sexual orientation for heterosexual women)” (Jones & McEwen, 2000, p.410). This finding suggested those who experienced privilege in the society were less likely to find importance in those privileged identities, whereas “when difference was experienced, identity was shaped (Jones & McEwen, 2000, p. 410).

The Multiple Dimensions of Identity (MDI) Model diverged from previous identity development models, because it was a model that did not rely on static, progressive stages, rather it emphasized fluidity and took into consideration the influence of changing contextual situations. The MDI model includes three parts: the core, intersecting dimensions, and societal context. Within the core, women described themselves using characteristics and attributes (ex. responsible, optimistic) and the intersecting circles represented the various identity dimensions (ex. race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion and social class). The dots located on each circle, represented the level of salience of the identity; the closer the dot was located to the core, the stronger the salience of the identity was. Lastly, the outer circle surrounding the atom shape, represented the context of the person’s life (ex. sociocultural conditions and family background).

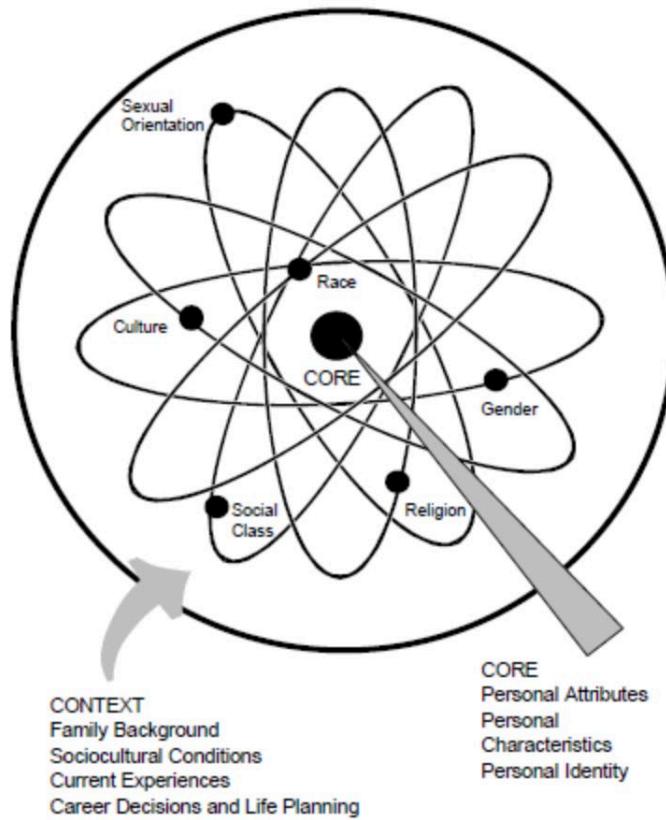


Figure 1: Multiple Dimensions of Identity Model

Reconceptualized multiple dimensions of identity. The MDI model was the first model in student development that conceptualized how various socially constructed identities concurrently develop within an individual. The MDI model was later reconceptualized to include the role of external contextual influences (friends, family, stereotypes, sociopolitical conditions and salience of identities) and meaning making capacity of the individual (Abes, Jones, & McEwan, 2007). The reconceptualized model can be found below in Figure 2 (Komives et al., 2009).

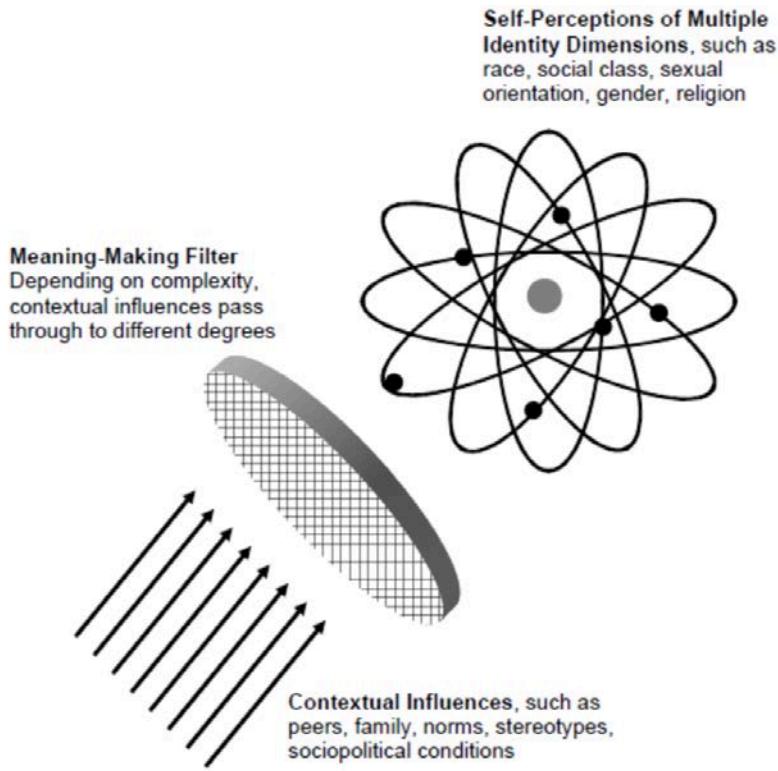


Figure 2: The Reconceptualized Model of Multiple Identities

Leadership Identity Development Theories

A leadership identity is one that is socially constructed identity as well as it is able to be perceived by self and others and is influenced by a person's interaction with others and the environment (Lord & Hall, 2005, Lord & Brown, 2004). Komives et al. (2005) also described leadership as both a personal and social identity, one that highlighted "an awareness that [one] can make a difference and can work effectively with others to accomplish change" (p.1). Due to the subjective nature of leadership as an identity, there is no single way to describe a leader or the practice of leadership. Therefore, the following sections describe the various ways in which research has explored leadership and its connection with other socially constructed identities.

Leadership Identity Development and Culture

Research has shown that a student's racial identity influences the way they become involved in leadership activities during their time in college (Tatum, 1997; Murray, 1994, Arminio, Carter, Jones, Kruger, Lucas, Washington, Young, & Scott, 2000; Hoppe, 1998; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000; Liang, Lee, & Ting, 2002). In fact, the research on the intersection of culture and leadership demonstrates that "cultural cognition may shape the development of leadership identity" (Komives et al., 2009, p. 25). Therefore, a person's understanding of their race and/or ethnicity will affect their understanding of their abilities and their identity as a leader (Helms, 1990).

Arminio et al. (2000) explored the leadership experiences of college student leaders of color using phenomenological research approach. They interviewed 106 undergraduate student leaders of color (African American, Asian American, Latino/a) to understand their unique leadership experiences. The first important finding was that most students interviewed did not identify with the word leader, and at times resented the term, as they felt it "separated them from other students in their racial group" (p.500) and, for some, meant were part of the system of oppressors. Second, some students felt their leadership development isolated them from their cultural groups, as they became assimilated to White leadership culture. This was evident to them when friends accused them of acting or speaking "White." Third, some students did not associate the word leader with a negative connotation, rather it was just not a word they used to describe themselves. Fourth, almost all students in the study spoke about being a leader "not for their personal benefit" but rather for the "importance of the team or group." And talked about their "responsibility to their race and to their community" (p. 504). Fifth, students of color, often sought out mentors that were the same

race and gender. Lastly, the groups most students of color wanted to be involved in were groups that were “honest, open, and collaborative.” (p.505). Although this research provided great insight into the unique leadership experiences of college students of color, the data was not disaggregated to understand the nuanced experiences by cultural group.

Other interesting research on the intersection of leadership and culture highlighted that students of color, including API students, who attended predominantly White institutions have experienced being targets of racism, discrimination, and microaggressions while on campus (Hooks, 1994; Tatum 1997, Young and Takeuchi, 1998). Hune (1998) found that API students often “experience a ‘chilly climate’ in the academy and encounter barriers in the academic pipeline” (p.3). Hune continued that racial, gender, class, and cultural biases are often a “subtle, part of the campus climate, and hidden in classrooms, advisement, the curriculum, and other academic sites” (p.6). In order to combat this racial oppression and the chilly campus climate, students of color will participate and develop ethnic-centered college student organizations to provide spaces where they could feel comfortable and able to develop in their leadership, advocacy, and ethnic identity (Ko, 2012). Ethnic centered co-curricular student organizations have positively shaped the leadership experiences and outcomes of racial/ethnic minority students on college campuses (Gonzalez, 2003; Guiffrida, 2003; Harper & Quaye, 2007; Kuh & Love, 2000). Participation in ethnic cultural student organization can play a crucial role in helping students feel a sense of belonging on campus (Wang, Sedlacek, and Westbrook, 1992), have a stronger commitment to their racial community’s interests (Inkelas, 2004), and advocate towards making the campus climate more inclusive (Rhoads, Lee, and Yamada, 2002).

Asian/Pacific Islanders and leadership development. Most of the extant literature on leadership and culture centered around the White and Black paradigm (Hune & Chan, 1997). For example, Yammarino and Jung (1998) found only four articles that pertained to leadership and Asian Americans. However, with the growth of API student populations in higher education, the literature on student leadership has followed suite. Researchers found that with API students, there are often conflicts between common leadership traits such as assertiveness, public speaking, self-confidence, and offering differing opinions (Astin, 1993) and traditional Asian American cultural values including: “deference to authority, humility, preferring harmony over conflict, and attending to group needs over individual desires” (Liang, Lee, Ting, 2002, p.82). Hune posited, these cultural differences between the “dominant American and Asian Pacific American values, communication skills, and leadership styles” are often used to explain why “qualified Asian Pacific Americans are underrepresented in managerial levels of corporations, the government, and academe” (Hune, 1998, p.16).

Racial stereotypes often depict Asians as shy, passive, quiet, and traditional (Lin, Kwan, Cheung, and Fiske, 2005). Hune (1998) stated the belief that Asian students are quiet, is a misinterpretation of the differences between American values of individualism and aggressiveness and API values of seniority and restraint. These cultural values are shown in the way Asian Americans lead, as one study found Asian Americans were less assertive than White Americans (Zane, Sue, Hu, and Kwon, 1991). This difference in communication style is heavily rooted in cultural norms and highlights a disconnect between American leadership norms and API cultural values.

Park, Lin, Poon, & Chang (2008) analyzed 35 years of data from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey, which is administered yearly to over 600 colleges and universities. Their goal was to better understand how Asian American college freshman participate in civic engagement, specifically focusing on the areas of “community service, political engagement, and the capacity for civic engagement” (p.76). They found that among Asian American students, there expressed a strong “desire to influence political structures, serve as community leaders, improve race relations, and to be volunteers in their communities” (p.90). Higher percentages of the API students, than the overall first-year college student population, indicated that promoting racial understanding was “an important or essential objective in their lives” (p.89). As the data was disaggregated further, interesting findings revealed that API first year students who were not native English speakers and API students who were non-citizens ranked promoting racial understanding and being a community leader higher than their native English speaking and US citizen API student counterparts.

Liu and Sedlacek (1998) found that API students were motivated to participate in leadership that promoted ending violence, crime, and racism. These motivations have led to Asians on college campuses forming “panethnic coalitions” (Espiritu, 1992) which have served as vessels to address inequities on campus including advocating for the addition of Asian American studies programs, resource centers, and greater representation in faculty and staff (Omatsu, 1994). The Model Minority Myth often depicts Asian Americans as only focused on academics (Suzuki, 2002), however, multiple studies demonstrate a strong history of civic engagement and social justice leadership in the API student community.

Leadership Identity Development and Gender

Research has shown that women experience leadership differently than men (Astin & Leland, 1991; Jones 1997; Klenke, 1996; Eagly & Carli, 2004, 2007; Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Haber & Komives, 2009; Dugan & Komives, 2007). Women have different leadership styles than men (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Haber & Komives, 2009), have lower levels of leadership self-efficacy than men (Dugan & Komives, 2007), and experience different leadership challenges than men such as the “double bind” phenomenon (Eagly & Carli, 2004, 2007). Studies have shown female leaders use their leadership differently than men and are more apt to advocate for disenfranchised communities, work through differences, and form coalitions and collaborations than their male counterparts (Rutgers, 2016).

Women’s leadership tends to emphasize interpersonal relationships, promotes collectivism rather than individualism, highlights the responsibility for others, empowers others to act, and is more democratic and egalitarian in nature (Astin & Leland, 1991; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Haber & Komives, 2009). However, women often report feeling pressure to adapt more masculine approaches to leadership including being more autocratic and direct (Eagly & Carli, 2004, 2007). Ironically, when women adopt this approach, it is often met with resistance from both men and women, (Eagly & Carli, 2004, 2007). This creates a leadership “double bind,” a conundrum where women feel unsuccessful in either approach to leadership. The double bind phenomenon is described in the Merriam Webster’s dictionary as, “a situation in which a person is confronted with two irreconcilable demands or a choice between two undesirable courses of action.” Eagly (2007) further clarified the double bind of women in leadership when she stated “if women lead in ways that are typically considered masculine, they are perceived to be too aggressive while women who behave in

ways historically considered as feminine are seen as too soft” (Onorato & Musoba, 2015, p. 29).

Recent research shows that although women ranked themselves as more likely to employ practices related to leadership and social change, they ranked themselves lower on their scores of leadership self-efficacy than their male counterparts (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Self-efficacy is the “belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p.3). This data established that although women leaders have a stronger emphasis on social change and leadership than men, they are less likely to believe in their ability to be a leader when compared to men.

Kezar and Moriarty (2000) analyzed 9,731 college student surveys (participants racial and gender breakdown included 4,437 White males, 4,730 White females, 209 African American males, and 355 African American females) and found that “on average, men rated themselves 14% higher than women on their leadership ability and almost 13% higher on public speaking ability.” They found that “positional leadership experiences did not appear to be important in the development of leadership-related skills for Caucasian women, African American men, and African American women” (p.67). They concluded, “women and African American students might favor a more collaborative approach or a shared leadership style and not view public speaking as integral in their role as an elected leader” (Kezar & Moriarty, 2000, p.67). This was a study that found that women and people of color may have very different views on what is important to being a leader than White men.

Leadership Identity Development and the Intersections of Race and Gender

When one combines the effects of race and ethnicity with gender, there are also effects on the way one understands and practices leadership. On a positive note, Park, Lin, Poon, &

Chang (2008) found that Asian Americans were slightly more likely than the national population of first years to have volunteered during their last year in high school. When the data was disaggregated further, they found Asian American women were consistently more likely than Asian American men to prioritize community involvement and therefore participated in higher levels of service. Interestingly, this wasn't always the case, as the researchers noted that since 1971 (when the data set began), Asian American women went from being ten points behind men in their desire to become a community leaders to now being essentially equal in their belief that it is "very important" to be community leaders (p.87).

There are also negative consequences to being an API woman. Hune (1998) found API women differed in their life experiences from API men, as they were often subjected to "double oppressions," as they were both a person of color and a woman. For example, API women reported they "struggle daily in society against gender stereotypes that converge with racial stereotypes" such as the "exotic/erotic stereotypes" which could "lead to unwanted advances and sexual exploitation" (Hune, 1998, p.10). Hune continued, "in the convergence of sexual and racial stereotypes and sex and race discrimination, women of color are especially vulnerable and are often viewed as both subordinate workers and sexual objects" (p.11). As she interviewed the women about these experiences, many of them could not tell which identity was more oppressed (Hune, 1998).

API women found it difficult to be a leader, due to the existence of the double bind phenomenon. Some API women reported they felt "their professional progress is impeded because they are considered to be too outspoken and aggressive when they are simply being assertive" (Hune, 1998, p.16). This may be the reason why Park et al. (2008) found that "Asian American males (32.1%) were slightly more likely to rank themselves as high in

public speaking ability when compared to Asian American females (28.7%) in 2005” (p. 86).

API women may believe that “being assertive is not always welcomed” and it may “be detrimental to their professional advancement” (Hune, 1998, p.10).

API women may also feel marginalized by the classroom environment and the curriculum as many universities “remain culturally masculine and European, governed by middle class, and sometimes upper class, norms and values” (Hune, 1998, p.3). For example, there was an absence of multicultural curriculum, including Asian American studies, and the curriculum focused on Euro-centric history and male figures. For API women, “not seeing themselves or their communities meaningfully reflected in their studies, they have less to say” (Hune, 1998, p.23). In Hune’s (1998) study, she found that many of the used women’s studies and ethnic studies courses as an academic refuge, a place where they felt valued and heard. Additionally, for some students, this chilly climate extended to their relationships with peers and faculty and their reaction was to remain silent and appear passive (Hune, 1998). Many API women stated that having more inclusive curriculum, such as Asian American studies, could help establish a “classroom climate that is inclusive, cooperative, and non-threatening” (Hune, 1998, p.23).

Leadership Identity Development Model

The Leadership Identity Development (LID) model (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005) is currently the only framework available to understand how a person develops an understanding of themselves as a leader. The LID model was developed through grounded theory research of thirteen undergraduate students by exploring leadership experiences across their lifespan. The researchers then used comparative methods to code the themes in the data and developed a stage model to understand how people thought of

themselves as leaders. According to Komives et al. (2005) the six progressive stages of the LID model include:

Table 2: The Progressive Stages of the Leadership Identity Development Model

Stage Name	Description
Stage 1: Awareness	An individual acknowledges that leadership happens, but does not actively participate in leadership.
Stage 2: Exploration/Engagement	An individual intentionally seeks out, and participates in, leadership opportunities.
Stage 3: Leader Identified	An individual defines leadership as a positional role, one that could be held by themselves or others.
Stage 4: Leadership Differentiated	An individual begins to transition in their understanding of leadership. In this stage, leadership shifts from a positional identity to an actions-based identity. An individual acknowledges that leadership can be practiced anywhere, by anyone.
Stage 5: Generativity	An individual shows a strong commitment to using leadership as a way to develop others and sustain a particular group and/or organization.
Stage 6: Internalization/Synthesis	An individual strives for lifelong learning and personal development, and is able to see organizational complexity across contexts.

Although there are six stages of progressive leadership development, this model can also be understood in a way that is more cyclical and demonstrated the influences of external and internal factors. As Figure 3 demonstrates, people are influenced at every stage of leadership development by different factors (Komives et al., 2009, p.15).

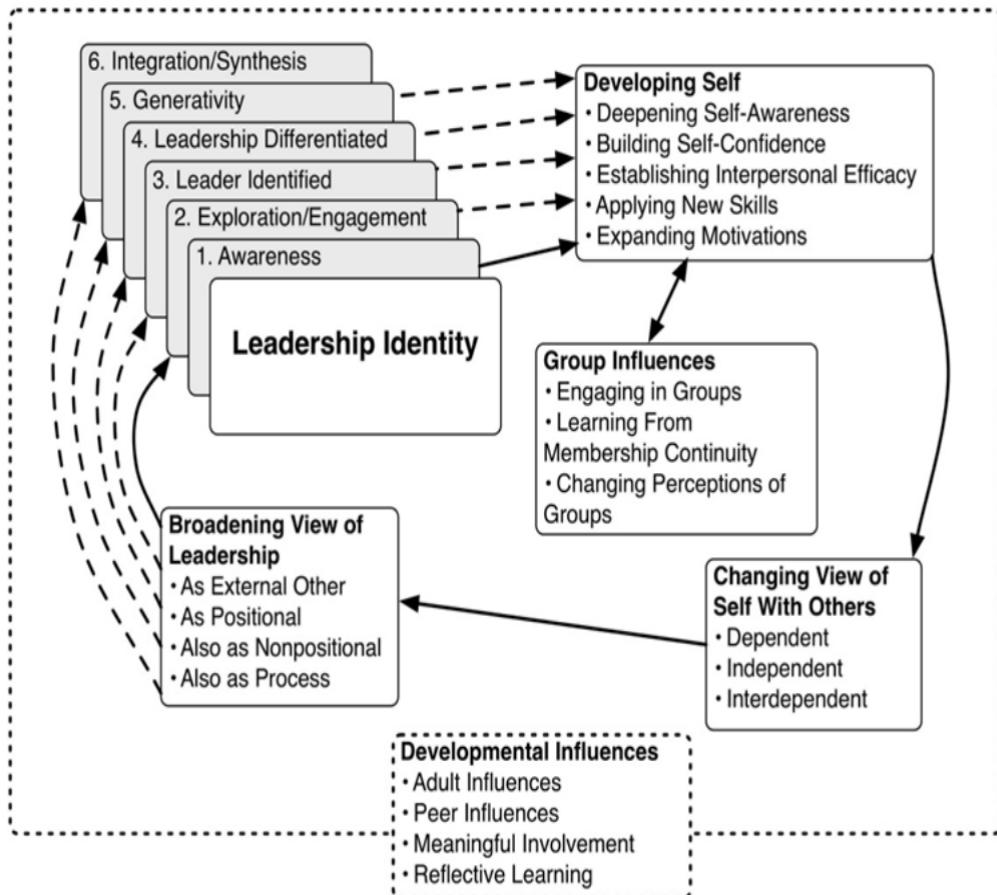


Figure 3: Leadership Identity Development Model (Cyclical Version)

According to Komives et al. (2005), participants cited the influence of developmental components (i.e. role of peers and adults in their lives) as well as environments and their engagement in groups. As the students moved through the stages, they noted internal changes such as a growing sense of self-awareness and self-confidence. They also found changes in their relationships with others, moving from being dependent on another to being interdependent. Ultimately, these internal changes and their views on relationships with others, influenced their views of leadership and their ability to be a leader.

Although the LID model explores the process by which a person develops a leadership identity development, it does not provide a full picture of how other socially-constructed

identities influence one's leadership development. Therefore, it is important to survey the existing literature to have a breadth of understanding of this. Hall (2004) stated identity is "the most important aspect" of leadership development (p.154). The following sections will outline what research has been done to understand how various identities intersect with leadership.

Leadership Identity Development and Intersecting Identities

Leadership identity development occurs differently for women and ethnic minorities (Arminio et al., 2007; Eagly, 2007; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000), however, more information is needed on the how the intersection of ethnicity and gender affect leadership (Jones, 1997; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000; Torres, 2003). Onorato and Musoba (2015) used a case study format and collected qualitative data from 11 Hispanic women in order to understand the unique experiences of Hispanic college women's leadership identity development. The women stated that although they were leaders, they did not want to use the word leader to describe themselves because they did not want to stand out from their peers. This finding was congruent with Arminio et al.'s (2000) finding that students of color shied away from the title of leader. Similarly, Boatwright and Egidio (2003) found that women student leaders are uncomfortable with the title of leader.

Onorato and Musoba (2015) found that relationships played a large role throughout their leadership journey. Other studies have shown that a woman's sense of identity is dependent on their context of connection with others through building and maintaining relationships (Gilligan, 1977; Josselson, 1991). The Hispanic women in Onorato and Musoba's study (2015) were often pushed into leadership roles through close family and friends and, more specifically, women that they admired. The women reported those who

pushed them into the leadership roles provided conflicting messages regarding females in leadership positions. The women reported they received messages that encouraged them to allow the men in their lives to make decisions, but were also told to rely on themselves and not to rely on a man. The women wanted to believe that the concept of leadership was gender-neutral, however, they often provided examples of when they received female specific messages about how leadership should be practiced.

One of the participants reflected on how the conflicting gendered messages reinforced the double bind women in leadership positions must navigate. She stated,

What I do hate about women and leadership is that once you are in that position, the subject of labels arises, and if you're the aggressive woman leader then you are a... bitch, or you're a feminazi. There are so many labels and obstacles...you're not the aggressive woman then you're a what? Everyone thinks they can roll over you. But the guy, he's just being the boss. (Onorato & Musoba, 2015, p. 27)

The women reported feeling more oppression as a female, than as a Hispanic female. They stated they felt this way because at least in their culture they knew the cultural expectations (Onorato & Musoba, 2015). In Arminio et al.'s study (2000) on student leaders of color, women spoke about the concept of a "double oppression," or feeling oppressed by both their race as well as their gender. For example, an Asian American woman stated, "I'm aware of not fitting the stereotypic, shy Asian woman image, but I get frustrated by how I see Asians just going with the status quo and not pushing things more, trying to gain more of a voice." (p. 504). This particular student highlighted the fact that, when combined, race and gender affected the messages she received as an Asian woman.

All identities, including leadership identity, are constructed under the influence of cultural, social, political, and historical norms and values (Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, Osteen, 2009); therefore, when exploring a person's leadership identity

development, it is important to consider the impact of these various influences. When using the LID model to understand students' experiences with leadership, it is important to "acknowledge the ways leadership identity intersects with other dimension of identity such as race, culture, sexual orientation, gender, disability, religion, and social class" (Komives et al., 2009, p. 24). In the grounded theory research on the LID model, it was documented that students of color described their understanding of Stage Three in a more collectivist ways, which helped researchers conclude that "students of color may experience the LID stages differently than their White peers" (Komives et al., 2009, p. 24), further emphasizing the need to understand how different groups of people experience the LID model.

Summary

It is important to recognize that women and men develop differently from one another. Additionally, when cultural norms and other identities intersect, they influence the way a person understands the world and their ability to participate in it, including one's understanding of leadership and their ability to be a leader. For years, leadership research was developed using mostly White male participants and emphasized hierarchies, competition, and delineation between leaders and followers (Kezar & Moriarty, 2000). However, as student populations continued to diversify, researchers began to understand that those models of leadership did not serve or resonate with the different student populations. Therefore, the study of leadership has evolved and now includes different philosophies of leadership, various measurements for leadership, and different pedagogical approaches to teaching leadership (Komives et al., 2009). However, not enough attention has been paid to leadership development across a lifespan (Avolio & Gibbons, 1989; Lord & Hall, 2005) or to an individual's development of a leadership self-concept (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Cremer, Hogg, 2005), or leadership identity (Komives et al. 2005, 2009).

The LID model (Komives et al. 2005, 2009) provided a conceptual model to understand how an individual develops a leadership identity. This model was developed using a diverse group of students in a university in the mid-Atlantic United States. Other researchers have used the LID model on more specific populations to understand nuanced differences in leadership development amongst different groups of people. The LID model has been used to explore Hispanic female college students' leadership experiences (Onorato & Musoba, 2015) and the LGBT college student leadership experience (Bilodeau & Renn, 2005), however, it has not yet been used to explore API female student leadership identity development.

Across leadership research and educational research, the lives and experiences of women of color are often undertheorized because "even the most progressive understandings of race fail to account for the intersections that capture the multidimensional experiences that women of color might confront" (Zamudio, Russell, Rios, & Bridgeman, 2011, p. 39-40). Of the intersectional research that does exist regarding women of color, much of the research highlights the experiences of African American women (Martinez Aleman, & Renn, 2002) and rarely addressed the unique experiences of Asian American women (Li, 2014). This research project provided insight into the unique experiences of API women leaders.

Leadership education cannot be treated as "culture free or independent of larger issues of race and racism in the United States, but rather must infuse these concepts into developing opportunities for students to explore their identity and leadership styles in a cultural context" (Liang, Lee, & Ting, 2002, p.87). With the rapid growth of API student populations across education, there was a critical need to know more about how API women develop leadership identities, so that educators and education administrators can provide leadership education,

supervision, and interventions that promote leadership identity development in a culturally responsive way.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Chapter One established the need to explore the ways in which Asian/Pacific Islander (API) female college students develop a leadership identity. The second chapter reviewed the extant literature on socially constructed identities and leadership development. Chapter Three describes the research design methodology used to explore the leadership identity development of twenty undergraduate, female API student leaders.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore Asian/Pacific Islander (API) female college students' lived experiences as they developed their leadership identity. The comparative case study approach was selected because the study was exploratory in nature and this approach allowed the flexibility to dive deeply into each participant, as well as to compare and contrast the individual cases, in order to find themes across the twenty cases of leadership (Yin, 2014; Salkind, 2010). Comparative case studies use cases that are bounded by time and place, within a real-life, contemporary setting (Yin, 2014). Therefore, the bounded criteria in this comparative case study included: gender (female), ethnicity (Asian and/or Pacific Islander) student status (undergraduate student), university (Research University in Southern California), and leadership status (recommended as a leader by a university staff member).

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study included:

- RQ1: What are the lived experiences of API female college students that influenced their leadership development process?
- RQ2: Which of these experiences helped the API female college students progress deeper in the leadership scale as outlined in the LID model?

Theoretical Framework

I utilized the theoretical framework the Leadership Identity Development model (Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, Osteen, 2006), developed from grounded theory research on college students, as a framework to develop the interview questions. After the initial coding was completed and themes were found, I compared the LID model to my findings to see how the LID model fit in to the different circles of influence.

Participants

Participants spanned different ages, years at the university, birth order in their nuclear family, generations as a United States citizen, ethnicity, sexual orientation and transfer student status. According to the LID model, leadership is not bound by a position, therefore, participants in this study were not required to hold formal leadership positions to participate in the study, rather, they were recommended to the study a university staff member who believed they embodied leadership qualities. Table 3 provides a brief overview of all twenty participants' demographics.

Table 3: Overview of Participants' Demographics

Pseudonym	Year	Major	Birth Order	Generation (Citizen)	Ethnicity	Other Salient Identities
Alice	3rd	Computer Engineering	Oldest	2	Chinese	
Alma Sage	NA	Biochemistry	Oldest	4	Japanese	
Andrea	2nd	International Business, Communication	Youngest	2	Filipino, Vietnamese	Queer
Anoushka	2nd	Psychology	Youngest	Intl. Student	Indian	
Audrey	3rd	Clinical Psychology	Youngest	2	Filipino, Chinese	
Bianca	4th	Cognitive Science	Oldest	1.5	Filipino	
Callista	3rd	English Literature	Unknown	Unknown	Filipino, White	Queer
Christy	3rd	Human Biology	Oldest	3	Filipino American	
Cici	4th	English Literature, Education	Youngest	1.5	Chinese American	
Debbie	4th	Mathematics	Only Child	1.5	Taiwanese	
Flash	4th	Biology	Oldest	2	Chinese, Vietnamese	
Isabella	4th	International Relations, Chinese Studies	Youngest	2	Chinese, Middle Eastern American	
Jennifer	4th	Visual Arts	Youngest	2	Greek, Indian "Grindian"	
Kalani	2nd	Theater	Oldest	2	Filipino, Chinese, White	
Mindy	4th	Human Biology	Oldest	2	Vietnamese	
Roshnai	4th	Cognitive Science	Oldest	International Student	Indian	
Saphira	3rd	Communication	Youngest	1	Taiwanese, Asian American	
TK	3rd	Human Biology	2nd Oldest	2	Samoan, White	Transfer
Tu	4th	Ethnic Studies	Oldest	1	Vietnamese, Chinese	Queer, Refugee
Yukiko	4th	International Business, Japanese Studies	Oldest	4	Japanese, Chinese, American	

Research Site

Research University, the research site, is a large, public university in Southern California. This particular university was selected for multiple reasons. California has the largest Asian and second largest Pacific Islander populations in the United States of America

(API-GBV, 2017), and California public universities serve a majority of California citizens. The Fall 2016 undergraduate enrollment at Research University was comprised of 38% API students and 20% White students. The university did not qualify as a predominantly White university (PWI) which is a designation given to universities when over 50% of the student population identifies as White (Brown & Dancy, 2010). While it was not considered a PWI, it was also did not hold Asian American, Native American, Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) status.

The LID model (Komives et al., 2005) was developed using data from a mid-Atlantic university with eight White participants, three African American participants, one African international student participant, and one Asian participant. In a later research study, the LID model was applied to a group of Hispanic female undergraduate students at a Hispanic serving institution (Onorato & Musoba, 2015). Because this study explored the leadership development of API female students, deploying the study at a university with a high API population was important. I felt that the racial context of this particular university may provide valuable insight into a unique experience of API college students who attend a university where they are the largest racial group in the university. Due to its high number of API students, Research University recently opened a new office focused providing resources for and building community amongst the API students.

Research Methods

The following sections outline the research methodology used to conduct this study.

Participant Recruitment

To garner research participants, I emailed university staff members across Research I University Student Affairs departments (Greek Life, Residence Life, Orientation and First Year Programs, Student Activities, Equity and Diversity Centers, and the Dean of Students'

offices) to introduce myself and my study. I asked the staff members to connect me with students who met the criteria of my study (See Appendix A). Due to the Federal Education Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA), staff members were not permitted to send me names and contact information of eligible students, so I asked staff members to contact eligible students on my behalf. From there, students began reaching out to me to opt into the study.

When students emailed me expressing interest in the study, I responded to their interest with an introductory email (See Appendix B). I attached a demographic form (See Appendix C) and asked them to complete and submit the demographic form to ensure they met the bounded criteria. If students did not meet the bounded criteria, I sent them an email to inform them they did not qualify (See Appendix E). If the students met the bounded criteria I sent them an email notification informing them of their qualification for the study (See Appendix D), as well as a consent to participate in research form (Appendix G). I informed them, there was rolling admission into the study, therefore, the sooner they returned their consent form, the more likely it was they would be able to participate in the study. The first twenty students who met the criteria and submitted their signed consent form were accepted into the study. If students submitted their demographic form and met the criteria of the study after I reached the study capacity of 20 people, I sent them an email to inform them they were placed on the waitlist of the study (See Appendix F).

Data Collection

Data collection consisted of one 1.5-hour semi-structured interview with each participant using the interview protocol (See Appendix H). I met with each participant over video conference (Skype, Google Hangout or Zoom), audio recorded the interviews, and had the recordings professionally transcribed. Upon the conclusion of my interview with

participants, I emailed them thanking them for their time (See Appendix I) and ensured they had any information needed for follow up support (See Appendix J). When I received each transcribed interview, I sent a copy to the corresponding participant and asked them to read the transcriptions and provide any edits they wished to make (See Appendix K). Upon receiving the edits from the participants, I began data analysis of the transcriptions.

Data Analysis

Qualitative research requires coding and analysis of the data collected to elicit meaning from the participant's words. Coding is the first step in the data analysis process. Some would argue that due to the interpretive nature of coding, coding is analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994), however, others would say coding and data analysis are not synonymous (Basit, 2003). Coding is often a cyclical act, whereby a researcher will complete an initial scan of the data, apply codes they believe to have found in the data, and then revisit the data to further refine the codes (Saldaña, 2009).

For the purposes of this study, I first open coded each individual interview. This inductive approach to coding was necessary because the leadership identity development of this population had not yet been studied. Using open coding with no *a priori* codes allowed the data to speak for itself. After coding each interview, I completed memos to document thoughts on the individual case, noting the similarities and differences that emerged across the cases as well as the connections or differences I found to with extant research. Once the list of initial codes was established for each interview, I then read through each interview a second time and added any codes that may have been missed on the initial coding process.

To ensure reliability, I had an independent researcher cross-check the codes I found in the data. This process is called an intercoder agreement or interrater reliability (Creswell, 2014). I sent seven of the 20 interviews to an individual with a doctorate of education and

research experience and asked her to code the data. For good qualitative reliability, it is recommended that coding is in agreement at least 80% of the time (Miles & Huberman, 1994). After reviewing her codes, I found we had a code matching rate of over a 95%. Confident in the reliability of the coding, I then moved to the second part of the data analysis, the cross-case analysis necessary for a comparative case study.

Cross-case analysis was a critical part of the data analysis as it revealed similarities, differences, frequencies, sequences, and correspondence in the data across the twenty cases (Saldaña, 2009). I used selective coding to cluster initial codes into larger categories, which were eventually condensed into themes. Four different themes arose, each including various subcategories within the themes including Inner Circle, Outer Circle, Environmental Circle, and Personal Definitions of Leadership (all explored further in Chapters Four and Five).

Limitations

A common argument against case studies is that they are not generalizable. However, for the research questions of this study, the case study methodology allowed me to explore the lived experiences of current college student leaders. The qualitative, semi-structured interviews allowed me the flexibility to explore the people, places, events, and beliefs that were most important in the students' lives as they became leaders. The openness of the case study allowed participants to provide rich, thick descriptions that gave insight into their personal and professional lives. The goal of the study was not to be generalizable, but rather exploratory in nature, therefore it was most appropriate to use the case study format.

Another common argument would be the bias of the researcher, however I mitigated this limitation through the use of interrater reliability checking. I utilized the peer checking method of interrater reliability to ensure that my coding was in line with another member who

was unrelated to this research. As we shared over 80% of the same codes, this assured that researcher bias was tempered.

Summary

A comparative case study approach was used to explore the themes present in each individual's case, as well as across the cases, as it related to leadership identity development. The bounded criteria included race (Asian/Pacific Islander), gender (female), student status (undergraduate), and university (Research University in Southern California). Participants were recruited from Research University with the help of Student Affairs staff members and the first twenty women who completed the necessary paperwork to participate in the study were selected as participants. I interviewed each student using a semi-structured interview questionnaire, transcribed, coded, and categorized the data. I mitigated research bias and ensured reliability through the use of an Interrater who also coded the raw data. After cross-case data analysis was completed, four themes emerged from the data.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This qualitative study explored how the lived experiences of Asian/Pacific Islander (API) female college students influenced their leadership development process. The research questions that guided this study were:

RQ1: What are the lived experiences of API female college students that influenced their leadership development process?

RQ2: Which of these experiences helped the API college students progress deeper in the leadership scale as outlined in the LID model?

The development of one's identity is a life-long journey, one that is influenced by personal attributes, close relationships, and the environment. Therefore, it was not surprising the themes which arose from the data highlighted the influence and importance of the Inner Circle (socially constructed identities, foundational life experiences, and the role of nuclear family), the Outer Circle (explicit and implicit messages of encouragement and discouragement from people and environments outside of their nuclear family), and the Environmental Circle (access to opportunities and social and cultural climates). These three factors contributed to the process by which the women participated in, defined, and developed an understanding of their ability to be a leader, thereby developing an identity as such. Participants defined and practiced leadership as forms of advocacy, service, care, and empathy.

The findings of this study are summarized in Figure 4 below:

The Process of Leadership Identity Development of Asian Pacific Islander Women

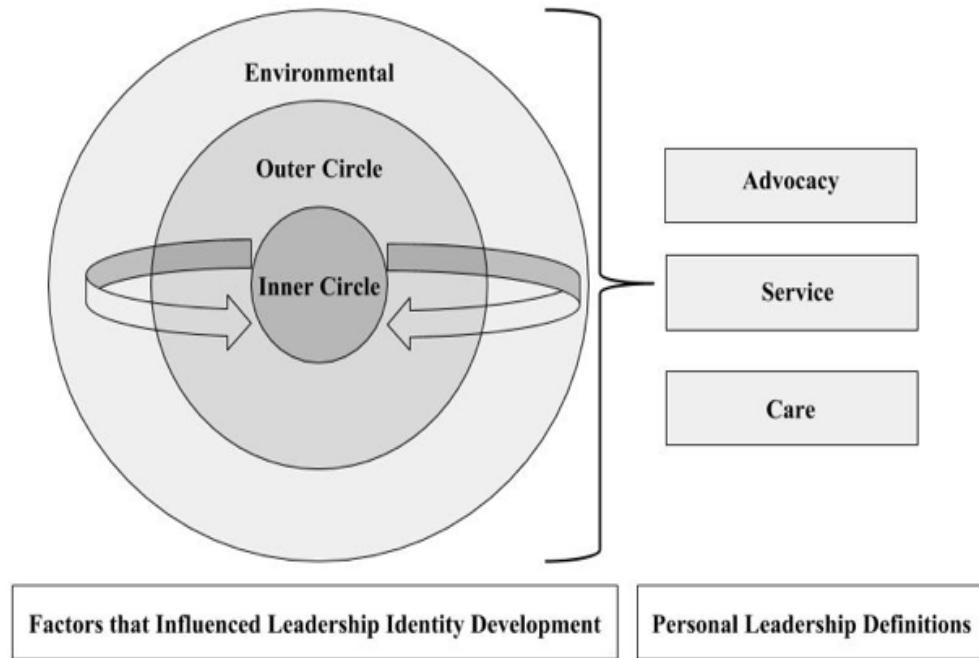


Figure 4: Process of Leadership Identity Development of Asian/Pacific Islander Women

Inner Circle

The first theme, the Inner Circle, focused on the role the participants' inner circles had on their leadership identity development. The Inner Circle included the participant's role in her family, early demonstrations of leadership, and cultural considerations. Together, these people and experiences provided foundational lessons of leadership for the participants.

Role in the Family

When participants were asked to reflect on where their leadership journey began, most participants spoke about their role as daughters, sisters, and cousins. The participants believed that with these roles came certain leadership responsibilities, which they learned through the messages they heard from their families. Birth order became important as the eldest and youngest children received different messages regarding leadership. Participants

who identified as the oldest children often received messages of their responsibility to care for their siblings, whereas participants who identified as the youngest children were told to listen to and follow their older siblings. These messages around responsibility guided their leadership identity development, and oldest children often took on leadership responsibilities earlier than the youngest children. Eventually however, through experience, the youngest children began to develop an understanding of their ability to be leaders. Twelve of the twenty participants identified as oldest children, seven were youngest, one woman was an only child, and the birth order of one woman was unknown. In short, while the development of a leadership identity did not appear to be dependent upon the specific placement in birth order, each spot did have an impact on the participants.

Oldest child. Many participants who identified as the oldest child cited early memories of their parents encouraging them to act as a leader for their younger siblings. Some parents used the word leader, while other parents talked about the responsibility of the oldest child to help out the family and care for their younger siblings. Roshnai stated her parents “always encouraged me to be a leader. I have a younger brother and so they’re like ‘Yeah, you’re the older siblings so you do have to be kind of a leader for your brother.’” Christy stated that as the oldest child in her family she “always just had this responsibility of being the babysitter.” Christy continued as “oldest of the pack” she has had to tutor her younger family members or “step in at school” if any of them experienced bullying. When Kalani’s father deployed for the military, her mother became a single parent of four children. As the oldest, Kalani explained she was expected to help her mother and be a leader in her family. Kalani reflected, “the concept of being a leader, I guess, really formed

around trying to be there for my mom, and at the same time be this big older sister that they can rely on, but also that they could look up to and be a great example.”

Youngest child. Participants who identified as the youngest child often developed a leadership identity at a slower pace than participants who identified as oldest children, but they still recognized their placement in the family influenced the ways in which they viewed themselves leaders. The youngest children remembered their parents directing their older siblings to be a role model for them. Cici remembered her mother saying to her older brother, “You're the older one. She is younger than you, meaning that she has less experience, and that she's less mature than you are, so you should always try to be the bigger person.” Cici stated that these messages from her mother to her older brother affected her perception of her own leadership abilities when she was younger. Although Cici now acknowledges she is a leader, she stated those messages of having to listen to her older sibling, as well as not being able to share her opinions, “contributed to the fact that I didn't feel like a leader” when she was younger. Cici continued, “not that my brother and my mom didn't value things that I had to say, but when it came to decisions, to things that they deemed serious, they would never ask me for my opinion.”

Participants who identified as the youngest sibling often accepted their older sibling as a leader and looked to their older sibling as an example of leadership. Audrey stated, “Growing up, I always thought, oh, I should always be more like my sister because she's a leader and she's super outgoing and talkative, has all these friends.” Similarly, Anoushka looked to her older sister as well because her sister was a, “very loud and outgoing and very firm person...she always had leadership roles.”

For many participants, birth order determined the foundational messages they received regarding their responsibilities and their abilities to be a leader in their family. Participants who identified as oldest children stated that when they were very young, they received messages from their parents about their responsibility to be a leader in their family by accomplishing tasks and caring for younger siblings. Participants who identified as younger siblings stated they were encouraged to follow their older siblings who were leaders in the family, and this lack of encouragement from family led to them developing their understanding of their leadership abilities later in life.

Early Demonstrations of Leadership

Participants also noted the role their parents played in teaching them about leadership. Participants expressed adoration for their parent's hard work, bravery, and sacrifice, which, to them, exemplified leadership. Furthermore, the actions of strong women, including mothers, single mothers, and grandmothers, were highlighted by the participants as important foundational lessons of leadership.

Parents as leaders. Parents often provided the foundational messaging through their words and their actions and informed the participants' understandings of leadership. As participants spoke about how their parents taught them about leadership, many immigration stories arose. Most students in the study identified as immigrants themselves or as first generation citizens (i.e. people whose parents immigrated to the United States) and as they reflected on their family's immigration stories, they identified leadership lessons they learned. Saphira found that as an immigrant to the United States, she often looked to her parents on how to deal with conflict. Saphira stated because she is "an immigrant" she has followed her parents and "seen how they deal with situations." Saphira said that when she and

her family moved to the United States, they “faced a lot of racism” and “just seeing how they navigate themselves and how they stand up for themselves is something that I take to heart very deeply.” These lessons of humility influenced her approach to leading others.

Participants whose parents were immigrants, refugees, or people who did not grow up in the United States did not often use the words “leader” or “leadership” when describing their parents, however, when asked directly about who they considered to be leaders, many of them stated their parents. Participants described their parent’s leadership actions as selfless and brave, persistent, and hardworking. Participants believed their parent’s leadership actions were based in care for their family, as their parents often braved difficult situations in order to create new opportunities for their families’ futures.

Tu, a Vietnamese refugee, reflected on the leadership lessons she learned from her father. Tu remembered that after her family fled to the United States, her father was extremely tough on her when it came to learning how to read and write in English. Often Tu was left crying and frustrated by his persistence and his discipline. When Tu became an adult, she uncovered old paperwork in which she realized her father lied on an official school document and stated Tu’s first language was English. Tu realized even though her father lied on the documents, he showed leadership to ensure she was tracked onto a path for academic and social success in her elementary school. Tu stated:

Recognizing my dad, also like a recent immigrant...in his broken English, having to tutor me in English because we didn't have those material resources, we didn't have the economic capital to actually put me in tutoring, those little sacrifices that I remember...really shaped the person who I wanted to be. I feel like I've always wanted to just be there for people because I understand what it's like to not have things. But I also understand what it means to have that type of care, the amount of tremendous labor that goes into making sure that I wouldn't be behind, or that I would just have enough. Nothing less, nothing more. Just enough.

The perseverance of Tu's father served as a powerful reminder to Tu about the leadership her parents demonstrated throughout her childhood. Tu stated:

In their quiet but very powerfully resilient way, [the people I look to as leaders have] always been my parents because they remind me of all of the sacrifices that they've had to make as young 20-year-olds, living in a refugee camp for literally a decade, putting that all behind just so that they could find some kind of opportunity...literally their entire existence in the States has been for me and my sister. I think that narrative in itself is incredible. I look to them [as leaders], even though there's not much spoken between us.

Similarly, Audrey reflected on what she learned about leadership from her parents. Audrey's parents left their home country to come to the United States to create a better life for her family. Audrey said her parents served as a strong example of leadership. Audrey stated:

The leaders in my life have just been my parents. Them immigrating from the Philippines to the US when they were in their early 20's and pretty much leaving behind their whole lives to me is incredibly leader-like and super brave of them and courageous. They came here to get a better life for themselves and to send money back to their own family and create a better life for their whole family, too. To me they've always been leaders. They're always super hard working. I mean, they've sacrificed so much just to give me and my siblings a better life here in the US. So, yeah, that to me is... They're my number one leaders in my life.

Parents' Explicit Messages About Leadership

Many of the women cited their families as people who provided support through explicit messages encouragement. Jennifer's mother encouraged her to pursue her passions by saying we are "the vessels to get you there." Isabella stated her parents told her, "You're a born leader," which Isabella stated was "nice to hear." Roshnai stated her parents always encouraged her to be a leader, and told her, "being a leader means that you'll be able to share your voice with people and that's something that's really important not only for you but also for other people to hear."

Many of the participants whose parents were immigrants did not use the specific words “leader” and “leadership” when talking to them about what was important in life but rather encouraged hard work. Flash’s parents were, “really supportive and encouraging” regarding her participation in leadership; however, she said, “I don’t think they fully understand all the details that comes with me being a leader just because in Vietnam I think that wasn’t their focus.” Flash expanded on her conversations with her parents,

My parents didn’t ever use the word leader around me...they haven’t said the word leader or anything about my leadership. I think they sit and wait for me to show them pictures. Then they observe it as, “Oh she’s actually doing good things.” But, nothing about my actual leadership. That’s not something that we talk about either. I do it and then we end up talking about it. But they’re not really aware of everything that I do. Which is fine. They’re just like, “We know that you’re doing productive things and you’re not wasting your time.

Alice expressed similar sentiments regarding the absence of the words “leader” and “leadership” in conversations with her parents. When Alice became the president of her student organization, she realized, “I don’t necessarily think [my parents] understood what I was doing, but they knew that I was doing something that requires more work to be put in, and it was something to be recognized by my peers.”

Tu and Debbie realized that although their parents did not verbalize their pride in their daughters’ leadership accomplishments, they still knew how proud their parents were of them. Tu said her parents were “never direct with anything,” and she never heard the words, “I’m so proud of you.” For Tu, her parents’ pride in her leadership actions “was just kind of a given.” Debbie did not hear a lot of verbal praise from her mother, because her mother’s “love language was action.” Through her mother’s supportive actions, Debbie internalized the message that she was “very strong” and “very capable.”

Although most participants cited positive messages from their parents about their leadership, some women heard discouraging messages about leadership from their parents. Audrey described her parents as conservative people who “have a traditional kind of outlook on how a woman should behave.” Audrey stated her brother was “given so many more freedoms to do whatever he wants or to be involved in whatever he wants to do;” however, her requests to participate were often met with messages such as, “Oh, you can't do that because you're a girl,” or “It's too dangerous for you to do that,” or ‘It's not ladylike.” Due to these messages of discouragement, Audrey made different decisions regarding her participation in leadership opportunities. For example, when Audrey expressed interest in going out for the Rugby team, her father said that sport was for men and as a result, Audrey did not pursue that activity. Audrey stated, “I guess in that way, he discouraged me from going after that extracurricular or getting that opportunity.”

Role of strong women. Many participants emphasized how the strong women in their lives affected their understanding of leadership. Jennifer reflected on how her mother served as a representation of leadership to her because of her mother’s ability to move from India to the United States to finish her doctoral degree, all while being pregnant. Jennifer’s mother went on to have a successful career dedicated to non-profit work and education. Jennifer stated:

My mom is definitely a driving force for me, especially in higher education. She was an immigrant. She came here and went to one of the most racist parts of the country...She came to Oklahoma in the ‘80s from India...she’s definitely my leadership representation. She went on to be a professor, to work in nonprofit, and she’s done really cool things. I always kind of think of her...the characteristic was just being so driven, to be that pregnant getting your PhD, that to me is insane... [and when someone] would call her Miss, and she’d go, "No, I'm a doctor." That was a moment for me. That to me is just feminism, honestly. As a kid, I watched that and

I was like, “Yeah, you better call my mom a doctor.” She worked so hard for that PhD.

Several participants spoke about being raised by single mothers and the impact their single mother made on their understanding of leadership. Cici stated:

My mother is a single mother, and she came to America when she was 16. She had about \$300 in her pocket when she came to study in American University, and she raised me and my brother on her own. We went through a lot of difficult situations. She's definitely the woman that I look up to as a role model and a leader, just in, the kind of sacrifice, like her own comfort, for something that she knows, if she works at it, will be beneficial for us, as a family. So, she's not either a leader in the sense of, she's really good in front of groups and is a good presenter and those kinds of qualities. She's actually very averse to office politics and social situations like that. She thinks that it can be quite distracting to actually doing good quality work and good team work as well. I think in other parts of my life and most other parts of my life, I definitely look up to her as someone to embody, especially now, where I'm seeing myself as an independent human being, like somebody who is pursuing a career that relies on me being very, believing that I have that capability of making it by myself.

Debbie stated because she grew up in a single mother household, there was a strong sense of female empowerment with messages such as, “You're very strong, you're very capable,” which in turn affected Debbie’s perception of her ability to be a leader. Debbie’s mother also taught her Confucius lessons, such as compassion, which shaped her leadership style and “had a really strong impact of the way that I think, and the way I carry myself, and the way that I want to influence others.”

Mindy, a Vietnamese participant, stated the legacy of single motherhood began with her grandmother and changed the course of her family’s history. Because her grandmother was a single mother, Mindy believed her family was more matriarchal and therefore challenged old cultural norms of patriarchy. Mindy felt “more on the lucky end 'cause I feel like there's more of a matriarchal power in my family because my grandma was a single

mother with just my mom.” Mindy stated this led to “very strong woman power” in her family where women are “known to be independent” and did not “internalize the submission that was typical in our culture.”

Cultural Considerations

Many participants referenced how cultural expectations of women influenced their understanding of their ability to be a leader. Participants from various ethnic backgrounds expressed how their culture viewed men as prominent leaders, but not women. Mindy did not “personally resonate with or strongly identify with” the word leader. She stated it “makes sense” that people see her as a leader because of the leadership positions she holds, but she has “tried to think of [her leadership role] less in the hierarchy.” When asked why she believes this, Mindy said she was raised with a “strong hierarchy” in her family, and as a young woman, she was “used to being in the more submissive role.” She believed in the Vietnamese culture, it is more common to see men as leaders, for example there are “more terms to greet men with positions of power than there are for woman.” Mindy said, “men are always seen as the figurehead in a Vietnamese household,” however, because she grew up with more “matriarchal power” in her house, she realized it was her mother who made the “big calls” and decisions in the family. Publicly her father was “the person to respect,” but behind the scenes, most of her family knew that, “if you want to go through any decision, you go through my mom.”

Mindy continued that she was also taught that the best thing a Vietnamese woman could be was “ngoan” which “basically means submissive and obedient” but with “less negative connotation.” The Vietnamese concept of “ngoan” encouraged women to “just sit down, be quiet, listen to the men talk, and just nod, say thank you, laugh, but very polite, just

polite.” When a woman is “ngoan” she should just be “polite” and does not “have to necessarily show any leadership or humor or kind of different nuances of personality.” This cultural concept of “ngoan” pushed Mindy away from leadership for a long time. In the beginning of her leadership journey, Mindy felt a stronger commitment to “just follow a lot in Vietnamese culture,” but because her “family is more matriarchal” the concept of “ngoan” wasn’t as prominent in her family as it was for some of her other friends. Mindy found the cultural expectation of “ngoan” to be “very confusing as a child cause they’re two contradictory messages,” however, Mindy thanks her mother for pushing her “to be independent, take care of myself, and take care of my siblings and be a leader within my siblings.”

Anoushka shared that when she was younger she lacked confidence in her abilities to participate as a leader and believed this thought stemmed from the “misogyny in Indian society.” She stated the Indian culture celebrates men more than women and often encourages men to step into leadership roles. When she was younger, she was never asked for her opinion and was not part of any decision making in her family. Because of this cultural norm to exclude women from decision making, Anoushka said, “I didn’t really have to have an opinion,” which she believed led to a lack of confidence in herself and her ability to lead. Anoushka was not confident in herself until college when she was forced into situations where she “had to be outgoing and outspoken,” and therefore she had to “pretend to be confident.” Anoushka realized, the “fake it until you make it” practice she developed in college helped build her leadership confidence.

Participants often believed leaders were people who were loud, outgoing, firm, and commanding, which conflicted with the way women were socialized culturally to be quiet,

submissive, modest, and polite. Alice grew up in a Chinese household where she learned, “the Chinese culture often values women being more docile and submissive;” therefore, the female leaders she admired “were always very modest.” Cici agreed that in the Chinese culture “women are expected to be more passive” and no adult in her life stated, “Oh, I think you'd be really great leading.” As a young shy girl, Cici’s silence was never questioned, and she was never encouraged to speak up or be a leader.

Breaking from gendered and cultural tradition. Some participants spoke about the importance of their families breaking away from the gendered and cultural norms in order for them to grow as be a leader. Some women attributed this shift in cultural norms to their family’s assimilation to American culture. As participants’ nuclear families broke away from their traditional cultural norms, the women began to notice differences in cultural expectations between them and their extended families. For example, Audrey’s mother was told by her grandmother, “Oh, you can’t do sports or do anything outdoors because that’s for men;” however, Audrey’s mom told her, she could do “whatever I want.” Roshnai found that despite growing up most of her life in India, she was raised with different values than other Indian families. Roshnai shared in “popular Indian culture, women are not given as much importance,” however, in her family her parents always told her, “whatever your brother can do, you can do it as well.” Isabella believed that although it used to be the expectation women “were submissive,” it is “something that I definitely don’t really believe in. Neither do my parents.”

The Inner Circle set the foundation upon which the participants understood what leadership was, their ability to be a leader, and how they could take on leadership roles. The Inner Circle highlighted the participants’ role in their family, the early demonstrations of

leadership by their parents, and the various gendered and cultural messages they received and the expectations they were taught. When reflecting on how they first learned about leadership, most participants referenced their birth order and how their birth order determined their need to be a leader in their family (an expectation assigned to the oldest) or to follow the example of their older sibling (assigned to the youngest). When participants reflected on the early demonstrations of leadership, many of them told the stories of the bravery, resiliency, and selflessness of their parents who brought them to the United States for a better life. This parental role modeling influenced their early conceptualizations of leadership. Participants reflected on the intersection of gendered and cultural values, and how, at times, their cultural values clashed with their early conceptualizations of leadership. These conflicting messages caused internal conflict on how they could participate in leadership. Lastly, participants felt that when their parents broke from traditional cultural and gendered values, they felt freer to participate in activities that led to their development as leaders.

Outer Circle

The second theme that arose from the data analysis was the role of the Outer Circle on the participants' leadership identity development. The Outer Circle included messages they received outside of their homes and nuclear families that either encouraged or discouraged the women from moving through their leadership identity development. These messages were either explicit through interactions with friends, peers, mentors, supervisors, and teachers or were implicit messages consumed through their environment or media.

Explicit Messages of Encouragement

Explicit messages of encouragement were the words, phrases, and messages stated verbally to the participants by friends, peers, mentors, supervisors, and teachers. These explicit messages of encouragement increased the participant's understanding of their ability

to be a leader and served as a support resource when the participants considered getting involved in leadership positions.

Friends and peers. Many participants were explicitly encouraged by friends, peers, mentors, supervisors, and teachers to participate in leadership roles. As Andrea explained, she found her greatest source of encouragement from her peer, who became a mentor. Andrea connected with her peer mentor when she joined an organization in college. Both Andrea and her peer mentor identified as Filipino women and shared similar traits; the greatest difference was her peer mentor was older, more outgoing, and held a formal leadership role in the organization. Andrea said her peer mentor has “been there since the beginning of my [leadership] journey” and over the years, they developed a strong bond and friendship, and now refer to one another as “baby duck” and “mama duck.” This peer mentor was invaluable throughout Andrea’s leadership development because her peer mentor “really, really helped me kind of find leadership roles that work for me” and encouraged her to pursue those leadership opportunities. When Andrea expressed interest in running for the campus-wide student government, her peer mentor was “really supportive and she was really guiding me through it.” Her peer mentor held the position Andrea was running for, and when Andrea had doubts in herself, her peer mentor assured Andrea that she too experienced those doubts when she was running for the position. Ultimately her mentor encouraged her and said, “This is something you should do.” Although Andrea worked with other professional advisors and staff throughout her leadership journey, she reflected on the importance of her mentor and said, “no one's influenced me more than her.” Andrea’s relationship with her peer mentor was the most important source of encouragement on Andrea’s leadership journey.

Participants felt more comfortable joining leadership activities if they knew a person in the organization. Alice stated because her cousin actively encouraged her to join a student organization, Alice “had a sense of belonging” and knew she “wouldn’t be alone if I joined this whole new foreign place.” The women also felt most comfortable in spaces where people looked like them, shared similar goals, and/or with whom they shared life experiences. Isabella joined a sorority in college where the women were “really outspoken and passionate” and felt like the sorority environment provided a space where there were many “empowered women empowering women.” Being in an all-female high school gave Christy the “confidence I needed to realize that I am an empowered person as opposed to if I went to a coed high school, I think I would have been too timid to do more.”

Participants also gravitated towards people who made them feel important and part of the community. Yukiko described a big-little program in a cultural club where older students in the organization mentored younger students. Yukiko stated, “through the big-little program, I’ve gained a lot of support and also inspiration from my big” who eventually went on to become the president of the organization. When her “big” became the president, Yukiko felt encouraged to apply for a leadership position as well. When Yukiko gained a leadership appointment, she not only felt supported by her “big” but also, she trusted that her “big” was “a president who understands the importance of what I do.” In a similar experience, Bianca reflected on a time when the co-directors of a student service organization reached out to her personally and encouraged her to apply for a leadership position. Bianca stated, “the two leaders at the time were both female...both of them had reached out to me, personally, and they said, ‘Hey, we really think you should apply for the position. We think you’d do awesome.’” Bianca stated their outreach “definitely made me feel empowered,

letting me know that they thought I would do great.” Bianca looked up to these leaders as role models “so it was great to see that they had faith in me.” The role of the explicit messages of encouragement from their peers was integral in encouraging the participants to engage in leadership opportunities.

Mentors, supervisors, and teachers. As the participants’ interactions with the world became more complex, they worked with older adults, such as mentors, teachers and supervisors, who served as role models. These relationships guided the participant’s understanding of themselves as leaders. As Andrea shared, “mentors really helped me develop my definition of leadership.” Often, the participants and their mentors shared similar personal identities or experiences. For example, during college Yukiko connected with an “outspoken, Asian-American woman” staff member who developed a resource center for the API community. Yukiko looked up to this woman, “not only for support, but as guidance to what I can do and really inspire me to continue the work that I am doing.”

Kalani, a Filipino participant, felt deeply connected with her mentor who was a “small framed Filipino woman, who also grew up in San Diego.” She inspired Kalani because she had done exciting work for the government, took risks, and accomplished her personal and professional goals. Kalani stated, when her mentor shared “her experiences as a woman, and then as a Filipino woman, I felt like I connected to her on a deeper level, and she became sort of a mentor to me.” Kalani said her and her mentor have “become really close because she told me her life experiences and kind of prepared me for life in general.” Audrey saw her work supervisor as a mentor because they were both Asian women who identified as introverts. Her mentor helped Audrey realize, “just because I’m more of an introverted person, that doesn’t take away from my impact and effect on my community.”

TK stated nearly all of her mentors came from her family because when she for Polynesian mentors outside of her family, there were none available. As a student majoring in Pre-Medicine, TK said she hopes she meets a Polynesian doctor in the future because, if she did, she “would be so happy and would want them to be my mentor.”

In addition to supervisors, mentors, and extended family, teachers were cited as leadership mentors. Alice idolized her teachers because they taught her “things that society wanted me to know, like math, and English, and social skills, like American social skills. They had that knowledge, so I really respected them as leaders a lot.” Anoushka grew as a leader because of the encouragement from her teacher. “She was definitely always trying to help me. She would always tell me about certain [leadership] workshops that were happening in the town that I was in.” Debbie was encouraged by the primary investigators in the lab in which she worked, as they helped her see her “potential of being a part of their community” of researchers.

Implicit Messages of Encouragement

There were also many examples of implicit messages of encouragement participants received regarding their ability to be a leader, which mostly included the positive representation of their identities in leadership roles and access to outreach programs and opportunities.

Importance of positive representation. When participants saw people with similar identities within leadership positions in their environments, they felt more confident in their own ability to lead. Seeing female leaders within her college environment exposed Audrey to “messages of empowerment as a woman” which helped her realize, “I have the equal right to be a leader and to do any kind of job that a man can do.” Bianca had the same feeling when

she saw a high number of female student leaders within her college campus. Bianca said it felt “more empowering to be a woman in a [student] leadership position” which was “definitely a different message than I received in high school.” Anoushka felt empowered when she saw an Indian woman student directing the university’s production of The Vagina Monologues and said, “seeing a lot of Indian women in roles of leadership has affected me, too...For me, it was like, wow, she can do it. I can do it.” With many women in positions of power at their university, such as professors and student services professionals, Alma Sage identified these women as potential role models and “a really easy resource to get to.” She continued,

It's not really a spoken thing, but just having those resources around and being able to go to them for anything that I need if something bad happens, or just in general to just talk to, I think that's really encouraging. I don't feel like I need a safe space, but it does give me a really safe space to talk freely.

Positive representation of the women’s various identities in the curriculum helped them feel included and empowered as well. Anoushka was so inspired by the content of her required general education diversity course she decided to take a follow up course called, “Women of Color in Activism.” Anoushka connected with the material personally, as she also identified as a woman of color who worked as a leader in the community to make positive, social change. Anoushka related to social activists like Yuri Tochiyama, an Asian activist who “worked with a lot of black movements, but she wasn't in a visible role.” Learning about this “behind the scenes” style of leadership was eye opening for Anoushka because it was a style of leadership she felt comfortable participating in.

Women in STEM. Although the participants in the study had different academic majors and professional aspirations, seven of the twenty participants identified as students within the science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) fields. Unlike the women in

non-STEM majors, the women in STEM spoke frequently about the importance of open, inclusive environments in the male dominated spaces of STEM. These environments helped them feel empowered and able to participate fully in their education and leadership development.

Due to the gender imbalance in the STEM community, Flash often felt like an “outcast;” however, certain STEM teachers “never made me feel like I was an outcast. I think that was really nice and understanding ... feeling like I was being included.” Alma Sage realized “early on” there were not many female professors in Biology, but when she did meet female STEM professors, she “connected with them a lot faster than I did with male professors.” Not only did Alma Sage connect with them faster, she also learned it was possible to have “your PhD and have a family, or get married and have a family, and have it all.” Through access to female STEM professors, Alma Sage felt she could be a “leader in the classroom but to still have a social life” and believed she did not have to sacrifice any of her dreams as a woman in STEM.

Debbie found encouragement through a co-curricular STEM program which highlighted the experience of women in STEM. Debbie found this program “helpful in terms of being able to see there are other women leaders and other women who are capable of taking charge and being a part of the STEM community.” Through the program, Debbie networked with women who were established in the STEM industry and asked them questions such as, “How did you get into this job? What are your days like? What are your advice for young women who are going into this industry?” Debbie found their answers “very empowering” and affirmed “young women can do things just as well,” and it is “not just men who are dominating in those [STEM] fields.” Similarly, Bianca had her “first real leadership

experience” when she became president of her STEM focused co-curricular academy. Bianca said the leadership position “didn’t even feel like that much of a scary job because I had two real teachers guiding me through most of it.”

Explicit Messages of Discouragement

Every participant spoke about the people or environments that encouraged them along their leadership development journey; however, they also identified messages of discouragement they received and the influence those messages had on their development of a leadership identity. Many of the discouraging messages centered around their identity as a woman.

Bossy, bitchy, and mean. When asked about messages they received related to their gender and leadership, all participants began with negative statements. The words “bossy,” “bitchy,” or “mean” were highlighted, and these messages began as early as elementary and middle school. Audrey stated that when she was in elementary school, many of the boys in her class made fun of her and told her, “Oh, you’re so bossy. You shouldn’t yell at us to get our stuff together. Don’t tell me what to do.” In middle school and high school, the words used most often were “bitch” or “bitchy.” Often the women heard these messages when they directed people to act. As the participants heard these negative messages regarding their leadership actions, they changed their leadership practices to avoid the negative name calling. Audrey said because of the discouraging messages, “I’ve become more of a reserved leader...I tend to not voice my opinions as often as I could” and she often feels the need to “apologize for my actions.” She would find herself saying, “Oh, sorry. I didn’t mean to boss you around or be mean to you, but we still have to get this done.” Callista said she was labeled as “very mean or they would call me things like a ‘bitch’ or something offensive regarding like usually

my gender identity.” Callista tried “to stay away from being direct with people so that they wouldn’t call me these things;” however, over time Callista has become more comfortable with herself and her leadership style, so she is “more direct than I was prior.”

Some women did not experience these messages directly but observed these terms used against other women. Anoushka stated although she was never called a “bitch,” she saw her friends called a “very assertive” teacher “a bitch.” Alma Sage observed this phenomenon during the 2016 United States presidential election and recalled the negative messages Hillary Clinton received “based on appearance” or “how shrill her voice was.” Although Alma Sage did not personally experience those messages, it gave her a glimpse of “how other women are being treated in positions of power and leadership positions.” Alma Sage stated, “I feel like I really internalized those messages, and after processing and everything I really try and look out for similar messages, and I try to call them out as best as I can now.”

Yukiko stated these messages of discouragement hindered her from being an outspoken leader. She said, “I struggle with calling myself a leader sometimes because I recognize that a lot of times I don't feel confident in speaking up, saying what I want to say.” Yukiko continued, she continues to push herself beyond her comfort levels in order “to build up my confidence” in leadership. Yukiko remains cognizant of her voice every day and has to pick her battles and decide “if I want to be that one student who speaks a lot in our class, or if I should hold back.” She continued she is cognizant daily about “how I'm saying things and what I'm saying” which affects “how I participate in class.” She often feels the need to figure out “whether or not I feel comfortable in being a leader and doing something” and therefore her leadership approach “literally depends on the people I'm interacting with.”

Bianca believed female and male leaders are often held to different standards. Bianca felt that as a woman, “there's a lot of expectations for you to be an empathetic leader, or a more ... I don't know if democratic is the right word, but there's a lot of pressure for you to be a people pleaser, as a leader.” Bianca stated it is challenging to manage the pressure “to please everyone and be liked by everyone,” especially when participating in leadership ends in being called “bitchy.” She continued, “Maybe it's because I'm a woman, but I definitely feel like there is more of a stigma for women leaders than there are men.”

Being challenged. Multiple participants stated they felt discouraged when people questioned their leadership authority or subject knowledge. Roshnai stated although she entered college with years of technical experience in computer coding, a male classmate questioned her knowledge on the subject, despite having no knowledge on the subject. Roshnai said, “he still wouldn't listen to me when I said, ‘Oh hey I know how to do this.’” This “also happened a couple of times with the tutors. They would not talk to me when I asked a question, they would be looking at my male partner because they assumed that I didn't know anything and he did.” Roshnai said it was common that “the guys just assume that because I'm a girl I probably didn't know how to code. It wasn't nice.” In turn, Roshnai had a “rough time” in class because she felt “inferior” and therefore “didn't enjoy the material as much.” For the first time in her life, Roshnai realized “I might be overlooked for my gender. It was not nice.” Roshnai eventually changed her major from Computer Science to Cognitive Science.

Participants also observed female professional staff being questioned for their knowledge or ability. Alma Sage remembered how her classmates treated her female biology professor. She observed they “treat her like she's stupid or she's dumb, but they'll kind of

patronize her a little bit more than they would with a male professor.” Whereas in classes led by male professors, students “won’t really question him as much. If there’s a question that [the students] don’t understand or a concept that they want to go over, they won’t directly question him or be skeptical of him.” Alma Sage continued, “I’ve noticed that with female professors here, people will be a little bit more, not aggressive, but I feel like they’ll question the professor themselves.” For example, “If there’s something [students] don’t get they’ll question if the professor gets it, or they’ll be really skeptical of the professor, like ‘Do you know what you’re talking about?’”

Double bind. The double bind is a phenomenon has its roots in psychology, with the term first being coined by Dr. Gregory Bateson, however, it has been popularized in research on women in leadership by Eagly (2007). Merriam Webster’s dictionary defines the double bind phenomenon as, “a situation in which a person is confronted with two irreconcilable demands or a choice between two undesirable courses of action.” Examples of the double bind phenomenon were demonstrated in some of the explicit messages of discouragement participants heard. For example, often times women were told to be assertive as a leader, however, when they were assertive, they were labeled as too assertive and were call “bossy,” “mean,” or a “bitch.” Navigating the double bind while practicing leadership was a phenomenon many women spoke about in their interviews. Andrea found when she gained enough confidence to be assertive in her leadership, she was told “You need to dial it down. You need to lower your expectations for people. You’re really intense sometimes,” or “You’re letting too much emotion get into the way of your leadership style.” Mindy shared similar sentiments.

I feel like being a female leader is particularly difficult to navigate just because I feel like there are a lot of negative perceptions on very normal

things that we do that are similar to male counterparts. Like the whole assertive versus bossy kind of thing versus just demanding. The rhetoric is completely different when talking about female leaders and in general, I don't think our male colleagues particularly mean or are aware of those kinds of differences when they say it, it's just something they've also internalized. But I feel like it's always difficult to please as a female leader because you can't be too much of this or too much of this or too little of this and too little of that. There's always room to offend as a female leader and less forgiveness.

Kalani stated as she began leading groups of people she tried to be more assertive, set expectations high, and reinforce rules; however, she quickly found these actions were met with resistance from the people she was leading. Kalani stated, "because I was a woman, it's just harder to command attention and respect" and so, as she eased into leadership roles, she tried to command respect "by trying to be assertive" but quickly realized "when you come off as assertive, sometimes you're taken as a bitch." So Kalani became less assertive to avoid a negative label but soon realized being passive, did not get the job done and realized, "I wasn't assertive enough." She concluded, "I think it's just finding that right balance between being that assertiveness that people need so that they get that encouragement to propel things forward." Kalani felt compelled to carefully navigate the double bind of female leadership to get the job done while avoiding negative labels about her leadership. Alice expressed similar sentiments and said she often feels "weird being too demanding" with her leadership. This fear lead Alice to believe if she did not receive positive feedback on her work as a leader it was because she was "being too abrasive" in her style.

Yukiko believed she faces different double bind struggles as an Asian woman.

I could either be seen as a Dragon Lady, as someone who is so strict, so bossy, so emasculating of other people. Or I'm seen as this quiet, this submissive person, I'll go along with what you say. That perception coupled with, sometimes, how I act, is a way that sometimes sets back what I do. Just because, for me, sometimes I'm very quiet, and I don't talk a lot. I think because people perceive me as a woman, as an Asian

American woman, it kind of sets back in that apparently, I'm going into the stereotype they want me to be. When they finally realize that I'm a loud, outspoken person, they kind of get turned off by that, and I'm like...it's very upsetting seeing that...As an Asian American woman, I have been given the liberty and the rights as an American woman to be told that, "Yes, you can say what you want. Speak up." But at the same time, as a woman in general, you still get conflicting views of -- there's certain ways you can say things, because you don't wanna sound bossy, you don't wanna sound harsh. I think there's an added layer of being an Asian American woman in that there is this kind of ideal of having to be a little bit more submissive, a little bit more quiet. I definitely struggle in saying, I don't think that's what a leader is, and I don't think that's a role that an Asian American woman should be put upon, in that box.

Whether the double bind messages were verbalized to the participants or not, there was a perceived threat of being labeled as a bitch, too aggressive, or too abrasive. This perceived discouragement caused the women to change the way in which they led groups so they could achieve the task while maintaining a positive reputation.

Microaggressions. Merriam Webster Dictionary defines microaggressions as, "a comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group (such as a racial minority)." There were countless examples of verbal and nonverbal microaggressions across participants' stories. Most of the examples of microaggressions experienced by the participants manifested in verbal messages. For example, TK referenced a time when worked as an intern in a hospital and a patient made a sarcastic remark about her and stated, "Oh, you're a smart cookie aren't you?" TK stated, she would often, "hear things like that" which she stated "is just so ... I don't know. It's offensive...Why am I smart cookie because I'm a Biology major?"

Andrea found many of the microaggressions she and her Asian female friends experienced in high school and college were messages around the sexual fetishizing of Asian

women which highlighted the stereotypes of Asian women as people who are “really docile and exotic.” An example of this microaggression occurred when Andrea led an information tabling event for her leadership role on campus. A man approached her table and rather than asking her about the resources she was promoting, he questioned her about her racial identity in an uncomfortable way. She stated sexual fetishes “factored into why they were hitting on me or attracted to me, and it made me really uncomfortable.” Andrea stated after this occurred, she felt worried she would run into this man on campus. She spoke about this incident with other women leaders on campus to let them know “they don't have to let any creepy guy during tabling tell them that they're half Mexican, half Asian. Nobody gets to decide that. You get to decide, and you get to define who you are.”

For the participants who identified as multiracial, some of them expressed frustration when they heard microaggressions about being “not enough” or that they needed to “choose” certain identities over others. Tu said although she works in leadership spheres that promote social justice and equity, she continues to hear messages like, “I'm not XYZ-enough, and I think that's even more complicated, compounded by the fact that I am a Vietnamese-American queer woman.” Tu stated because she occupies, “certain radical organizing spaces, I'm seen as not enough because my positionality and my identities. My multiple identities are always being questioned.” This led her to doubt herself in her leadership abilities. Tu experienced the effects of microaggressions in high school when her student involvement advisors made racist statements towards her during her election to student council. Tu confronted the high school administration about the racist comments, but the administration did nothing about the incident. Because of the racist comments and inaction on the school leadership, Tu felt the only choice she had was to resign “the same day I won the elections.”

Some participants experienced verbal microaggressions in environments where they were the only people from their cultural background. Jennifer grew up in a gated community where her family was the only non-White, non-Christian family. Jennifer and her family were, “subjected to a lot of really crappy social interactions that you don't realize is really crappy until you leave. It's kind of like you just think this is how everything is.” Jennifer stated in retrospect there were, “definitely microaggressions involved with the [neighborhood] parents” because “they would make off-handed jokes.” Jennifer stated, “as a child you don't really recognize” the implications of the statements, “but eventually you were like, that was racist and I didn't realize it until now because I didn't know what racism was until [college].”

Although most of the microaggressions defined by participants were verbal, there were also many examples of non-verbal microaggressions. Andrea found “in leadership spaces, I've felt like I've been spoken over a lot.” Andrea also had an experience in student council when she verbalized a point, was ignored by the committee, and then a male student council member said the same thing, to which people listened to and agreed. For Andrea, “it was really one of the first times that really informed me of when you're a woman in leadership and you're going to face these things.”

Implicit Messages of Discouragement

The greatest source of implicit messages of discouragement came from the lack of positive representation of API women in media and leadership roles throughout society. Representation of identities in leadership roles was important to participants because it allowed them the opportunity to imagine themselves as leaders. With an absence of representation of their identities in leadership, participants had difficulty envisioning

themselves as leaders. Mindy remembered the leaders in her community were “always people who commuted from an hour away to come to school.” People in positions of power (ie. teachers, politicians, doctors) “were never from my community” and therefore “I feel like that wasn't particularly advocated for in my community even though it was predominantly Vietnamese immigrants.” In her view, “the teachers were always outsourced from different communities and from wealthier communities, communities that really didn't try to understand the various specific Vietnamese immigrant communities they were serving.”

Mindy stated representation of her cultural identity in various leadership roles is important because young people are “very impressionable.” When people are able to see themselves, or someone “they could relate to” in leadership, they “see that they can do the same thing and kind of see what places that they have access to.” To have positive cultural representation in leadership, is to have “a figure for [young people] to let them know what they're capable of.” When positive representation is absent, and people are not seeing “familiar faces or very similar experiences in those positions,” it “gives them the message that they can't enter that space or pursue that passion or anything like that. Or if they do and they want to, then it's gonna be an uphill battle.” Therefore, “representation in those areas is really important in encouraging young minds to know that they're not limited.”

Anoushka stated that growing up in India she rarely saw women in leadership roles. Women in media were “only there for the man's pleasure.” The first time Anoushka saw a woman leader was in eleventh grade when her teacher invited a motivational speaker to class- a woman with a disability who successfully climbed Mount Everest. Anoushka stated, “That was the first time that I'd seen a woman coming to speak to us who had done something

like that, because otherwise, anytime I'd ever seen anyone in some type of authority role or who has done something really great, it would always be men."

Cici reflected on her childhood dream to be like Jane Goodall, who lived a life of "adventure, but for the purposes, pursuing an intellectual question." Cici stated this dream remained "just a fantasy...just something cool that I can imagine" because she never met a woman like Jane Goodall "in real life." Cici stated that in recent years she has seen more examples of female leadership in different fields which helped her see how she could be a "pioneer in that field if you're a woman." Although Cici was happy to see an increase in positive representation, she lamented there still remains "a lot of sexism as well, and that's discouraging."

Many participants noted that during their formative years, they did not see women represented in leadership roles, however, this changed as they entered high school and college. Andrea said if she "had seen a queer Asian-American woman or just an Asian-American woman in leadership roles" she would have had an easier time seeing herself "as a leader at a younger age" and the concept of an Asian woman leader "would be more normal." Andrea said the first time she saw Filipino women leaders was in college within her student organization. Andrea said this positive representation of Filipino women leaders helped her internalize the message, "Hey, you can do this, too." She believed this positive representation "really catapulted me into this leadership experience that has been the dominant leadership experience that I've had so far."

Although examples of positive representation increased in the co-curricular fields, participants stated there was little positive representation of their identities in their academic fields, specifically the STEM fields. Debbie stated there was very little representation of API

women in the field of Mathematics which made her wonder if she was capable of excelling in this field. Debbie stated the lack of representation in her academic field increased her feeling the effects of the “imposter syndrome.” Clance and Imes (1978) developed the term “imposter phenomenon,” now known as the “imposter syndrome.” The imposter syndrome is when people feel they have succeeded by luck, not because of their abilities or qualifications. Debbie did not feel the effects of the imposter syndrome until she entered college, and more specifically, until she entered her mathematics coursework where very few of her classmates and professors were women. Debbie stated that when she attends women in STEM events, she does not see a lot of women in math. Women are represented in “other aspects of science” yet “there’s not really a prominent math female that you really can look to.”

Alice, who is majoring in computer engineering, also spoke about the imposter syndrome. After learning about the imposter syndrome phenomenon in college, Alice realized the imposter syndrome “is not a natural thing to do” and therefore realized “I don’t have to do this...these thoughts that I’m having are detrimental to my mental health. I am holding myself back by having these thoughts.” Armed with the knowledge of the impostor syndrome, Alice connected with other college women who told her, “I used to feel that way, and now that I recognize it, and I’ve gotten over it, and I’m so much stronger.” Alice stated her ability to name and understand the imposter syndrome helped her reconcile her own experiences so she could persevere through these feelings and become a better leader.

The Outer Circle was comprised of the interactions participants had with the people and environments outside of their homes and nuclear families. The Outer Circle provided the both encouraging and discouraging messages surrounding their ability to be a leader and influenced the participants’ thoughts on and practices of leadership. Women spoke about the

many messages of explicit encouragement (i.e. a mentor encouraging them to apply for a leadership position) and implicit encouragement (i.e. seeing an established female leader in their high school or university). Women also spoke about the explicit discouragement (i.e. being called bossy) and implicit messages of discouragement (i.e. lack of positive representation in leadership). Ultimately, these messages were powerful enough to alter their beliefs about themselves as leaders and their practices of leadership.

Environmental Circle

The third theme highlights the role the environment played on the student's leadership development, specifically the leadership opportunities available and the importance of structured inclusive environments.

Available Opportunities

Leadership opportunities were available as early as kindergarten for some participants, whereas for others, opportunities did not arise until they were older. This access to opportunities influenced the trajectory of the women's ability to participate in leadership, thereby affecting their trajectory to grow in their leadership identity.

Elementary school. Elementary school did not often provide formal leadership positions (clubs, organization, or student body governments) for the students, rather there were informal ways for students to participate in leadership activities. Multiple participants identified language translation as a leadership opportunity during elementary school. For example, Saphira stated her leadership began in elementary school when she decided to help a student who was struggling to learn English. She took it upon herself “to help him every day with his homework” and “translating whenever he needed my help,” which was the first time she acted as a leader. Other women cited their responsibility to translate documents and conversations between their parents and outside entities (such as businesses and teachers) as

their first leadership roles in the family. Alice stated translating documents for her parents, from English into her native language, became so common she joked with her parents she was just “born to be your translator.” Alice stated that in the first grade it was “imperative” for her “to take on that leadership position.” She said, “if my parents were sick I needed to know how to probably help diagnose them...I needed to know how to use technology to help my parents google things, or call companies.” Alice stated situations in her life forced her to become a leader earlier.

Middle school. Middle school often marked a turning point for the participants’ leadership experiences because leadership opportunities were more prominent and became more structured. When Flash participated in her middle school Associated Student Body (ASB) government she realized, “people have voices and you can do a lot of things with them. The way that you hold yourself and the things that you say really do stick with you and how other people view you.” Flash participated in this leadership opportunity because she, “wanted to do more...because I felt like I had good intentions” to make positive change in her community. Yukiko also participated in ASB during middle school and said, “I can't pinpoint an exact reason why I decided to want to be ASB president my eighth-grade year, but a lot of it has to do with, I think, family.” Yukiko’s father’s stories about his participation in ASB inspired her to run for ASB election. Audrey became involved with a co-curricular leadership organization in middle school because her sister encouraged her to apply. Because of Audrey’s participation in middle school leadership, she “thought it would be cool” to be a leader in high school so she applied for and was elected to the secretary position in her co-curricular club. Audrey applied for the secretary position because, “I wanted to take

[leadership] a step further and be able to come up with the ideas for those events. Not just be on the committee where you vote on what is happening.”

High school. High school was a time when the women in this study refined their personal leadership interests through their participation in co-curricular activities, as the selection of available leadership activities became more plentiful and varied in high school. Many participants described getting involved in interest-specific organizations and volunteer opportunities in high school. Some participants stated they became involved in leadership as a way to go to college, while others believed being involved for college applications was a disingenuous way of leading. Andrea admitted that during high school she “wasn’t really connected to the concept of leadership that I am right now in my college journey, just because it was mostly just focused on what’s going to look good on a college application.” Andrea’s views on leadership have changed since participating in student government in college, and she has come to realize “leadership is so much more than having a position and putting it on a resume. There’s real one to one connections that you can have as a leader.”

Importance of Inclusive Environments

Inclusive environments became a factor in encouraging students to get involved in leadership opportunities. Some participants felt the high school environment was not inclusive because it felt like a “popularity contest” where stereotypes were still present. This environment hindered their ability to participate in leadership. All participants attended the same university, and many noted their university environment was different because it helped them feel free and open to be themselves. This openness encouraged the women to explore who they were and participate in leadership opportunities. Jennifer said, “I think in college it

became a lot more inclusive and focused, whereas in high school I was still trying to combat the people that didn't feel like I should be in that [leadership] position." During high school Jennifer felt she spent a lot of time "proving" that she "could have this [leadership] role, that I could do it." She found "instead of [the high school environment] being really supportive or inclusive, it was a lot of, I have to prove my own."

Participants believed their university supported an incredibly diverse population by promoting equity and diversity at an institutional level. The institutional culture influenced the participants' changing leadership identities. In high school Roshnai only interacted with people with her same ethnicity, but when she attended the university she "interacted with people from all over the world and even different age groups." For Roshnai, this access to diverse groups of people gave her a learning opportunity to see issues from different perspectives, which influenced how she approached her work as a leader. Roshnai's university experience "really made me realize that there are different perspectives to everything" and therefore her perspective is not always right. She continued, "it doesn't mean it's wrong either but that there are different ways of looking at the same thing. That's something that I really value now." For Roshnai, this openness to others' opinions became important to her leadership practice.

Through required diversity and equity courses, and through a heavy emphasis on social justice in many student leadership trainings, the university promoted the values of inclusivity both in the curriculum and the co-curriculum. Audrey chose anthropology and critical gender studies courses for her required diversity and equity courses. When Audrey became a Resident Advisor (RA) in her second year, the diversity and equity training continued within her required student leadership training. She stated, "throughout high

school, I wasn't really exposed to any kind of equity-minded or diversity training." Audrey reflected that, "through those experiences in college, I've learned a lot about I guess what privileges come with certain identities and what privileges don't come with certain identities. That's the first time I ever had heard about or learned about that."

Through her Ethnic Studies courses, Tu learned the vocabulary needed to describe difficult situations she experienced personally, including "racism," "structural inequality," and "structural inequity." After gaining this vocabulary and conducting deeper personal reflection, Tu was able to connect those concepts to her role as a leader on campus. Tu realized her leadership was a form of power, and therefore, Tu considered her role as a student leader as both "personal and political work." With her formal power as a student leader, and with extensive knowledge on equity, Tu felt equipped with "certain tools and resources" to make positive change on campus and in her community through leadership.

During college, many of the participants joined culture-specific organizations and activities which helped them explore their cultural identities and deepen their commitment to their cultural identities. Access to cultural organizations and activities was practically non-existent in the participants' high school experiences and was much more available in college. Through her work in the local Asian film festival, Anoushka was asked by an Indian filmmaker, "Are you one of me?" Anoushka realized, "It was really cool figuring out that I was Asian-American first of all, and then building on that and the community." Anoushka found a "sense of community" through being a leader in the film festival, and after working in the film festival, realized she wanted to continue building more inclusive communities on campus. As a leader on campus, Anoushka now aims to "give students a place to be themselves, and to be their full selves without prejudice."

Alma Sage felt “so starved of a [cultural] community” in high school, she joined multiple Japanese organizations during college. This “was not an over correction, but a way to embrace more of my culture every day...I guess just seeing a group like that was really appealing to me. I felt more included, and I felt more involved in stuff.” Alma Sage joined these groups in her first year and eventually moved into a formal leadership position within one of the organizations.

As students explored topics of power and privilege and learned the values of inclusivity, they often became proud of their own marginalized identities, which affected the reasons why and how they became leaders. As a person from a low-socioeconomic background and as a first-generation college student, Mindy often felt her family’s income was a “point of shame” and she “pretended to be otherwise.” However, through the curricular and co-curricular education in inclusion, she “became more prideful” of this identity and “talked about it more often because I saw it as me being able to be [at the university] regardless of it.” She continued, “I wanted to be more vocal about it so I could represent that [SES] group and just let them know being a leader from a low socioeconomic background is still possible and things like that.”

Andrea made similar statements regarding her queer identity and leadership. Andrea found that being at the university where more people were out and proud, attributed to her feeling more comfortable in her queer identity and gave her a bigger reason to participate in leadership. Andrea was closeted in high school but once she was “around more people of the LGBTQ+ community, I kind of felt more comfortable coming out and it was the first time I started coming out to people.” Because of the experience of coming out, her leadership has taken on a new purpose. “I feel like a lot of the student leadership positions I’ve been drawn

to are just really about that ability to connect with other people and advocate for other people.” As a leader, Andrea works towards “making sure that students are getting really the care that they need and just the resources that they need access to or just someone to listen to” so that “that they could be themselves in their greatest capacity and fulfill what they wanted to do and pursue what they wanted to do, all while maintaining the most pivotal aspects of their identity.” She hopes to be the queer, Asian representation in leadership she did not see growing up and noted “more people from different communities need to be in these leadership roles.”

TK found that although her university is incredibly diverse, there is still a lack of representation of Pacific Islanders, which led to difficulty finding a cultural community on campus. As some who identified as racially ambiguous, TK stated when she disclosed to others, she was Samoan, she felt that people were always in awe of her Samoan culture. She often got a positive response of how “cool” her culture was, whereas other participants often felt their ethnicity was surrounded by microaggressions, racism, and negativity. TK continued, she has never considered herself a “person of color” until attending this university because the concept is “so strange.” TK found that although she’s “definitely seen racism” and “definitely felt racism” towards her, she “never really absorbed that it's because I'm brown or because I'm a person of color” until attending this university.

After beginning school at this university, TK reflected on her time in the community college and realized there was not an emphasis on social justice and leadership. TK stated, “being on a college campus where everything is a big deal and every social injustice is really talked about in depth and really publicized just made me more aware of what a person of color means at a college campus.” This dialogue helped her realized that “going to school

with no people that look like you, is kind of difficult.” As a multiracial Samoan woman, TK discovered when she meets another Polynesian person she is able to quickly build a stronger sense of trust because she believes that person will have similar life experiences and values. “Meeting other people who are Polynesian or who are Polynesian that are my same major and always talking to them like getting advice ...just seems much more useful and comfortable than with someone who's not Polynesian or Pacific Islander.” But with an absence of this cultural community at her university, TK and a few other Polynesian students realized it was up to them to begin a Polynesian club to create a new cultural community on campus.

Inclusive leadership training. Because all participants served in student leadership roles on campus, they had each experienced a variety of leadership trainings offered by the university. These leadership development trainings taught the women the importance of inclusive leadership, different leadership styles, and helped them further define their leadership identities and practices. Mindy’s greatest lesson was the “importance of understanding the people you’re serving when you’re a leader.” She found the main pillars of the university’s leadership development was understanding “identity and people’s different experiences with identity and what that could entail and how that informs their experience.” Mindy realized the importance of being an inclusive leader because “there’s a lot of opportunity for unintentional harm” as there may be “certain microaggressions and certain nuances that might affect other people differently than others.”

When Kalani participated in student leadership training, she learned how to “communicate with people from different backgrounds and different ethnicities and experiences.” The training taught her the “empathy to really come from their perspective, and understand their

experience.” Andrea found inclusive leadership training helped her feel “free” and the training “allowed me to open social circles, be more open minded, and then also I kind of just developed this need to make sure that the people around me, that they could be themselves in their greatest capacity.”

Through inclusive leadership training, Yukiko realized her cultural heritage “became core” to her leadership. Through leadership training, she realized her leadership identity development began in elementary school when she learned her Japanese grandparents were unjustly incarcerated during WWII. Although Yukiko wanted to know more about this part of her family's history when she was younger, she found it was “too serious of a topic to talk about when you're young,” therefore, she “really struggled with being very open about talking about it.” This experience affected Yukiko’s approach to leadership because the intersection of her identities “became a big part of my leadership in wanting to make sure to accurately address how people see not only me as a woman, but also my identity, and my culture.” Yukiko wanted to be in a leadership positions where “I could talk about myself freely and make sure that it's my stories being heard and being represented correctly.” She constantly looked to align her leadership in social and cultural organizations with her identity.

Callista felt inclusive leadership training helped her feel empowered regarding her marginalized identities. It felt “isolating” and “taboo” to be “openly queer” in the Asian community, so when her marginalized identities were validated in inclusive leadership training, Callista found the training “very empowering” because she realized she could “be a leader despite the societal oppressions I face on the daily.” This empowerment “definitely plays into me wanting to prove people wrong...it really plays into me wanting to be a leader,

or wanting to aspire to be the head of the organization.” Callista now aims to use her leadership to “make my mark and have my voice heard...challenge the systems at play” and “show people who identify with maybe similar identities that I have, to show them that they can make waves and they can change things that are set up against us.” Callista found affirmation in inclusive leadership development and now believes “you can do more than what society has designated you can't do.”

Inclusive leadership training helped participants align their leadership work with empathy and compassion, and these concepts became core to how and when they engaged in leadership. Audrey said “whether you're a mentor, an RA, a boss or what not, you're going to be in charge of people who come from all different kinds of backgrounds, different upbringings who have all these different multifaceted identities.” Therefore, empathy and compassion are critical “in order to be an effective leader to them.”

Audrey believed “empathy is the most important” leadership characteristic because it is at the heart of creating inclusive environments that help all people thrive and discover leadership abilities in themselves. Audrey believed, “if you're not open to other people's feelings and opinions, and you're not able to be open-minded towards others, you can't really be a leader that's inclusive toward other people.” As a Resident Advisor, Audrey felt it was her “duty” to “show what it means to be a leader” by “being empathetic and kind to other people and being inclusive of other people on campus.” Bianca agreed and said, “It's really important that leaders take the time to get to know who it is that they're leading or who they are going to be working with.” Saphira noted “If you're a true leader you're not going to be working by yourself...being aware of your team members and your own identities, backgrounds, privileges, struggles, strengths, and weaknesses, is something that is super

essential to a team's success." When the participants found environments where there was an alignment of leadership and empathy, they felt more confident to participate as a leader. Often times, these values were emphasized through their inclusive leadership training.

The environments in which the women were most comfortable practicing leadership, were the spaces in which their individual identities were valued, authentic bonds were created, and where empathy was present. These environmental elements helped the participants feel supported during their vulnerability and able to try new things without a fear of being chastised for failure. Tu found that empathetic environments help people understand "that there are struggles that are specific and unique to us, but also how are these struggles similar to each other." When the women felt that their fears and hesitations were heard and acknowledged by others, and had an authentic connection with those who they shared their fears with, they felt able to step outside of their comfort zone and practice leadership. Bianca said, "the best people that I've worked with in leadership positions are those who are empathetic towards the people that they're working with." Debbie's said due to the supportive environments, she has been able to grow as a leader, and now her leadership goals are to always "create a very supportive community and have people being comfortable enough to be vulnerable in a sense to connect on a very personal level, so each person can feel like they're valued and they have the potential to grow."

Personal Definitions of Leadership

Over time, all participants went through various iterations of their definitions and practices of leadership. Early conceptualizations and practices of leadership began in the Inner Circle in the home and were influenced by the examples their parents set. As women's experiences and social circles widened to the Outer Circle, the women were faced with new messages of how, when, and where they could practice leadership. Through both

discouraging and encouraging messages, women began to try out different ways of leading and eventually found leadership definitions and messages that worked for them. The Environmental Circle provided both opportunities for leadership, as well as environments that encouraged women to practice leadership. The following sections describe how the Inner Circle, Outer Circle and Environmental Circle contributed to the ways in which the participants came to define their leadership as advocacy, care, and service.

Evolving Definition of Leadership

As the women participated in leadership roles, their definitions of leadership changed. For many women, those definitions began to shift from a positional stance (a teacher, or assigned leader) to one of action and service. The participants realized leadership was not a trait one is born with but rather a learned skill. Cici began “to seek out more roles, as a leader, just because...I thought it was something that I could start to develop and learn about, rather than something that was just like a trait.” Cici realized “anyone can really find situations or styles of leadership that's really based on your own strengths.” Andrea agreed, “there's no mold for student leadership.”

Many of the early conceptions of leadership were learned from the environment, including images the women saw on television. Mindy said she “got the idea of leadership from just a lot of TV...seeing a lot of male figures typically and then usually they're wearing suits or some kind of prestige.” Mindy continued the male leaders she saw in the media were “stern, very pragmatic, very ‘my way or the highway’,” they had a “a lot of ultimatums” and “a lot of demands.” However, Mindy’s personal definition and perception of leadership changed over time as she interacted with her Inner Circle and Environmental Circle. Her Inner Circle included a strong “matriarchal” lineage that began with her grandmother who

was a single mother and did what she needed to do to survive and provide success for Mindy's mother and future generations. Through her Environmental Circle, she was taught through inclusive leadership training to focus on service. Due to these influences, her conception of leadership is very different than before, as Mindy now believes a leader "is someone who respects and advocates for whatever group they're leading instead of just kind of making the overarching decision without consulting." Mindy concluded she defines her leadership style as "bottom up" and focused on the "community needs."

Similarly, Roshnai stated, "When I was younger, I definitely thought leadership was just basically telling people to do stuff," but she now realizes leadership is "not just delegating tasks. It's about being a role model, being a mentor and actually listening to people's ideas instead of just forcing your ideas on them." For Andrea, leadership in high school was about having a designated position in a club, however, her transition to college changed her thinking. During college, leadership "evolved into something more personal, and it's really about, to me, having made a connection with someone and showing them that within them, they have the capacity to be a leader."

Rejection of the title of leader. Many of the women, shied away from using the term leader for themselves, and instead used the words "involved" or "role model." Mindy said she is "not super comfortable with the spotlight and the attention that comes with being called a leader," however, she "wants to contribute to my community" through "positions of power." Alice found that she struggled with calling herself a leader because of the imposter syndrome. She said, "I would get really uncomfortable having to assume that [leader] identity. But, I think over the years, after recognizing what it was, I've gotten a lot better at

being confident in my leadership.” Alma Sage considers herself more of a “really open resource for people and not so much ‘a leader.’” Alma Sage continued,

The label or the title [of leader] doesn't mean as much to me. It's more what I do with it, or how hard I work, or how much I help other people. That's what means more to me than the title or the position. I don't think using that title as a way to express authority is how I view a leader should be.

Intersections of gender, culture, and leadership. As the women practiced leadership, they navigated intersecting messages regarding gender, culture, and leadership. The women reconciled the various and distinct and sometimes contradicting messages, and began to build a leadership identity congruent with their personal identities. For example, Tu “thought leadership meant being loud, being aggressive,” however realized this leadership style was “very masculinist” and was not congruent with her Vietnamese cultural and gender norms. Tu was taught to be “docile and not speak my mind too often” so her leadership is “a lot softer” and she defines her leadership as “underground work.” Debbie said although she is naturally “more assertive and more confrontational than a lot of other people” she has had to learn a gentler leadership approach as not to be labeled “mean.”

Yukiko “struggled with the stereotypes of what it's like to be an Asian American woman” and the perception a lot of people have of her. She said, “I definitely struggle with that as a leader.” Yukiko continued, “I felt like I had to please everyone in how I should act. As I got older, I've kind of just been more, like, this is who I am. You're gonna have to deal with it.” Yukiko found that learning about leadership was a process filled with conflict because she was “breaking free of what I can say and how can I say it.” She has heard messages such as, “I need to be a little bit more soft-spoken. I shouldn't be talking about this. This shouldn't be addressed.” Yukiko’s leadership identity development has been

characterized by breaking free of these limiting messages and saying, “No, I have this right. I can be this way.” She has learned about how these messages oppress her and others and uses her power as a leader to “deconstruct” the oppressive system she lives in and “say this is not what it should be, and I don’t want to be a part of that system.”

As the participants’ definitions of leadership changed, they reflected on their previous perceptions and realized how those perceptions limited them from participating in leadership positions. Cici realized she avoided leadership positions because she used to believe leaders were “popular people who just were able to influence others based on the fact that they were charismatic or likable.” She believed a good leader “had to have a sense of authority, this comfort with being able to dictate what’s gonna happen next and have that presence of power. I definitely knew that I was neither of those things.” Because of this perception, she “evaded leadership positions where that would be a thing, so like, leaders of clubs, like presidents of clubs.”

Cici knew she was “good at mediating between people” and “giving people my undivided attention.” She helped people figure out “what they were good at, what they felt proud of, what they loved to do, and kind of always having these really great conversations with friends or just other classmates.” Eventually Cici realized “that is also a really great leadership quality” so she “approached leadership after that as a facilitator.” She found “that was the most rewarding kind of leadership that I could participate in.” She also realized she “could be part of a network of leaders” and there is “not always a situation where it’s just one leader and then a bunch of followers,” rather “there can be multiple types of leaders who are kind of taking care of different aspects of the group and, in that way, setting up a really comprehensive and well-rounded kind of leadership.”

It is through the influence of the participants' 'Inner Circles, Outer Circle' and Environmental Circles, that they were able to try on different styles of leadership and learn about how others define and practice leadership. This experiential and educational knowledge helped them create ways of leadership that were congruent to their values and felt comfortable. The sections below highlight the three main pillars of leadership styles present across the cases.

Leadership as Advocacy

Many participants became involved in leadership so they could bring about positive social change. Their commitment to advocacy solidified during their time in college; however, for some of the women, the seeds of advocacy were sown in their younger years through their lived experiences. For example, when Anoushka began learning about the rates of relationship abuse and sexual assault amongst women in her Indian community, Anoushka asked herself, "How can I make it better or how can I make it stop at least in a small way?" She took up a leadership role at a non-profit organization in India that worked towards ending relationship and sexual violence. Leadership and activism became incredibly intertwined, and Anoushka stated, "activism is a really big part of my life...being an activist really does show leadership for me."

Alice saw a teacher show leadership by advocating for more inclusive language in the classroom. When a racial microaggression was used in class, her teacher stopped class and told the students, "Hey, that's not appropriate to say." Alice was "shocked to see her make the whole class uncomfortable" but realized her teacher wanted to help someone "be a better person." Alice said this form of advocacy was also a form of leadership. Alice believed at times, in order to be a leader, "you have to put yourself in a very uncomfortable position to

uphold what you believe is moral, and that high school teacher did it.” Her teacher was willing to make everyone feel awkward for the sake of the students learning an important lesson in civility, and “that sacrifice really stood out to me... A leader cares about who they’re in charge of, and she cared enough about that person to emotionally invest the classroom, and her awkwardness, into making them learn that lesson.”

The curricular and co-curricular education at the university provided an open environment that encouraged students to deeply explore inequitable social structures, which led to increased motivation to serve as an activist leader. As the students were trained on how to be inclusive leaders, they often reported feeling activated to use their positions of power as student leaders to advocate for social change. Andrea, who described herself as “closeted” in high school, “felt so free” in college and was able to “open social circles” and “be more open minded.” As a queer Asian-American woman who held a leadership role on campus, Andrea strived to advocate for students so they “could be themselves in their greatest capacity and fulfill what they wanted to do and pursue what they wanted to do, all while maintaining the most pivotal aspects of their identity.” Andrea saw herself not as a traditional leader but “more as an advocate for other students.” Jennifer believed attending college in California also allowed for a more inclusive environment, which led to her becoming a student leader and “an activist” in her own community.

Jennifer stated that when she was in high school, her friend created a service program that advocated for people with disabilities, in honor of her father who had a disability. Jennifer was so moved by her friend’s passion for this advocacy work, she eventually joined her friend and became vice president of the organization. For her, “seeing the effects it had on our local community, on the students that had disabilities, it was really

amazing.” Jennifer’s friend was an example of a “leader” who helped her feel “empowered.”

Mindy realized that as a college student at a four-year university she is more privileged than others, therefore she felt the need to give back to an underserved neighborhood as a teacher’s assistant, rather than in an affluent neighborhood closer to her college campus. Mindy said, “I think that advocating for people who don’t have voices is something that’s really admirable to do.” Mindy wanted to participate in advocacy, “because I didn’t necessarily feel like my identity was advocated for back at home, so yeah. I think I just attracted to advocacy as a way to take my privilege and give underserved people more of a voice.” She now defines a leader as “a person who decides to take a bigger responsibility within a community or group and is someone who represents their needs and kind of advocates for them.”

Andrea worked as a peer educator for a sexual violence prevention program on campus. During a tabling event, a student disclosed to her she was sexually assaulted and needed resources. In that moment, Andrea realized the “gravity” of her leadership position. She also further solidified the belief that advocacy “is so meaningful” as you help people get “the support that they need.” Andrea’s fellow student leaders are “some of the most compassionate people that I’ve ever known...they just really care about the community and genuinely changing campus culture.” Andrea believed that a lot of her advocacy work stemmed from her own feelings of “dysphoria,” feeling lost,” and “being closeted.” Being in a leadership role has given Andrea the “resources” and “the tools to communicate with other students.” Within her leadership roles Andrea has access to college administration, faculty, and staff and has asked them, “How are we going to hold you accountable for making sure

that your goals are met?” “How are you trying to make diversity important on this campus?” and “How are we going to get more people that we get to see ourselves in on this campus?”

Advocacy, equity, and diversity were all leadership values the university promoted through their student leadership training and expectations. Alice felt because of these structured values, “my university has helped me be a lot more inclusive in my leadership.” She realized in her leadership training before college “no one’s emotions mattered, we just needed to get things done;” however, during her university leadership training she learned about “inclusiveness, and intentionality, and empathy, and equity versus equality.” Because of this training, Alice is now committed to “recognizing that peoples’ humanity before assigning tasks...I can’t just be like, ‘I don’t care if you’re having a bad day, just do it.’ I have to understand this is a person I’m talking to.” Because of her university leadership training, Alice felt “I’m just a lot more inclusive and empathetic as a leader.” This focus on inclusivity helped participants solidify their commitment to advocacy in leadership. As a Resident Advisor, Audrey defined the concept of leadership as “being able to advocate for other people,” to use one’s “position of power to help those that don’t have the privileges to help themselves,” and “advocating for other people when I see that they’re not being treated well just because of who they are.” Audrey considers advocacy “an everyday duty I feel as an RA in my community.”

Similarly, after learning about microaggressions in her student leadership training, Flash realized she had a responsibility to bring awareness to the importance of words and their meanings. Flash learned she can advocate for others by addressing problematic language in her campus community. Flash stated, “When you get called out by people you know you have

to understand they're looking out for you...It's because they want you to be more aware of what you're saying and how it can affect other people around you."

The participants learned that being a leader and advocate also included educating themselves. Students realized equity-minded learning should be on-going so they can continue to advocate in a respectful manner. Yukiko is "actively trying to seek out" new information so she can "be a better advocate for my community." She continued to challenge herself to understand "what it means to be an API in society today and what I can do to advocate for our rights, and how to do it accurately. It's really me putting myself into the space and wanting to learn."

Many of the women used their leadership positions to provide opportunities to educate others on the societal systems of power that led to oppression, sexism, racism, and homophobia. Kalani worked as a Resident Advisor and provided educational programming in the residence halls regarding the #timesup movement. Kalani stated, "seeing all the discussion that was happening among my female residents and my male residents was really awesome. Just being able to educate them in these things and share this knowledge, felt really productive and fruitful on my behalf." Outside of her role as a Resident Advisor, Kalani was involved in a Filipino cultural organization on campus and her participation in that organization taught her the importance of "inclusivity, especially when it comes to diversity and gender inclusivity."

Callista helped bring diversity, inclusivity, and equity training and education to the Greek Life system in her university through a peer educator program. Through this program Callista taught students about social justice. In Greek Life, many students will "say things that are problematic and need to be unpacked. So, I have to call them in and be more

understanding as to why they came to that idea.” Using her leadership to educate other students is important because a lot of her peers “don’t have a lot of social justice background.” Callista recognized that “social justice is a continuous learning process,” and therefore she remains cognizant of her biases as well and is always learning new things and actively reflecting on her growth and understanding.

After the 2016 United States presidential election, Alma Sage realized the need to be an advocate in her community. She heard the negative messages used against Hillary Clinton and realized she heard those messages about women leaders in her own life. Alma Sage decided to use her leadership to advocate against those hateful messages and biased language. “Even if it’s something small, like if one of my friends is getting treated differently because they’re a woman or something I’ll try and call that out,” Alma Sage declared. Since the 2016 presidential election she has “become a little bit more politically active, and just more aware in general,” participating in events like the women march, because she “wanted to be a part of that message of hope and inclusivity again.”

Some participants felt their leadership advocacy was necessary to further the positive messages of what Asian and Pacific Islander women could do. Alice was proud to be a leader, “to build an example to the people who are younger than me, and to the people who are older than me, and aren’t used to seeing this type of role for an Asian woman.” Alice continued, “I’m glad to prove to their existing ideologies that this is not true, I think it’s possible for someone like me to be a leader.” Callista felt being an Asian female leader was very important because she believes her leadership will cultivate change and challenge the systems, because as a leader she will “show people who identify with maybe similar identities that I have, show them that they can make waves and they can change things that are set up

against us.” Being a leader on campus helps her show people they “can do more than what society has designated you can’t do.” Similarly, Tu believed her leadership contributed to positive change. Tu recognized for some people, “positive change could be finally getting included, finally getting a seat at the table,” however, for Tu “positive change is really not just getting a seat at the table, but owning the entire room.”

The Inner, Outer, and Environmental Circles influenced the women’s definition of leadership as advocacy. The conception of leadership as advocacy began with the formative years in the inner circle. Students like Anoushka witnessed her mom be the target of racism when she moved from India to Oklahoma. Yukiko grew up hearing the stories of her grandparents being unjustly imprisoned in the Japanese internment camps during World War II. These stories of racism set the foundation for why the women felt it was important to be a leader through standing up against discrimination and advocate for what is right. Advocacy was emphasized when leaders in their Outer Circles did so. For example, Alice witnessed her teacher stop the class to confront a racial microaggression that was used and teach the students how to use language that was not disrespectful or hurtful to others.

The Environmental Circle was a large contributor to the participants defining leadership as advocacy. Andrea, Mindy, Flash, Kalani, and Callista specifically talked about how their leadership training in college taught them, that as leaders, they have the privilege and power to influence people’s lives and the systems around them. Their leadership training challenged the women to use their leadership to participate in activism by confronting sexism, racism, homophobia in their communities. Andrea, Alice, and Jennifer stated they felt more comfortable in their advocacy because their environment (both California and the university) was open to and accepting of this type of leadership. Lastly, for some students like Alma

Sage, the larger sociopolitical climate that precipitated the United States presidential election, helped her understand the necessity of using leadership as advocacy.

The women saw injustice in the world through their Inner, Outer, and Environmental circles and were moved to make a change in the world and in their communities through their leadership. Inclusive environments and interventions helped the women find deeper purpose for their leadership and many of the women looked at themselves as agents of social change.

Leadership as Care

Care was a core pillar of leadership for many of the women, and many of them held leadership positions in organizations and activities focused on care. For some participants, their understanding of leadership as care work began when they were children. Christy found as the oldest child amongst her siblings and her cousins she “always just had this responsibility of being the babysitter” which eventually led to her to understand leadership as caring for others. Christy said to this day, “in my friend group, I'm the mom of the group or whatever it is. Because I just have this natural tendency to have to take care of people, or make sure I'm doing enough for them.” Debbie believed her understanding of care leadership stems from her family’s spiritual beliefs. The lessons her mother taught her about the ancient Confucius ways impacted the “way I carry myself and the way that I want to influence others.” Debbie continued, “the Confucius understanding of things shaped my leadership style” which helped her build the “compassionate side” of leadership. Debbie decided her leadership goals “is always to create a very supportive community and having people being comfortable enough to be vulnerable in a sense to connect on a very personal level” so that “each person can feel like they're valued and they have the potential to grow.”

Andrea's mentors helped her further define her personal beliefs on leadership as care work. Whereas Andrea used to believe leadership was important "to put on my college application," through working with mentors, she realized there is a larger reason to participate in leadership. This shift in her approach to leadership guided which leadership opportunities she took advantage of in college. Andrea now works to "connect with other people and advocate for other people" as well as "making sure that students are getting really the care that they need and just the resources that they need access to, or just someone to listen to." As a peer mentor in the sexual assault resource center on campus, Andrea realized "how much an individual can make a difference." Through this particular leadership role, Andrea needs "to have that gentleness, that compassion" because at the core of the leadership role is "self-care, self-love, [and] self-preservation."

Some students spoke about the important role other student leaders, like Resident Advisors or Orientation Leaders, played in their understanding of leadership as care. Cici recalled, "when I came to college, I remember that I really appreciated people in the community, in our residence halls and just around campus, that made it known, and would show that they were there if any of us needed them." These student leaders made her feel included and cared for, so she "began to look for [student leadership] roles like that as well" and eventually applied to be an Orientation Leader to share that resources across campus.

Alma Sage was so grateful for the student leaders in her Japanese club because they provided an environment that helped her feel included. Due to her experience in that club, Alma Sage decided she "really wanted to be a part of making that environment to help people feel included and welcomed into a space that they might not be able to find elsewhere...I really wanted to give back."

In addition to the care they provided in their formal leadership roles, some students believe the care they provided to their friends demonstrated leadership as well. Tu felt her leadership includes “a lot of care work” and her “leadership emerged because I care.” Tu believed her genuine care for others is what made her “an amazing RA for my first-year students” and a leader in her personal life when she would cook “meals for my friends one day because they've been working a full day and they forgot to feed themselves.” According to Tu, this form of leadership was “a way to retain students [at the university].” Tu critiqued the title of student leader because she believed that student leaders often bear the brunt of “labor that goes unnoticed” and it “gets re-appropriated by the university through the title of leader.” At times, this care work drained Tu emotionally. She said, “because my leadership is so closely aligned with care work, I've had to learn this year actually what it means to draw healthy boundaries.” Alice echoed the sentiment that leadership happens in and out of formal leadership roles. She said, “I think that everyone can be a leader without a leadership position.” Alice continued that leadership “happens every day” for example “when anyone takes on a task that didn't have to.” Even small moments like “asking if your friends are okay” is “something a leader would do.”

Most participants saw a natural intersection of empathy, care, and leadership. This was due in large part to the experiences within their Inner and Outer circles. Christy found that as the oldest child in her family ingrained in her to be a leader by caring for others. Although this care leadership began with her younger siblings, it has now extended into her friend groups. Debbie believed her care leadership was rooted in the Confucius beliefs taught to her by her mother. Tu, a Vietnamese refugee, reflected on the care leadership given to her and her younger sister by her parents and realized this contributed to her understanding of

leadership as “care work,” which, similarly to Christy, was a leadership practice used amongst friends.

The Outer Circle further solidified this care work as leadership as the women worked with mentors who helped them define new ways of understanding the practice of leadership. Andrea said her mentors helped her understand leadership must be about helping others. When Cici moved to Research University, the first student leaders she met were her Orientation Leaders and Resident Advisors. She noted how much they genuinely cared about her and others, and she modeled her leadership practices after them. Alma Sage felt grateful for the care leadership provided in her Japanese club. This leadership helped her feel included and she worked to make people feel included as well as she took on leadership roles.

Leadership as Service

Many participants interchanged the words “lead” and “serve” and provided examples of how they use their leadership to serve their friends, families, and communities. Flash viewed her leadership role as a Resident Advisor as a “service job.” Flash believed service was core to her leadership and it means “prioritizing the other members of the group, really being aware of where the strengths and weaknesses are, being aware of how people are doing mentally and emotionally, being able to be flexible around that.” Flash believed good leaders prioritize people over tasks to be accomplished, and recognized “in order for something to be successful, or a group to function well, everyone within that group should feel capable and comfortable, safe to take a few risks.”

Isabella pursued leadership experiences focused on service because those are the “roles that females are expected to take. As someone who is very active in a community service club, Isabella found “no guys were ever leaders within that club.” She believed

women gravitate towards experiences that were “caring” and focused on service because they “care more, they want to do service” and does not “think guys would want to do that.”

As participants continued to refine their personal definitions of leadership, they realized that the service their parents provided to them, was a form of leadership. Mindy realized that when she was younger she never thought of her parents as leaders because they did not fit the “stereotypical leader based off of movies, TV shows, media...they didn't hold any prestigious positions or anything like that, anything with particular power. They're working class.” As time went on, and her definition of leadership became broader and included service as a form of leadership, she “recognized that they were leaders on their own because able to push this family towards actually a stable place like economically takes a lot of leadership.”

Being a mentor was a form of service leadership many of the participants engaged in. Often, those women who were mentored earlier in their leadership journey, wanted mentor other younger women to provide empowerment and positive representation to the next generation of leaders. Jennifer became “really excited” when she saw women of color seeking leadership positions and felt that by serving a mentor, she “served their [cultural] community” and encouraged more young women who looked like her to participate in leadership. Alice realized that when she mentored a young woman in a service organization “it meant more” because “she could see herself as me, or not as me, but in a position like me.” Alice felt like she “was giving her [mentee] something that a lot of people couldn't give her”- positive representation in leadership. Alice realized when her mentee looked at the people in the US government, she was not seeing people who looked like her, but that at a “more local

level” her mentee could see “the Key Club president is an Asian girl just like me, I could be president like her one day.”

Some participants served as mentors to other women through their Resident Advisor (RA) position. Audrey applied to be an RA because she was “interested in being able to mentor first-years.” Audrey realized she “wouldn’t have been able to navigate my way through my first year” without her Resident Advisor. It “meant a lot” to Audrey that her RA “was always available...whenever I had questions or needed guidance,” so she wanted to “pay it forward and do that for other incoming freshmen the following year.” As a Resident Advisor, Kalani helped first year women process and understand life experiences that “were mostly negative.” Through her RA mentorship position, she told young women “You’re not alone in this. I’m here for you, we’re all here for each other, and it’s gonna be a journey for all of us.” Ultimately, Kalani felt like her “place was kind of to go along with them and be there for them in their journey together.” Flash, who also worked as an RA, took special interest in mentoring her female residents because they “lack a lot of confidence in themselves and they don’t really value themselves or hold themselves at a high worth.” Flash took every opportunity to “talk to them with confidence” and helped them realize “they are a lot better than they think they are” because if “they’ve gotten this far they can do anything.” Flash worked diligently with one female resident who struggled with her self-confidence. Flash mentored this woman to help build her confidence and eventually this student “started applying to other leadership roles that she really liked.” Flash concluded, “I am just a person who really, really worships self-worth and self-love. That’s where I put a lot of my energy and attention when I can. Especially with my female residents.”

Service was a way in which many women categorized their leadership. This was mainly a result of their interaction by their Inner and Outer Circles. Mindy described learning about service as leadership through her Inner Circle because of the example set by her parents, who put their children's needs over their own and did what they needed to do to immigrate to the United States for the future of their families. Some participants attributed their understanding of leadership as service to the examples set by their mentors in the Outer Circle. Their mentors took time out of their busy schedules to counsel and support them, which made the women grateful and pushed the women to serve as mentors who were younger than them. Jennifer and Alice stated they participated as mentors to other young women as part of their leadership practice, and Kalani, Audrey, and Flash mentored women through their positions as Resident Advisors.

Summary

This chapter described the themes the data revealed: the influence of the participants' inner circles, outer circles, and environment circles, as well as the evolving definitions of leadership and the core pillars of the leadership practice. In the beginning, many participants understood leadership as a position with formal power, such as a teacher, club president, or a director of an organization, but over time, their definitions of leadership became more action-based and focused on advocacy, care, service. As the women grew in their leadership identities, they realized there is not one definition for leadership, and became more comfortable with developing their own personal style of leadership. Their leadership definitions were informed by their lived experiences across their lifespans, as well as the leadership training they received at the university level. The university leadership training focused on understanding and honoring individuals' identities, and how as leaders, they must practice leadership in a way that is inclusive of all people, so that all may thrive and grow. As

a result, the core tenets of the way the women practice leadership was through advocacy, care, and service.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This qualitative study explored how the lived experiences of Asian/Pacific Islander (API) female undergraduate students contributed to the development of their leadership identities. Furthermore, this study investigated which experiences helped the women progress deeper into the Leadership Identity Development (LID) model developed by Komives, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen (2005). Twenty API undergraduate college women were interviewed for this study using a set of semi-structured interview questions. The data collected was analyzed utilizing open coding in each case and then cross-case analysis was used to identify themes across all cases.

Summary of Findings

Two major findings emerged from the data. The first finding confirmed the trajectory through the LID model's six stages of Leadership Identity Development as well as the proposition that there are many factors that influence the development of a woman's leadership identity. Participants in this study all traveled through the six progressive stages of Leadership Development as outlined in Komives et al.'s LID Model. Also, participants identified the many influences that were salient through their development journey. These influences were categorized into three sub-findings: the participant's Inner Circle (socially constructed identities, foundational life experiences, and their role within their nuclear family), Outer Circle (messages of encouragement and discouragement from people and environments outside of their nuclear family), and Environmental Circle (access to opportunities and social climates). These three factors contributed to the process by which the women participated in and defined leadership, thereby developing identities as such. The second finding gave insight into how the women reconciled their personal definitions of leadership which, for these students, centered on advocacy, service, and care. These findings

confirmed existing research on women and women of color in leadership that posit women approach leadership through a transformational lens.

Finding 1: Reflections and Implications for the LID Model

In the extant leadership literature, the LID Model had not been used to explore the leadership identity development of API women. This study aimed to fill that gap in the literature. The findings from this study revealed that the API women's leadership identity development did follow the progression of the LID thereby further solidifying the application of the LID model on different populations of students. The core tenets of the progressive stages of the LID model can be found in Table 4 below. I have added the third column to demonstrate how the findings of this study aligned with the stages of the LID model.

Table 4: Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model with Study Findings

Stage Name	Description of LID Model	API LID Study Findings
Stage 1: Awareness	An individual acknowledges that leadership happens, but does not actively participate in leadership.	Inner Circle: Role in family (including birth order), parental demonstrations of leadership and strong females determined participants' initial conceptions of leadership.
Stage 2: Exploration/ Engagement	An individual intentionally seeks out, and participates in, leadership opportunities.	Outer Circle: Explicit and implicit messages of encouragement supported the women in their pursuit of leadership activities, whereas messages of discouragement halted progression into Stage 2.
Stage 3: Leader Identified	An individual defines leadership as a positional role, one that could be held by themselves or others.	Outer Circle: Women were able to identify positional leaders through their interactions with their Outer Circle.
Stage 4: Leadership Differentiated	An individual begins to transition in their understanding of leadership. In this stage, leadership shifts from a positional identity to an actions-based identity. An individual acknowledges that leadership can be practiced anywhere, by anyone.	Outer/Environmental Circles: Interactions with these circles and their experiences in leadership helped them develop a more complex definition of leadership.
Stage 5: Generativity	An individual shows a strong commitment to using leadership as a way to develop others and sustain a particular group and/or organization.	Outer/Environmental Circles: Reflecting on the role that mentors had in their lives, the women used their leadership positions to mentor younger leaders who were in the initial stages of LID model.
Stage 6: Internalization/ Synthesis	An individual strives for lifelong learning and personal development and is able to see organizational complexity across contexts.	Environmental Circle: Inclusive environments and leadership development that focused on promoting equity and social justice, helped the participants develop a personal definition of leadership aligned with their personal values including advocacy, service, and care.

The next sections explain how the sub-findings of Finding 1 of the study intersected with, differed from, and added to the current research on the LID Model and leadership.

Inner circle. The first sub-finding, the Inner Circle, aligned most with Stage One (Awareness) of the LID model, as it was the time when students began realizing leadership existed. The Inner Circle was comprised of participants' foundational leadership experiences including role in family, early demonstrations of leadership, and explicit messages of leadership from their parents.

Unlike the original Komives et al. (2005) study from which the LID model was derived, many of the participants in this study identified as first generation or second generation Americans, therefore, the immigrant experience was prevalent throughout the Inner Circle and influenced the participants' foundational concepts of leadership (Stage One of LID). Participants identified the sacrifices their parents made to create future wealth and opportunities for their families as initial demonstrations of leadership. An interesting juxtaposition to this finding was many first-generation and some second-generation participants noted their parents did not explicitly encourage them to be leaders, use the words leader or leadership, or praise them when they participated in formal leadership. It wasn't until the women interacted with their Outer Circle that they become aware of the word leadership and the importance of leadership development within themselves. Students who identified as third or fourth-generation, and/or who had parents who were more assimilated to American values or broke away from traditional cultural values, noted their parents explicitly encouraged them to become leaders when they were younger. This implies that for first and second generation students, leadership may not be a concept that is emphasized during their formative years. Although the stated leadership was present in their younger years, it was not spoken about explicitly.

Additionally, this study emphasized the presence of cultural and gendered norms throughout women's Inner Circles which had an impact on the women's foundational beliefs about leadership during their development in Stage One. This was a different finding than the original Komives et al. (2005) study. Participants noted the intersections of these messages, noting, for example, the encouragement to be submissive, quiet, and docile, messages often given to API women. These early gendered and cultural customs influenced the women's understanding of how they could participate in leadership, as these cultural values often conflicted with their conceptualizations of leadership (i.e. a practice of using one's voice and holding power).

Participants who stated they had independent women in their Inner Circle (i.e. single mothers, mothers with degrees in higher education, and/or mothers who openly opposed the traditional gendered/cultural values), declared that their mother's departure from traditional cultural values was an asset to their early understanding of leaders and their ability to be one. They said their mother's guidance helped them understand that leadership could be practiced by women and men. This departure from traditional cultural values encouraged women to believe that, despite their culture promoting men into leadership roles, there could be room for women in leadership as well.

Outer circle. The second sub-finding, the Outer Circle, was comprised of the people and environments outside of the participants' nuclear families. The Outer Circle corresponded with the leadership identity development described in Stage Two (Exploration/Engagement) and Stage Three (Leader Identified), the stages when students became involved and participated in leadership roles. Due to influences from the Outer

Circle, students became involved in organizations, volunteer events, and activities. This participation in leadership activities signified a participant's move through the LID model.

People and environments in the Outer Circle provided explicit and implicit encouragement to the women which helped them progress deeper into the LID model. As the women heard explicit messages of encouragement from others they decided to participate in leadership. For example, participants cited the importance of peers inviting them to join a group or organization, and the role of older mentors/adults recognizing their abilities and encouraging them to participate. Explicit messages of encouragement helped the women feel motivated to try new experiences including leadership roles. This external validation helped to break down participants' internal doubts and contributed to them feeling as if their participation was valued and mattered.

Implicit messages of encouragement also played a vital role in women moving from Stage One through Stages Two and Three. When participants saw people with similar identities in a club, organization, or activity, they perceived that space or activity to be open, inviting, and attainable. For example, seeing women, or women of their ethnicity, in academic majors, student organizations, and service opportunities, helped the participants believe they, too, could participate in that space. These implicit messages of encouragement were especially important those students studying science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) because these fields are traditionally populated by men. For some STEM students having one female professor in STEM field, or having a conversation about being a woman in STEM, were important ways for them to realize that they could participate in that space and helped them move from Stage One to Stages Two and Three.

Conversely, participants' journeys from Stage One to Stage Two and Three were halted by explicit and implicit messages of discouragement from their Outer Circle. Explicit messages of discouragement often centered around their female identity, such as being labeled bossy, mean, or bitchy, having their authority challenged, navigating the double binds of female leadership, and confronting sexist and racist microaggressions. This discouragement began as early as elementary school. When the participants heard these negative messages about their identities it caused discomfort and led to the development of internalized doubts about their abilities to be leaders. For those who were involved in leadership, negative statements about their identities often also caused them to reevaluate their approaches to leadership. At times the discomfort was so immense they avoided engagement opportunities altogether.

Implicit messages of discouragement often centered around a lack of positive representation of women, or more specifically API women, in positions of leadership. If participants did not see people who shared similar identities as them in an organization, they would, at times, choose to not participate in those opportunities. When women did participate in organizations, classes, or groups where they were the only woman present, they noted feeling the effects of the imposter syndrome and that they did not belong. They reported feeling less comfortable participating in these activities or avoided them all together. A lack of positive representation hindered their progression from Stage One to Stages Two and Three.

These experiences and messages from the Outer Circle demonstrated similarities and differences to extant research on the LID model and leadership practices of women and people of color. For example, Onorato and Musoba (2015) explored the leadership

development of Hispanic women at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and found that, similar to this study, many of the participant's messages of their abilities were not explicitly to either gender or culture, but rather these two identities were intricately intertwined and influenced the participants' conceptions of self and abilities. This furthered confirmed past research which emphasized the importance of using an intersectional approach to best understand students' needs (Reynolds & Pope, 1991, Deaux, 1993, Jones & McEwen, 2000). Participants in both this study and Onorato and Musoba's (2015) study identified different expectations for women and men in their culture. The API women and Hispanic women identified their cultures to be strongly patriarchal. Furthermore, both studies found that two parent households that adhered to more traditional cultural values were more patriarchal in nature. Students who had mothers who did not adhere to patriarchal norms, or who were single mothers, realized earlier they could challenge patriarchal gendered norms and step into leadership roles earlier. In both studies, women grappled with conflicting messages on their abilities to be leaders. One of the greatest examples of conflicting messages on leadership occurred through a phenomenon called a double bind, which was present in both studies. This presence of the double bind confirmed past research that demonstrated the phenomenon existed for women in leadership (Hune, 1998; Arminio et al., 2000).

Environmental circle. The Environmental Circle, the third sub-finding, focused on the number and types of leadership development opportunities available, as well as the social climates in which the women participated in their leadership opportunities. The Environmental Circle exhibited similarities with Stages Three (Leadership Identified), Four (Leadership Differentiated), Five (Generativity), and Six (Integration/Synthesis). An abundance of leadership opportunities was important because this determined the number of

chances the participants had to further develop as leaders. Additionally, the social climates in which they lived affected how the students refined their practices and personal definitions of leadership.

Some students noted the opportunities to participate in leadership during elementary school were the first moments they participated in leadership. Often, when women spoke of leadership during elementary school, they noted these opportunities were informal, ad hoc leadership opportunities (i.e. being asked by the teacher to help in the classroom or being a line leader for lunch). For some of the participants, language translation was their first experience as a leader during elementary school. Some women cited the need to translate for their parents, whom did not speak English and others were asked by their elementary school teachers to translate for students who were not as advanced in their language skills. Middle school involvement opportunities were more formalized than elementary school, but clubs and organizations were not plentiful. Most women who mentioned middle school leadership spoke of the opportunity to participate in Associated Student Body (ASB) government.

As students entered high school, their options for leadership participation became varied and allowed them to specialize in different topics of interest. As students began planning for college, the importance of leadership development became more pressing, therefore, they began to participate in more leadership opportunities. Some students took on formal leadership roles, indicating a movement from Stage Two into Stages Three and Four, while others worked towards the sustainability of an organization, indicating a movement into from Stage Four into Stage Five. Access to formal co-curricular involvement activities during middle school and high school helped the women move through Stages Two, Three, Four, and Five of the LID model.

A distinct shift in leadership identity development occurred when the women entered Research University. Participants noted the college environment offered a more inclusive space, different from the “cliques” and “stereotypes” of high school. Through their required diversity, equity, and inclusion courses, students felt their personal stories, histories, and identities were honored by the college environment. This campus climate change helped women feel proud of their marginalized identities (i.e. queer, refugee, first-generation status, ethnicity) and more confident in themselves, which was often different from how they felt about their identities in high school. This curricular emphasis on inclusivity honored various perspectives and gave the women the language and agency to describe the phenomena they experienced (i.e. sexism, racism, and homophobia), which in turn empowered them.

This inclusive climate was present in the Research University’s co-curricular climate as well as through formal college leadership trainings and development. During formalized leadership trainings and seminars, student affairs staff members emphasized the importance of leadership as a way to build more inclusive environments and create positive social change in their communities. The emphasis on diversity, social justice, equality, and equity throughout the university’s curriculum, co-curriculum, and formal leadership development programs helped the women move into Stage Five, as they wanted to help others become leaders, and Stage Six, when their leadership values were consistent with their personal values.

Finding 2: Personal Definitions of Leadership

The student’s creation of a personal definition of leadership that aligned with their intersecting identities was the second finding of this study. Most women developed an understanding of leadership as a practice that centered around advocacy, care, and/or service. As students moved through the LID model and arrived in Stage 5 and Stage 6, they had

developed leadership identities that were congruent with their personal values. For all the participants, their time in the university helped them solidify who they wanted to be as leaders and how they wanted to practice their leadership. As the women experienced the transition from Stage Four to Five in college, the women could identify a “growing awareness” of their passions and were committed to “transcendent goals and purposes” (Komives et al., 2005, p. 410). As the women continued to participate in leadership, their personal leadership definitions became more refined and eventually they found “congruence among individual and organizational values” (Komives et al., 2005, p. 410). All the women in the study defined their leadership as forms of advocacy, care, and/or service which demonstrated a commitment to something bigger than themselves.

As the women continued to move into Stages Five and Six, they became interested in teaching and developing younger women who they identified as needing their support, affirmation, and mentoring to become leaders. Congruent with Stage Five, their roles as mentors helped them internalize “their own personal leadership identity” (Komives et al., 2005, p. 411). As the women solidified their personal brands of leadership, they were often compatible with their gendered and cultural values as well, as they were “committed to the congruence of their beliefs with their actions” (p.412). This signaled a movement into Stage Six the final stage of the LID model which further solidified the reliability of the identity development process outlined in the LID model.

Interestingly, Renn and Bilodeau (2005), Onorato and Musoba (2015), and this study all identified the importance of activism within leadership to these student populations. It was through activism that the students found empowerment through their leadership. This is congruent with past studies on marginalized populations (women, people of color, and

LGBTQ students) which found these populations emphasize using their leadership for positive social change (Kezar & Moriarty, 2000, Park, Lin, Poon, & Chang, 2008). These findings on leadership as service and care also confirm Eagly & Carli's (2007) research findings that women often adopt transformational leadership habits, in which they prioritize their relationships with their followers. This is different from transactional leadership, an approach that male leaders are more likely to employ, which focuses on the leaders themselves and the task at hand. The Pew Research Center (2015) also found differences in leadership approaches by gender and stated women are much more likely than men to say that being compassionate is absolutely essential in a leader (66% of women vs. 47% of men). This study's findings confirm much of the previous research on gender and leadership and strengthen the notion that people from different backgrounds experience, understand, and practice leadership differently from one another.

Study Limitations

This study had some limitations that are important to note. The site used for this study was a large, public, four-year Research I University in southern California. Due to the site being a highly selective university, the participants were more likely to come from educational and personal backgrounds which included extensive leadership experience before entering college. This may have influenced the participant sample as they may have been farther along in the leadership model. This study does not highlight the unique leadership identity development experiences of students attending community colleges, smaller universities, or private universities.

Furthermore, it is important to note that this university was comprised of a diverse ethnic population where about 40% of the student population identified as Asian. To support the high population of Asian students, the university had recently created a new student affairs

staff position to create and manage intervention programs focused on the API community at the University. Lastly, the university was located in California, a state with the second highest Asian/Pacific Islander population across the United States. Therefore, on and off campus, students were more likely to see themselves and their culture represented. This limitation leaves room for consideration of how, if at all, the leadership development of API undergraduate women would be similar or different at a university located in a state or university with a lower API population.

Lastly, the university culture strongly promoted the concepts of equity and diversity through various means, but most prominently through their required diversity and equity general education courses, as well as through their social justice-focused student leadership training. Many of the participants referenced these classes and trainings as important to their leadership identity development. Students learned about the concepts of privilege and power and were able to connect those concepts to their work as leaders. Participants specifically referenced using their power as leaders to break down oppressive systems and to help those who are marginalized or less fortunate. Not all universities require equity and diversity general education courses, nor promote social justice training as a part of their leadership training. Therefore, it leaves room to explore how API women leadership identity development would have differed, if at all, if these elements were not present.

Participants

Participants varied in many of their identities, however, nineteen out of twenty participants identified as Asian and only one participant, TK, identified as Pacific Islander (Samoan and White). Having only one participant identify as Pacific Islander was not surprising, as only 1% of the undergraduate population at this university identified as Pacific

Islander. TK was also the only participant who identified as a transfer student. Therefore, this study does not lend significant insight into the nuances of many Pacific Islander or transfer student's experience.

Lastly, because I solicited participants from student affairs staff members, many of the participants were students who worked closely with student affairs departments. Had I reached out to academic affairs departments, I may have received students who met the criteria, but who had more leadership experiences in the curricular realm which may have yielded different insights.

Positionality

It is important to note this researcher's positionality as it relates to the study. I have been a student affairs professional working in the area of student development for ten years. I worked for more than two years at the university in this study, but was not employed by this university during the time of the study. With my personal and professional history with the study site, I was somewhat familiar with the student affairs department and the student leadership training used across departments on campus. It was important to me to be as unbiased as possible in the research. Therefore, the selection of the participants was done in such a way that I did not seek out students who attended any leadership training that I facilitated while working there. To mitigate bias, I also utilized the interrater during the coding process.

Generalizability

This was a comparative case study that used qualitative methods to collect the student's lived experiences, therefore this study is not generalizable. One person's lived experience does not represent what is true for all people with similar identities. The purpose

of this comparative case study was to capture the unique voices of individuals and understand their lived experiences as they related to their leadership development. Although this study contributed important insights into a community of women, it cannot be determined that these findings are true for all API women.

Implications for Educators

Participants' Inner Circles influenced their understanding and conceptualization of leadership which indicated most students were in Stage One before entering a formal system of education. Therefore, it is important for elementary school educators to identify ways in which they can develop student leaders. For elementary educators who serve first-generation and second-generation students, their role as a leadership educator is especially important as these students may not have parents who explicitly encourage them to be leaders.

The findings indicated students will enter formal systems of education with different beliefs about leadership (i.e. who a leader is, what a leader does, how a leader acts), however, these beliefs on leadership are often dependent on cultural norms. It is important for educators to be cognizant that not all students will conceptualize leadership the same, therefore, educators should provide opportunities for students to explore concepts of leadership from a culturally responsive lens to help students solidify a personal definition of leadership that is congruent with their cultural values.

Educators should be cognizant that with API women in particular there may be inherent conflicts between the way a leader is defined (i.e. someone who uses their voice and directs others) and the ways API women may be socialized (i.e. to be quiet, docile, submissive). Educators should present various styles of leadership throughout their educational activities to demonstrate there are various ways to be leaders. Culturally responsive leadership education during Stage One (Awareness) could help API women

understand new perspectives of leadership and recognize that leadership could be aligned with their cultural values, thereby encouraging them to participate in leadership which would help them move into Stage Two (Exploration/Engagement).

The Outer Circle encompassed a critical time for the student's leadership identity development, as it contained people and messages that either propelled students into Stage Two (Exploration/Engagement) and Stage Three (Leader Identified), or hindered them from engaging in leadership opportunities. Educators hold the immense power of creating the environments in which leadership development occurs, therefore, it is imperative for educators to create an environment that promotes the leadership development of API women.

In order to measure if the educational environment is promoting leadership equitably, it would be beneficial for educators to assess which students are involved, what they are involved in, and how are they involved. This assessment could be done informally through conversations with students and other educators, asking questions such as: Do women and men gravitate towards different leadership interests? If so, how and why? What are the perceptions of the students about classes, organizations, or involvement opportunities? Who do students turn to for advice? Or they or they could use formal approaches such as campus climate assessments and involvement surveys. Measuring the campus climate and involvement patterns is important so that educators can better understand if their educational climate is supporting the leadership development of API women.

Within the Outer Circle, representation of people with shared identities in leadership was important to the women as it helped them determine if that activity was available to them. When the participants saw leaders with similar identities they felt more inclined to participate in those organizations or connect with them for mentorship. Students will not always have

staff, faculty, and other student leaders who share similar identities. Therefore, if this representation does not exist at the school site, it is important for educators to provide the implicit messaging of support and representation through assigned readings, educational speakers, printed materials, and available clubs and organizations. Positive representation of one's identities should also be incorporated throughout the curriculum. It is especially necessary to incorporate diverse identities into the physical sciences as many participants within the STEM fields noted feeling the effects of the imposter syndrome.

Within the Outer Circle, the role of mentorship became incredibly important, as it helped propel the women into leadership activities. Students were more likely to begin participating in leadership activities when an outside person recognized their leadership potential and encouraged them to participate. Because many educators also serve as mentors to their students, it is imperative for all educators to reach out, encourage, and mentor students, especially students who have not yet become involved in any leadership opportunities. Although the women in this study felt most at ease with a mentor who shared similar identities with them, it is not always possible to provide mentors with similar identities for all students, nor should it be expected that educators only mentor students with whom they share identities. This would put an undue burden on educators, especially educators from marginalized identities. Rather, it is the responsibility of all educators to create mentorship connections and opportunities for all students.

As students interacted with their Inner and Outer Circles, and felt encouraged from family, peers, mentors, and educators, they joined organizations, interest groups, and service activities. For most participants, this transition began in middle school and lasted throughout their time in college. Therefore, educators from these educational environments must create

an environment where encouragement is the norm, and discouragement is addressed. Many of the explicit messages of discouragement participants experienced were forms of microaggressions- subtle, prejudiced statements made about marginalized identities. Educators must be cognizant of their implicit biases, and ensure the language they use, verbally and non-verbally (i.e. syllabi, posters, reading materials), is culturally appropriate and supportive of all students. Educators must understand their words have power, and they have the agency to influence and guide how a student feels about their ability to be a leader. Even the small moments and statements made in passing affected a student's leadership trajectory. It is recommended that educators participate in frequent training around inclusive language and culturally responsive pedagogy in order to minimize the use of microaggressions and increase the use of inclusive practices. Educators also have the power to establish inclusive and supportive norms for their academic classroom environments. Implicit messages of support can be achieved inside and outside the classroom through reading texts by diverse women leaders, and creating physical environments that are inclusive of diverse perspectives through photos displayed and diverse guest speakers.

The number of activities available and the climates with the students' Environmental Circles influenced the leadership identity development of the women in this study. There are many implications to be gleaned from this finding. First, leadership identity development occurs across the P-20 education pipeline, therefore, opportunities to participate in leadership activities should be made available throughout various education environments. According to the participants, their leadership development in elementary school occurred through mostly informal leadership positions, however, it might be of benefit to develop more formal leadership opportunities in elementary school. Many participants began participating in

formal student leadership in middle school and high school through opportunities such as student body governments, clubs, organizations, and service projects. It wasn't until their college experience that they participated in cultural organizations, social justice education, and formal leadership development training.

Through participation in diverse courses and inclusive leadership development, participants moved quicker through Stages Four, Five, and Six as they were able to understand more fully how their leadership aligned with their personal values. Therefore, it may be of benefit for middle and high school educators to increase the amount of opportunities for students to explore their cultural values and help them relate those concepts to leadership. This may help students move through their leadership development earlier in their lives and develop leadership practices congruent with their identities. Cultural and social justice education could be incorporated through classroom curriculum or through co-curricular opportunities such as clubs, organizations, and after school programs.

In the last finding of the study, participants moved through the LID stages and developed their own personal definitions of leadership which aligned with advocacy, care, and service. Educators should note these descriptions of leadership are all aligned with helping others and connected to a higher purpose other than their self-interest. As educators promote leadership opportunities to their students, especially to API women, it is recommended to consider the ways in which the leadership experience is advertised, as not all students may resonate with the same advertised benefits of leadership. To ensure leadership development reaches a wide audience it is important to ask questions such as: Are leadership development opportunities being advertised from an individualist perspective or a collectivist

perspective? Are the benefits of leadership shared with the participants, and if so, do they mention advocacy, care, and service?

Areas for Future Research

Further research is needed to explore some of the topics that arose in the data. It would be interesting to explore the significance of birth order/role in the family and its connections to leadership identity development. Also, as many of the students identified as first-generation or second-generation US citizens, it would be interesting to further explore the connections between immigration, assimilation, acculturation, and leadership identity development. The data indicated there were differences in the way native English speakers and students for whom English was a second language experienced and understood leadership, therefore it might be an interesting to focus on language barriers and leadership identity development.

The LID model was developed using college-aged students and has been applied to the university experience. However, it may be beneficial to explore the concepts of the LID model on younger populations. Further research is needed on the leadership identity development that occurs before college.

Many of the women shared their personal experiences with microaggressions, racism, sexism and general oppression against their marginalized identities. Interestingly, they also defined leadership as a way to advocate against those oppressive practices by caring for others and being of service to their communities. Further research could be used to find the connections, if any, between marginalized identities and leadership, to see if people from marginalized identities are more likely to approach leadership with a focus on social justice.

Lastly, although this study looked into the leadership identity development of Asian and Pacific Islander college students, there was only one student out of twenty who identified

as Pacific Islander. Although the census groups Asian and Pacific Islander people together, there are very different histories and cultures across the API spectrum and some would argue Pacific Islanders are too different from Asian populations to be compared. In this research project, the only woman who identified as Pacific Islander (Samoan and White), TK, had some initial differences I found during coding. For example, the woman identified that her racial background was seen as exotic in a positive way, whereas the other Asian students identified being exotified with a negative connotation. TK also described her family as large and close-knit with lots of extended family who lived close to one another. This differed from the other participants who identified smaller families, most included two children, and who had family who lived in different cities or different countries. TK was also the only transfer student who could speak to experiences in the community college. Lastly, TK was the only participant who stated she did not believe that racism was a significant factor in her life.

Although TK's experience does not speak for all Pacific Islander students, further research could explore how Pacific Islander students lived experiences influence their leadership identity development. California houses the second largest population of Pacific Islanders in the United States, very few Pacific Islanders make it to higher education. As an example, Pacific Islanders at Research University comprised only 1% of the student population. Therefore, it may be beneficial to conduct this research in the state Hawaii or the territory of American Samoa, where statistically there are larger populations of Pacific Islander students.

In Table 5, located below, I outlined the various ways in which future research could lend more insight to this topic.

Table 5: Considerations for Future Research

	API Leadership	Future Research May Explore
College/ University	Research University	How might this study look with students attending community colleges, smaller universities, religiously affiliated university?
Student Population	High API Population	How might this study look if the API student interviewed attended a university where they were a racial minority?
Student Leadership Development	Emphasis on Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice	How might this study look if the students were not exposed to leadership development or a university culture focused on equity, diversity, and social justice?
Recruitment Methods	Student Affairs Staff	How might this study look if students were recruited from leadership in the curriculum?
Cultures Represented	19 Asian Students, 1 Pacific Islander Student	How might this study look with more Pacific Islander students?
Other Salient Identities	Various Identities	How might the role of birth order, immigration/assimilation, language barriers, marginalized identities and commitment to Social Justice connect?

Social Justice Implications

According to the 2014 census the United States is on track to be a majority-minority nation by the year 2044 (Frey, 2014) where, for the first time in United States history, people of color make up more than 50% of the population. Within this national demographic shift, the Asian/Pacific Islander population is the second fastest growing racial population in the United States, after the multiracial population. As such, there are, and will continue to be, incredible social justice implications regarding how the United States is serving API populations throughout education, including how API students are developed as leaders within educational systems.

Unfortunately, the veil of the Model Minority Myth not only leaves API populations invisible in academia, but also invisible in the research, design, implementation, policy making, and assessment of student services provided to underrepresented student populations (Lee and Kumashiro 2005; Museus & Kiang, 2009; U.S. Government Accountability Office 2007). In fact, less than one percent of research articles found in the most popular peer-reviewed journals of higher education pertain to API student experience (Museus, & Kiang, 2009). Without the API representation in education research student services are being designed and implemented on campuses without taking into consideration the specific needs of API populations which leaves the API populations underserved (Teranishi and Ngyuen, 2012). With a lack of academic research about the educational and co-curricular experience of the API community, API students are not receiving the support needed to become leaders in our society (Chang & Kiang, 2002; Hune, 2002; Museus & Chang, 2009).

This study has lent valuable insight into the leadership development of API women. It is now the first study to explore the leadership identity development of API women using Komives et al.’s (2005) LID model. It is important to understand how API women develop as leaders so that systems of education can ensure their leadership development education and opportunities resonate with this population. It is also important to note that, “the successes and challenges women face in their leadership roles while on college campuses can be key experiences in their lives and could serve as motivator or demotivators for pursuing leadership in the future” (Curran, 2013, p. 72). Knowing more about how this population develops as leaders, may lead to an increase in API women leaders in the future.

Colleges and universities are microcosms of society that “reflect, resist, and contribute to shaping norms of the larger culture in which they are situated” (Allan, 2011, p. 3). They

also “serve as primary socialization environments for so many young adults” therefore they “cannot afford to risk undeserving students and marginalizing their college experience.” (Park, Lin, Poon, Chang, 2008, p.79). If society is to become a place where API women are not underrepresented in leadership, we must begin by understanding their unique experiences of developing a leadership identity. Only then will we have an education system that promotes and prepares API women to become leaders of the future.

Conclusion

This study utilized a comparative case study approach to understand how the lived experiences of Asian and Pacific Islander college women impacted their leadership identity development. Furthermore, it sought to understand which of these experiences moved the women deeper into the stages of the Leadership Identity Development model. I collected qualitative data by using a semi-structured interview protocol with each participant and then used a combination of open coding, selective coding, and cross case analysis to find themes in the data.

Four themes arose from the data analysis. The first three findings were the influences of the Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Environmental Circle on the women’s leadership development. These various Circles highlighted the influences of ethnicity, culture, gender, and generational status, confirming research that leadership identity development occurs differently for women and ethnic minorities (Arminio et al., 2007; Eagly, 2007; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000). The last finding highlighted that through these interactions with these identities and environments, the women developed their personal leadership style which centered around three core pillars of advocacy, care, and service. The women’s leadership development did follow the stages of the LID model and, at the time of the interview, all

participants were actively in the last three stages of the model: Stage Four (Leadership Differentiated), Five (Generativity), and Six (Integration/Synthesis).

This study determined that leadership identity development occurred throughout the women's lives, therefore, recommendations were made for educators across the P-20 pipeline. Recommendations included integrating more formalized, inclusive leadership education and equity and social justice curriculum within the K-12 curriculum and co-curriculum. Further recommendations encouraged all educators to acknowledge their role as a leadership sponsor for their students. Educators must maintain inclusive practices, such as using respectful, culturally-relevant language, encouraging their students into leadership roles, helping students define leadership and practice leadership in ways that are aligned with their gendered and cultural values, and being available as leadership mentors for all students. Lastly, educators and education administrators must create educational environments the promote explicit and implicit messages of encouragement so that API women feel supported and empowered to progress through their leadership development.

Appendix A: Participant Recruitment Emails to University Staff

Dear [Staff Member's Name],

My name is Sara Vogel, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Joint Doctoral Ed.D. program in Educational Leadership at the University of California, San Diego and California State University, San Marcos. I am seeking participants for my dissertation research titled *Leadership Identity Development of Asian/Pacific Islander College Women*.

My qualitative study focuses on understanding the lived experiences that shaped the leadership identity development of Asian/Pacific Islander (API), female, undergraduate college students. Leadership comes in different forms, and I am looking to interview students who hold formal leadership positions as well as students who exhibit leadership qualities through their participation in organizations and groups.

I write to you today with the hope that, through your position at [UNIVERSITY NAME], you will help me recruit participants for this study. Due to the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), I cannot ask you to share any student's personal information with me, however, I humbly request you forward this recruitment email to any undergraduate students who you believe may be:

- Female Identified (Transgender women are invited as well)
- Asian and/or Pacific Islander (including Multiracial API students)
- Leaders (through formal and/or informal positions on campus)

I need to interview twenty undergraduate, API, women. This study requires the participants complete a quick demographic questionnaire (which covers questions about their personal identities, interest in the study, and previous leadership experiences) and complete a 1.5 hour video call (i.e. Skype, Zoom, Google Hangout) to talk about their leadership experiences. Students who complete the demographic questionnaire and individual interview will receive a \$15 Amazon gift card for their participation.

Your help is critical to the success of this research project. I ask that you either forward this email or the email script I have provided below to any students who may meet the criteria listed above.

Also, please feel free to share this email with your colleagues as well. The more student recommendations I receive, the better this study can be!

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the study, please do not hesitate to contact me. Again, I thank you for your consideration in helping to make this study a success.

Sincerely,
Sara Vogel, M.Ed.
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership
University of California, San Diego | CSU San Marcos

EMAIL SCRIPT FOR STUDENT

Hello!

Hope you are well! A doctoral student at UC San Diego, Sara Vogel, is conducting a research project regarding the leadership identity development of undergraduate college student leaders who identify as women and Asian/Pacific Islander. She is in need of twenty female undergraduate student leaders, and her email made me think of you! You have shown great leadership capabilities, and I would love for your voice and unique experience to be captured in her project.

This is a voluntary study, and participation is relatively easy. All you would need to do is complete a short demographic questionnaire and participate in a 1.5 hour video call interview (i.e. Skype, Zoom, Google Hangout). For your time and participation, Sara will give you a \$15 Amazon gift card. Due to the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act, I cannot share your personal information with Sara; however, if you are interested in participating, I highly encourage you to send Sara an email at [EMAIL].

Thank you in advance for your consideration!

Appendix B: Participant Recruitment Emails to University Students

Dear [Participant's Name],

Thank you for your interest in participating in the study! The fact that you are emailing me today confirms that someone at UC San Diego identified you as a current leader on campus. Your time and contribution to this research project will help tremendously in the discovery of new knowledge regarding the leadership identity development of female, Asian/Pacific Islander, undergraduate college students.

My name is Sara Vogel, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Joint Doctoral Ed.D. program in Educational Leadership at the University of California, San Diego and California State University, San Marcos. I am seeking twenty participants for my dissertation research titled *Leadership Identity Development of Asian/Pacific Islander College Women*.

In order to participate in this study, I will need you to complete and submit the attached documents:

1. Demographic Questionnaire- The demographic questionnaire helps me understand more about your unique identities and life experiences. This form also helps me confirm that you meet the parameters of the study (an undergraduate student, who identifies as Asian and/or Pacific Islander and who is female-identified).

AND

2. Informed Consent Form- The informed consent form outlines my research project, the potential risks and benefits, as well as acknowledgement that the study is voluntary. You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this study, and by signing the informed consent form, you give your written permission to participate in this voluntary study.

At this time, I only need you to complete the questionnaire and email the demographic questionnaire back to me. For ease, you can fill in the Word Document directly and send it back to me as a Word Doc or a PDF.

Upon receipt of your demographic questionnaire, I will then verify your eligibility for the study. Should you qualify for the study and should there be open interview slots (this study is limited to 20 participants), I will send you an email with the informed consent form and some available interview times. I will ask you to electronically sign the informed consent form, email it back to me, and indicate what interview times work best for you. Once I receive your signed informed consent form and best available times, I will email you to set a time to participate in a 1.5 hour individual interview through a video call (Skype, Zoom, or Google Hangout).

Upon completing the required questions in the demographic questionnaire and participating in the individual interview video call, your participation in the study will be concluded, and I will email you a \$15 Amazon gift card. Participants will not need to answer every question on the demographic questionnaire or the individual interview in order to qualify for the incentive; however, participants must at least answer the required questions on the demographic questionnaire and half of the individual interview questions to receive the incentive.

Participation is limited to 20 people, and admission into the study is rolling. The sooner you submit your demographic questionnaire and informed consent form, the more likely you are to participate in this research project.

I am so excited for your participation in the study! Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns regarding the study, and I will be happy to answer them.

Sincerely,
Sara Vogel, M.Ed.
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership
University of California, San Diego | CSU San Marcos

Appendix C: Participant Demographic Questionnaire

Thank you for your interest in participating in the research project titled, *Leadership Identity Development of Asian/Pacific Islander College Women*. All potential participants will need to fill out this demographic questionnaire. There are only four required questions (to determine eligibility for the study) and those required questions will be marked with an asterisk (*).

What pseudonym would you like to use for this study?

Fill in the blank

What is your undergraduate academic class level (your class level is determined by the total units you have completed)?

Fill in the blank

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

Have you received the Pell Grant while attending [UNIVERSITY NAME]?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer Not to Answer

Did your family receive financial assistance (ex. free and reduced lunch, SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, subsidized housing) from the Federal government during your childhood?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer Not to Answer

Are you a first-generation college student?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer Not to Answer

Are you an international student at [UNIVERSITY NAME]?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer Not to Answer

Did you transfer into [UNIVERSITY NAME]?

- Yes
- No

Prefer Not to Answer

What is your academic major at [UNIVERSITY NAME]?

Fill in the blank

Do you identify as female? *

Yes

No

Do you identify as Asian and/or Pacific Islander (multiracial/multiethnic API included)?

Yes

No

Are you a currently enrolled undergraduate student at UC San Diego? *

Yes

No

Are you 18 or over? *

Yes

No

What is your best contact email?

Fill in the blank

Appendix D: Notification Email: Qualified for Study

Dear [Participant's Name],

Thank you for submitting your demographic questionnaire. I have reviewed your demographic questionnaire, and you qualify for the study. Should you wish to participate in the study, I will need you to electronically sign the attached consent form, scan it, and email it back to me.

In addition, please let me know which method of video call you prefer to use (i.e. Skype, Zoom, Google Hangout).

Lastly, I have the following times available. Please identify your top three dates and times and email those to me. Once I have received your signed informed consent form, your preferred method of video call, and preferred interview dates and times, I will confirm an interview time with you.

[INSERT DATES AND TIMES HERE]

Thank you again for your interest in participating!

Sincerely,

Sara Vogel, M.Ed.
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership
University of California, San Diego | CSU San Marcos

Appendix E: Notification Email: Did Not Qualify for Study

Dear [Participant's Name],

Thank you for submitting your demographic questionnaire. I have reviewed your demographic questionnaire, and unfortunately, you did not meet the qualifications of the bounded criteria for this study.

Thank you again for your interest in participating. I appreciate you!

Sincerely,

Sara Vogel, M.Ed.
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership
University of California, San Diego | CSU San Marcos

Appendix F: Notification Email: Qualified and Waitlisted

Dear [Participant's Name],

Thank you for submitting your demographic questionnaire. I have reviewed your demographic questionnaire, and you qualify for participation in this study. At this time, I have already confirmed twenty participants for the study, therefore, I have placed your name on the waitlist.

Should a spot become available, I will let you know. If you do not want your information to be kept on an alternate list, please let me know, and I will delete it from my database.

Thank you again for your interest in participating, and should a position become available in the future, I will be in touch.

Sincerely,

Sara Vogel, M.Ed.
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership
University of California, San Diego | CSU San Marcos

Appendix G: Informed Consent Form

Dear [Participant's Name],

My name is Sara Vogel, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Joint Doctoral Ed. D. program in Educational Leadership at the University of California, San Diego and California State University, San Marcos. Thank you for your willingness to participate in my dissertation research project titled *Leadership Identity Development of Asian/Pacific Islander College Women*.

Please read this informed consent form carefully. I encourage you to ask me about any concerns or questions you may have. When you are ready, please sign and return this form to confirm your participation in the study.

STUDY PURPOSE:

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the lived experiences that shaped the leadership identity development of Asian/Pacific Islander (API), female, undergraduate college students.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:

There will be a total of 20 female API undergraduate college students who will participate in this study.

PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY:

If you participate in this study, you will complete and submit a demographic questionnaire and complete a 1.5 hour individual interview video call (i.e. Skype, Zoom, or Google Hangout). The demographic questionnaire asks participants to answer questions about their personal identities. The individual interview video call will last approximately 1.5 hours and cover about 13 questions. Once you have completed the demographic questionnaire and individual interview, you will receive a \$15 Amazon gift card for your participation. Participants will not need to answer every question on the demographic questionnaire or the individual interview in order to qualify for the incentive; however, participants must at least answer the required questions on the demographic questionnaire and half of the individual interview questions to receive the incentive.

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The attached demographic questionnaire will be used to verify your ability to participate in the study. All eligible participants must identify as female, Asian and/or Pacific Islander, and be currently enrolled as an undergraduate student at UC San Diego. Individual interview questions will be asked in a semi-structured format to allow for conversation to flow. The focus of the questions will be on your lived experiences and how your experiences informed your leadership identity.

RISKS AND INCONVENIENCES:

There are minimal risks and inconveniences to participating in this study. The potential risks of participating in the study may include:

1. The 1.5 hour interview may be inconvenient for you.
2. There may be questions asked in the demographic questionnaire that may cause discomfort.
3. Through the individual interview, you will be asked to speak about the lived experiences that influenced your leadership identity development. During this process, you may recall memories that may cause discomfort.
4. You may worry about the confidentiality of your identity, and the identities of others, in the study.
5. You may worry about the confidential storage of your personal data by the researcher.

SAFEGUARDS:

To minimize these risks and inconveniences, the following measures will be taken:

1. Participation in the study is voluntary. The protocols of this study have been made to be as convenient as possible for you. The informed consent form and demographic questionnaire are both completed, signed, and submitted online. The individual interview video call can be conducted at a time and location that is convenient for both you and the researcher.
2. There are only four required questions in the demographic questionnaire to ensure you meet the bounded criteria of the case study. These required questions will be marked by an asterisk. Participants will have the option to not answer the non-required questions.
3. The researcher will inform you verbally of the counseling and psychological resources available before the individual interview and in writing after the individual interview. You will be notified at the beginning of the individual interview that you may pause the interview at any time for whatever reason.
4. You will be asked to select a pseudonym for the data collection. You will be reminded during the introduction speech to the individual interview that you should do your best to protect not only your identity, but also the identities of others by not using real names.
5. The researcher will conduct most communication with you via a password protected email address. Only the researcher will have access to this password protected email address. Additionally, all data (written and audio) will be divided and stored on two password protected storage platforms that only the researcher has access to. Your consent form and any document with your real name, will be stored on one password protected storage platform, and the data you provide in the demographic questionnaire and through our individual interview, will be stored on the other password protected storage platform.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your demographic information and narrative responses will be published in the study; however, the use of pseudonyms will help to maintain your confidentiality.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part in this study. You may choose to leave the study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with the University in any way.

BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:

Your participation will help add knowledge to current college student leadership literature. The information garnered in this study may also aid in the development of more inclusive student leadership development practices.

INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION:

Participants who complete the demographic questionnaire and the individual interview will receive a \$15 Amazon gift card. Participants will not need to answer every question on the demographic questionnaire or the individual interview in order to qualify for the incentive; however, participants must at least answer the required questions on the demographic questionnaire and half of the individual interview questions to receive the incentive.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND SIGNATURES:

If you have questions or concerns about the study, I will be happy to address them. To reach me, please call me at [PHONE NUMBER] or email me at [EMAIL]. You may also reach the chair of this study, [INSERT NAME], at [EMAIL]. You will be given a copy of this form for your records. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the CSU San Marcos Institutional Review Board office at [EMAIL] or [PHONE].

PARTICIPANT'S CONSENT:

By initialing the following statements, you are giving consent to participate in the study. You must be at least 18 years old to give your consent.

I certify that I am 18 years or older.

I agree to participate in this research study.

I agree to be audio recorded.

Participant Name	Participant Signature	Date
Research Name	Researcher Signature	Date

Appendix H: Individual Interview Protocol

Introduction Speech

I want start our time together by thanking you for taking time out of your busy schedule to speak with me today. We have an hour and a half set aside for our conversation today.

Before we begin, I want you to know that I will be audio recording our conversation and transcribing it at a later date. You will have access to this transcription at a later date and you will have the ability to make any edits you deem necessary after receiving the transcription. In order to move forward, can you state your name, age, and that you agree to be verbally recorded? Do I have your verbal permission to continue the recording?

Today our conversation will include topics around the experiences in your life that led to your participation in leadership. All the questions I will ask are voluntary and you have the ability to skip any question you do not wish to answer.

Should any of the topics cause you to experience distress or emotional discomfort, please know you have the ability to stop or pause the interview and/or recording at any time. I can refer you to any resources during our conversation and after our conversation, I will send you a list of local, regional, and national resources that could assist if you need further emotional support.

You, as a specific named individual will not be identified in my study. However, your ideas will be summarized and generalized, and non-identifying quotations may be used.

From the questionnaire, I see you would like to use the pseudonym _____. To maintain confidentiality, I encourage you to use this pseudonym throughout the interview. But, should your name be mentioned, it will be edited in the interview transcript to protect your identity.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

[START RECORDER]

Interview questions

I want to start our conversation by talking about concepts of leadership.

1. What was your reaction to being recommended for this study?
2. How do you react to people seeing you as a leader?
3. Does the word leader resonate with you? If so, in what ways?
4. How would you define leadership?
5. What are the most important characteristics of a leader and why?
6. Throughout your life, who are the people you have seen as leaders?
 - a. How did they come into your life?
 - b. Why do you consider them leaders?
 - c. What did you learn about leadership through them?

I now want to shift our focus and talk about your leadership journey. I want to know more about your experiences, and how you feel those experiences influenced you throughout your life.

7. How would you tell someone about your leadership journey? Going from non-leader to leader?
8. When did you first become aware that leadership existed?
9. When did you first become involved in leadership opportunities?
 - a. What factors influenced your involvement in leadership activities?
10. Have there been any messages, verbal or nonverbal, that you received which have affected your leadership journey?
 - a. What were the messages? By whom? In what context?
11. Can you think of any messages from your family that affected your understanding or practice of leadership?
12. Can you think of any messages about gender that affected your understanding or practice of leadership?
13. Can you think of any messages about culture that affected your understanding or practice of leadership?
14. Can you tell me about a time when you were successful leading other people?
 - a. What about times when you felt unsuccessful leading other people?
 - b. Does your leadership change when you lead people different than you (ethnically or gender wise)?
15. What role does confidence play in your leadership evolution?
16. What role does leadership play as part of your identity?
17. Do you feel like you practice leadership on a daily basis? If so, how?
18. Have you used leadership to develop others individuals, groups, or organizations?
19. Was there a point where you realized you could be a leader without having a leadership position?
20. How has your philosophy of leadership changed over time?
21. How has UCSD shaped your understanding and practice of leadership?
22. Is there anything else you would like to add what you have talked about today? Is there anything you feel we have not discussed that you would like me to know?

Appendix I: Email Notification: Thank You for Your Participation

Dear [Participant's Name],

Thank you for participating in the research project, *Leadership Identity Development of Asian/Pacific Islander College Women*. Your contribution to the research is much appreciated! As a small token of my appreciation, I will be emailing you a \$15 Amazon gift card.

Additionally, I attached a list of counseling resources that you may utilize if needed. Once the audio file of our interview has been transcribed, I will email you a copy of the transcription, and you will have the opportunity to make any edits you deem necessary before I begin my data analysis.

Thank you again for your participation! Hope you have an amazing day!

Sincerely,
Sara Vogel, M.Ed.
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership
University of California, San Diego | CSU San Marcos

Appendix J: Email Notification: Referral Sheet for Mental Health Services

UCSD Mental Health Providers

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Phone: 858-534-3755

Location: Galbraith Hall 190 (Revelle College)

Business Days/ Hours: Monday- Friday 8:00 am - 4:00 pm (Excluding holidays)

Urgent Care Hours: 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Individual Mental Health Providers

Psychology Today's Therapy Directory

- <https://therapists.psychologytoday.com>
- Listings for psychologists, psychiatrists, therapists, counselors, support groups, and treatment centers.

Therapist Referral Network

- 1-800-843-7274
- Provides referrals to mental health professionals that accept a variety of insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid.

Crisis Hotlines

Crisis Text Line

- Text CONNECT to 741741
- Free, 24/7 support for those in crisis.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Appendix K: Email Notification: Transcription Checking

Hello,

I hope this email finds you well! Attached is the transcription of our interview. Should you want to make any edits to the transcription, please email me those changes by this [DAY, DATE, TIME], so that I can make those changes before data analysis begins.

Have a great day!

Sincerely,

Sara Vogel, M.Ed.
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership
University of California, San Diego | CSU San Marcos

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