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The Road Less Traveled: How Asian Cultural Values Impact the Career Choice Tendencies of Asian American K-12 Principals

A Dissertation by

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Irvine, California

School of Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

February 2018

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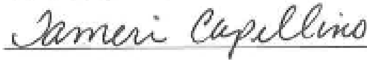

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grateful for their willingness to participate in my study.

Growing up in a poverty-stricken family, with both parents attaining only an elementary school education, and immigrating to the United States at 7-years-old, I would never dare to dream in a million years that someone like me, someone with my upbringing, would get the opportunity to receive a doctoral degree. I am truly humbled by this dissertation journey.

ABSTRACT

The Road Less Traveled: How Asian Cultural Values Impact the Career Choice Tendencies of Asian American K-12 Principals

by Melissa Chan-Nauli

Purpose: The purpose of this constructivist inquiry study was to identify and describe the perceptions of Asian American principals of how cultural values impacted their career choice tendencies in the K-12 educational setting.

Methodology: For the purposes of providing the most authentic and genuine lived experiences and perceptions of these Asian American principal participants, the researcher engaged in three primary methods of collecting data, which included demographic questionnaire, interviews, and artifacts. The study participants were 15 current Asian American full-time principals who work in school districts located in Los Angeles and Orange County, California.

Findings. A thorough examination of study participant interviews, demographic questionnaires, and artifacts unveiled four findings. First, Asian American K-12 principals were encouraged by their parents to pursue typical Asian careers such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers. Second, parents of Asian American principals viewed K-12 career path as female-dominated. Third, Asian American K-12 principals grew up significantly valuing education as a vehicle for upward mobility. Last, Asian American educators were taught that hard work and humility will help them in life.

Conclusions. Based on the research findings of this study and the existing literature, the researcher drew four conclusions. First, the belief that being a doctor, lawyer, and engineer is a more prestigious career due to status and higher pay is a cultural obstacle for

Asian Americans who are interested in a career in K-12 education. Second, male Asian American educators face greater pressure from their parents when considering teaching as a career. Third, acquiring graduate degrees, certifications, and taking part in ongoing professional development allows Asian American educators to move up in the educational system. Last, Asian cultural values such as hard work and humility were key ingredients for success for Asian American educators.

Recommendations. Further research is recommended to replicate and extend the study to a different populations and samples in order to expand the understanding of how cultural values impact the career choice tendencies of Asian Americans K-12 principals.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

To lead people, you must walk behind them.

—Lao Tzu

From 1960 to present, the enrollment of students in public schools has shifted tremendously in the area of ethnic diversity. According to the United States Census Bureau (2012), Asians as a minority group grew faster than any other race group in the U.S. between 2000 and 2010, increasing in size by 43%. By 2050, this population will grow five times (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

These immigration trends also substantially increased the Asian school-age population, which created a greater demand for educators to meet their unique cultural needs (K. L. V. Chin, 1998). As Asian students in America increased dramatically, literature reveals that Asian teachers are surprisingly not increasing at the same rate. Kiang and Lee (1993) found a historical shortage of Asians employed in teaching and a major disparity in that while 15% of all college students majored in education, only 6% of all Asian American college students chose to major in education. In addition to this phenomenon, Kiang and Lee also unveiled the same disparity with school principals, guidance counselors, educational researchers, and policy makers were even less than that of teachers.(Not clear which is less than teachers. One or more? You start of with same disparity and then end with even less than teachers. Need to designate which one or ones were less than teachers.)

Since Kiang and Lee's (1993) discovery, there appears to be a slow and steady growth in Asian American school principals. Despite this growth, the increase in Asian American principals still lag behind the increase in the national average of Asian

American students. During the 2015–2016 school year, Asian American students comprised 5% of student population nationwide, but only 2% of K-12 principals are of Asian descent (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Seven different Asian cultural values have been identified in literature that impact the career choice tendencies of Asian Americans, which contribute to the underrepresentation of K-12 Asian American principal positions. The first is the historical trend of Asians choosing careers that lean heavily toward the science and engineering fields (Cheng, 1997; Song & Glick, 2004; Woo, 1994). The second Asian cultural value is the emphasis on collectivism and humility, which may hinder their promotions, as some Asian Americans strive not to stand out, put others' needs ahead of theirs, and not boast about their accomplishments (B. Kim, Atkinson, & Yang, 1999). The third cultural value is Asian Americans' conservative behavior of not personally engaging with their supervisors, which may have negatively impacted their upward mobility into administration (Xin, 2004). The fourth cultural value is that Asian Americans value careers that have extrinsic motivators such as high earning power, status, prestige, and job security (Kelly, Gunsalus, & Gunsalus, 2009; Leong, 1991). The fifth cultural value is that many Asian American children choose their careers based on their family's desires rather than their own interests, and Asian American parents do not consider K-12 careers as valuable professions (Leong, 1998; Leong & Gupta, 2007; Louie, 2004; Tang, Fouad, & Smith, 1999). The sixth is that Asian Americans' cultural emphasis on conformity and emotional self-control through minimal expression may also hinder success in career fields where skillful application of politics, social networking, and language are necessary (Cheng, 1997). Last, Asian Americans' cultural value of

homophily, which is the tendency for people to interact and develop relationships with those who are similar to them, may result in Asian Americans seeking advice from other Asians (Friedman & Krackhardt, 1997). Since there are few Asian American principals in America, there is a lack of role models for those who are interested in the principal pipeline (Kim-Qvale, 2012).

In order to increase the representation of Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting, one must understand the factors that influence their career choices. Although there is current research on administration in general, there appears to be very little literature on how cultural factors impact the career choices of Asian American principals. It is worth noting that the number of those who do enter K-12 educational administration is low and needs further investigation. The next sections will explore the history of Asian immigration, historical trends of Asian Americans in public education, and areas of Asian cultural values and its impact on career choice tendencies for Asian American K-12 principals.

Background

Data show that Asian Americans are underrepresented in K-12 administration in both elementary and secondary schools (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2009). Further, there is an inconsistency between the number of Asian American principals and the number of Asian American students in the United States (K. L. V. Chin, 1998). In order to understand the reasons for this underrepresentation, one must introduce the topics of Asian immigration, historical trends of Asian American educators, and how Asian cultural values impact their career choices.

History of Asian American Immigration

Asians come from a diverse population, with origins tracing back to China, Japan, Korea, India, Vietnam, Cambodia, Philippines, Indonesia, and other countries (Takaki, 1998). The first large wave of Asian immigration to the U.S. took place from 1848 through 1924, and the group consisted of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Asian Indians, and Filipinos looking for brighter opportunities and a better life. The Chinese were the first large group to arrive in 1852 after the Gold Rush, and more were recruited in the 1860s to work on the transcontinental railroad (Fong, 2002). The second large wave of immigration was selective and granted to those with professional skills and education as a result of the restructuring of the global economy (Fong, 2002; Takaki, 1998; Woo, 1994). This new influx of Asian immigrants grew from 1 million to almost 5 million people between 1965 and 1985 (Takaki, 1998). By 1992, the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights Report concluded that Japanese and Chinese Americans have been in the United States longer than any other Asian group (Min, 1995; Takaki, 1998). Even though Asian Americans have been in the United States for more than 150 years, very little is known about them and their history (K. L. V. Chin, 1998). The next section discusses a brief history and the variables that underpin the underrepresentation of Asian Americans in K-12 education.

Asian Americans in Public Education

Asian Americans were discouraged from pursuing careers in education until the 1940s (Tsai, 1986). L. Chin (1972) postulated that the stereotypes about Asian people suggested that they were not good educators because they had an accent, lacked initiative, and were too soft-spoken. Moreover, the causes of Asian teacher shortage included

immigration status, lack of salary and occupation prestige, lack of ethnic role models, historical discrimination, job specific discrimination, and parental influence leaning against a K-12 teaching career (Rong & Preissle, 1997). To fully understand the scope of Asian Americans in public education, one must begin by investigating the historical trends of Asian American teachers and principals.

Historical Trends of Asian American Teachers

Teachers need to be representative of the U.S. population; however, that is not the case. Statistics show that 30% of the U.S. is minority and 50% male, but the teaching population in 2000 was almost 70% Caucasian female (J. Gordon, 2000). This phenomenon results partly because Asian Americans were discouraged from pursuing careers in education until the 1940s (Tsai, 1986). Historical trends stated that minority teachers were initially hired for specific skills and areas, such as bilingual education or special multicultural projects; therefore, their experiences were limited to specific students and curricular content (Ortiz, 1982). Furthermore, many Asian American teachers were perceived as task-oriented, conscientious, hardworking, and quiet. Unfortunately, being perceived as quiet has a negative connotation that is linked to being a reserved person rather than having inner confidence (Low, 1981).

Rong and Preissle (1997) looked at the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s decennial census data to see if there were patterns that contributed to the shortage of Asian American teachers as compared to Hispanic American and African American teachers, and they found that Asians as a group was simply not interested in the K-12 teaching careers. Rong and Preissle reported, "In 1990, Asians constituted 2.8% of the labor force, 3.7% of all professionals, 5.1% of college professors, but only 1.2% of pre-collegiate teachers" (p.

276). In addition, there are currently more than 5% of Asian American teachers in California, but J. Gordon (2000) found that Asian Americans have the lowest participation rate in teacher education of all minority groups.

Historical Trends of Asian American Principals

Asian Americans are underrepresented in administrative positions in both elementary and secondary schools (NCES, 2009). Nationally, during the 2015–2016 school year, Asian Americans made up 5% of the student population, but less than 2% of K-12 principals are of Asian descent (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). In California, which has one of the highest percentages of Asian American students in the country, Asians make up 8.85% of the student population, but only 4% of the principals are of Asian descent (California Department of Education, 2016). For example, in Orange County, California during the 2014–2015 school year, there were 7.7% Asian American students enrolled in elementary and secondary schools, but less than 4% of the principals were Asian (Orange County Department of Education, 2016). As with Asian American teachers, Asian American principals are stereotyped as passive, inscrutable, or lacking the aggressiveness required in administration (Y. C. Suzuki, 1994). Data show that Caucasian men still control the operation of most public and private institutions in this country (Regules, 1995), and Asian Americans are discouraged from entering the field of education and administration (Kim-Qvale, 2012). The next sections will delve deeper into Asian cultural values and their impact on career choice tendencies.

Asian Cultural Values

Asians are diverse in their ethnic demographics, languages, cultures, and traditions, but as a group, Asians share specific cultural values (Min & Kim, 1999).

These values were identified in a study conducted by B. Kim et al. (1999). They developed an Asian Values Scale to identify 112 Asian traits that were generated and tested by a survey administered to 303 Asian Americans and 63 European Americans. The authors defined Asians' shared cultural values gathered from Asian Values Scale as filial piety, humility, collectivism, conformity to norms, emotional self-control, family recognition through achievement, and values education.

Asian Cultural Values and Their Impact on Career Choice Tendencies

Asian Americans are overrepresented in some occupations, specifically those in science and technology fields, while underrepresented in other careers such as entertainment, social, and humanistic fields (Fouad et al., 2008; Leong & Gupta, 2007; Leong & Hardin, 2002; Tang et al., 1999). The 2007 U.S. Census Bureau showed that although Asian Americans comprised 4% of the U.S. population, they represented 25% of computer engineers, 30% of medical scientists, 17% of physicians, 14% of dentists, but only 1% of social service workers (Fouad et al., 2008). A variety of factors such as family desires, discrimination, homophily, Asians choosing careers in the science and medical fields, extrinsic motivators, language manipulation, and lack of role models have been proposed to contribute to the underrepresentation of Asian Americans principals in the K-12 educational setting (K. L. V. Chin, 1998; Kim-Qvale, 2012; Poon, 2014).

Statement of the Research Problem

Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting are grossly underrepresented. It is important to point out that the NCES (2009) reported that White administrators made up 80.9% of principals nationally and 73% in California, while White students made up only 54.9% nationally and 27.9% in California. The need to

investigate the underrepresentation of Asian American K-12 principals and how to support them in pursuing a career as a principal becomes pressing especially since the Asian American population is projected to grow five times by 2050 (U.S. Census, 2004). To encourage more Asian Americans to go into K-12 administration, Kim-Qvale (2012) argued that an Asian American teacher-to-principal pipeline is needed. Hiring more culturally diverse principals, such as Asian American principals, to serve as role models for all students is extremely beneficial because research asserted that not only do minority students achieve higher academic performance, but nonculturally diverse students, staff, and families also benefit academically, socially, and emotionally (Edson, 1988; Michael-Bandele, 1993). Furthermore, Kim-Qvale (2012), F. H. Lee (1998), and Louie (2004) shared that the element of mentorship is a key component in the lives of students because role models help them reach their full potential, develop positive self-esteem, guide their career paths, and serve as mentors to help them navigate their future.

It is important to point out that the underrepresentation of Asian American principals in the K-12 educational system has not been widely studied (Kim-Qvale, 2012; Pacis, 2005). Although there is an abundance of literature available on general leadership skills (Fleck, 2017; Lawlor, 2017; Mengesha, 2008; Nye, 2017; Tucker, 2001; Weigel, 2013), Hispanic and African-American administration (De Los Santos, 2008; Edwards, 2015; Falk, 2011; Gillespie-Johnson, 2017; Rosario-Schoenfeld, 2010), and higher education administration (Dlamini, 2011; Ellis, 2015; Riera, 2013; Rogers, 1984), little has been written specifically about Asian American K-12 principals (K. L. V. Chin, 1998; Y. C. Suzuki, 1994). Furthermore, there is currently no research available on how cultural values impact the career choice tendencies of Asian American K-12 principals.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this constructivist inquiry study was to identify and describe the perceptions of Asian American principals of how cultural values impact their career choice tendencies in the K-12 educational setting.

Research Question

The research question for this study was as follows: How do Asian cultural values impact the career choice tendencies of Asian American K-12 principals?

Significance of the Study

Research has shown that as the demands on principals continue to increase, a crisis has arisen in finding highly qualified candidates to fill the role (Harris, 2007; Thompson, 2010). Furthermore, there is a dire need to hire minorities, especially Asian American principals (J. Gordon, 2000). Current educational demographics in the United States showed that the percentage of Asian American principals is less than 2% (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). This is relatively low compared to the percentage of other ethnic groups in administration. This study is significant because the literature on how cultural values impact the career choice tendencies of Asian Americans is cursory and limited and this study may add to the literature that examined the variables that contribute to the underrepresentation of Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting. Additionally, exploring cultural values and the impact on career choice tendencies appears to be a growing interest. Despite acknowledgments of the importance of how cultural values impact career choice tendencies of Asian Americans, this area has been less studied compared to studies in other areas such as academic achievements and well-being (Qin, 2010). Currently, there are very few empirical

studies, which has led to repeated calls for more research addressing these areas of career underrepresentation in the K-12 education setting (Leong & Gupta, 2007; Leong & Hardin, 2002; Leong & Serafica, 1995).

Literature indicates Asian American students could benefit from engaging with culturally representative role models who understand and advocate their unique cultural needs (Kiang & Lee, 1993; Kim-Qvale, 2012) and having Asian American educators as role models offers an alternative career path to the historical trend of Asians leaning heavily toward the science, medical, and engineering fields (Cheng, 1997; Song & Glick, 2004; Woo, 1994). Furthermore, without culturally representative role models to encourage and model career paths for Asian American students, the chances of broadening and increasing the number of Asian American principals in the K-12 educational system would be slim. Last, having more Asian American administrators may have an immediate impact by providing schools with broader and richer perspectives on the diverse ways to lead schools and lead student learning (Salleh-Barone, 2004). This study is significant because it may provide valuable information to educational leaders and policy makers about the supports necessary to help Asian American educators access administrative positions in the K-12 educational setting.

Definitions

This section provides definitions of the terms that are relevant to the study. There are theoretical definitions that give meaning in terms of the theories of a specific discipline in addition to operational definitions.

Theoretical Definitions

Asians. The United States Census Bureau defines an Asian individual as a

"person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam" (U.S Census Bureau, 2017).

Confucian. A member of the school of philosophers, founded by Confucius, who codified in their teachings the traditional Chinese principles of ethics, morals, and politics (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2018).

Glass ceiling. The term glass ceiling first was used in the 1980s to describe the barriers women and culturally diverse groups faced in going beyond midmanagement positions (Reskin & Ross, 1995).

K-12 school administrator. School administrators are certificated employees who are not teachers or pupil services personnel (Edsource, 2007). Examples of K-12 school administrators include principal, assistant principal, and dean of students.

Melting pot. Melting pot is where immigrants melt into the majority group and assimilate into the dominant culture by acquiring the language, behaviors, and characteristics of the majority group (Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997).

Model minority. Sociologist William Peterson coined the term model minority in 1966, and it refers to minority groups that have achieved a high level of success in the United States (Caliendo & Mcllwain, 2010).

Operational Definitions

Acculturation. In this study, acculturation is defined as the process that an individual goes through when he or she is exposed to two different cultures (Suinn et al., 1987).

Collectivism. In this study, collectivism is the importance of thinking about one's group before oneself and considering the needs of others before considering one's own needs (B. Kim et al., 1999).

Conformity to norms. In this study, conformity to norms is seen through honoring the hierarchy by not deviating from familial and social expectations, following role expectations (gender, hierarchy), and not deviating from social norms (B. Kim et al., 1999).

Emotional self-control. In this study, it refers to the importance of having the ability to control one's emotions, having sufficient inner resources to resolve emotional problems, and implicitly understanding and not openly expressing emotions (B. Kim et al., 1999).

Family recognition through achievement. In this study, it refers to the importance of not bringing shame to the family by avoiding occupational or educational failures and by achieving academically (B. Kim et al., 1999).

Filial piety. In this study, filial piety is the importance of taking care of one's parents when parents become unable to take care of themselves and knowing that elders have more wisdom than younger people (B. Kim et al., 1999).

Homophily. In this study, it refers to the tendency for people to interact and develop relationships with those who are like themselves "based on greater ease of communication, acceptance, trust, and predictability among those who are similar" (Friedman & Krackhardt, 1997, p. 321).

Humility. In this study, it refers to the importance of being humble, not being boastful, and having modesty (B. Kim et al., 1999).

Delimitations

Delimitations are aspects of a study that can be controlled and thus provide the boundaries of the study (Simon, 2011). The study participants were delimited to current full-time Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting that work in Los Angeles and Orange County, California, which included ABC Unified School District, Alhambra Unified School District, Anaheim Unified School District, Anaheim Union High School District, Cypress Unified School District, Fullerton Unified School District, Long Beach Unified School District, San Gabriel Unified School District, Santa Ana Unified School District, and Westminster Unified School District. The study participants were delimited to those with at least 10 years of K-12 education experience and at least one year of principal experience. This geographical area was chosen as a convenience for the researcher because of proximity and availability.

Summary

In summary, Asian Americans are underrepresented in K-12 administration. Despite recent literature pointing to an increase in Asian Americans in K-12 administration, little is known about how cultural values influence the career choices of Asian American principals. Kim-Qvale (2012) and F. H. Lee (1998) discovered that successful Asian American principals have mentors to support their careers, and Kim-Qvale (2012) revealed that a pipeline is needed for Asian American teachers to become administrators. Additionally, career choice tendencies are often affected by cultural values, as evidenced by the work of Cheng (1997); Song & Glick (2004), B. Kim et al. (1999), and Woo (1994), who unveiled that education is perceived as a subjective field; and Johnson (2008) and Spencer (1996) discussed that the field of education is viewed as

low-status and traditionally female-dominated. The trend of current research points to a need for further investigation in the nexus of Asian American administration, career choice tendencies, and the impact of cultural values in career decision making.

Organization of the Study

This study is apportioned into five chapters. The first chapter introduced the problem statement, significance, and set the foundational background of the study. It also stated the purpose of this constructivist inquiry study and the research question. Chapter II provides a comprehensive literature review that synthesizes the essential works and seminar authors of the study. Likewise, it reveals historical frameworks to the problem of the study. Chapter III includes the methodology, which includes a detailed procedure of how the research study was conducted. Chapter IV presents a presentation and analysis of the data. Chapter V provides the summary of the study, conclusions, delimitations, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Chapter I provided an introduction to the study and background to the research. It also provided the research question, the statement and significance of the research problem, definitions, delimitations, and organization of the study. It also stated the purpose of this constructivist inquiry study and the research question. This chapter begins with a historical review of Asian immigration to the United States followed by an examination of the discrimination and challenges they had faced. The next section focuses on the national population and K-12 student population of Asian Americans in the United States, followed by the historical trends of Asian Americans in public education as well as the underrepresentation of Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting. The chapter continues with a comprehensive review of the Asian cultural values that impact the career choice tendencies of Asian Americans. Factors that were considered to discourage Asian Americans from pursuing K-12 education are discussed. Key research is presented to explain patterns, variances, and overall synthesis of the data. This chapter concludes with a summary of how these elements were related and identify a gap in research and literature relating to the underrepresentation of K-12 Asian American principals. The researcher developed a synthesis matrix, which served as a foundation for the review of the literature (Appendix A).

Historical Perspectives

Career choice tendencies in the Asian American community are highly correlated with the parental expectations for their children, and the prestige of parents' career expectations was a significant predictor of young adults' expected career choices (Sandhu, 2011). Additionally, it has been found that cultural values play a crucial role in

determining the career choice tendencies of Asian American youths (Kim-Qvale, 2012; Sandhu, 2011). This chapter begins by exploring the historical perspectives of Asian Americans in the United States and how their Asian cultural values influenced and intersected with their career choices.

The United States is considered a melting pot where immigrants from all over the world migrate, in increasing numbers, in search of a better and brighter future that brings opportunity and prosperity (K. L. V. Chin, 1998). According to the 2010 United States Census Bureau, data on race has been collected since the first United States decennial census in 1790, but a distinction was not made for people of Asian descent. It was not until 1860 when the first Asian response category (Chinese) was added to the question on race in the state of California and in other states beginning in 1870. A second Asian response category of (Japanese) was added to the Census in 1870. By the 1980 Census, there were six detailed Asian response categories of Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

The term Asian American was a result of the Civil Rights Movement where the term was created to represent a minority group that shared common immigrant experiences in order to build a pan-ethnic identity (Wei, 1993), which is a historical trend similar among African and Hispanic Americans (Espiritu, 1992). Prior to the lifting of the Oriental Exclusion Act of 1945, Asian Americans had very little political power. For Asian Americans to gain more political power, they needed to unify as a larger group to combat racism (Kobayashi, 1999). What is interesting is that the term was originally created to label citizenship, not as a racial category that it is today (Kuo, 2001).

Grouping these various cultures, traditions, and histories have both benefits and

challenges. One of the benefits is that it helps Asian Americans unify as a larger group to combat racism as mentioned earlier; however, lumping more than 25 diverse subgroups into one group blurs important differences (B. Kim, Yang, Atkinson, Wolfe, & Hong, 2001). An example of an important difference is the socioeconomic levels that vary greatly in the Asian American category, with Hmong Americans earning less than a third of what Japanese Americans made in 1990. Likewise, 10 times as many Chinese and Japanese Americans held baccalaureate degrees than Laotian and Hmong Americans in the late 1980s (Kim et al., 2001).

Asian Americans have been in the United States for more than 150 years, yet very little is known about them and their history (K. L. V. Chin, 1998). In order to understand the factors that underlie the underrepresentation of K-12 Asian American principals, it is necessary to start with the historical perspectives of their history in America. This section includes a brief account of their experiences in America.

Asian Immigration in the United States

Asians come from a diverse population, with origins tracing back to China, Japan, Korea, India, Vietnam, Cambodia, Philippines, Indonesia, and other countries (Takaki, 1998). Asian Americans began their immigration to the United States as early as the 1780s with many immigration waves (Okihiro, 2001).

1st Immigration Wave (1848–1924)

The first large wave of Asian immigration took place from 1848 through 1924, and the group consisted of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Asian Indians, and Filipinos looking for brighter opportunities and a better life. The Chinese were the first large group to arrive in 1852 after the Gold Rush, and more were recruited in the 1860s to

work on the transcontinental railroad (Fong, 2002). Many of the early Chinese immigrants were from Guangdong, China and settled in California, also referred to as *Gam Saan* (Gold Mountain) where they dreamt of new possibilities for themselves and their future. The following folk song expressed many of the emotions felt by the Chinese who came to gam saan to test their luck:

> In the second reign year of Haamfung (1852),
> a trip to Gold Mountain was made.
> With a pillow on my shoulder, I began my
> perilous journey:
> Sailing a boat with bamboo poles across the
> sea,
> Leaving behind wife and sisters in search of
> money,
> No longer lingering with the woman in the
> bedroom,
> No longer paying respect to parents at home. (Takaki, 1998, p. 35)

The Chinese who immigrated during this time were almost all men. Single women were not allowed to travel alone or to distant places, and married women generally stayed home (Takaki, 1998). Following the Chinese, a large number of Japanese arrived between 1902 and 1907 first to Hawaii, which at the time was not considered a U.S. state, and then moved to the United States mainland, and worked in agricultural businesses that the Chinese had started. Koreans and Asian Indians began to immigrate in small numbers in the 1880s. Koreans came as students, farm workers, and

picture brides while the Asian Indians arrived as farm workers in California. Filipinos began their immigration to Hawaii just as the Japanese because they were recruited to work in the sugar plantations before coming to the U.S. mainland in 1898 after the Spanish-American War (Fong, 2002).

2nd Immigration Wave (1965–1985)

The second large wave of immigration was selective and granted to those with professional skills and education as a result of the restructuring of the global economy (Fong, 2002; Takaki, 1998; Woo, 1994). This new influx of Asian immigrants grew from 1 million to almost 5 million people between 1965 and 1985 (Takaki, 1998). As the U.S. moved to exporting low-skilled labor to other countries and importing those with advanced skills to meet the country's shifting economic needs, the number of highly educated immigrants increased (Fong, 2002). This was evidenced by the increasing number of foreign-born students studying in U.S. colleges and universities as well as laws such as the Immigration Nursing Relief Act of 1989, which was passed to address specifically the shortage of skilled people needed to fill those positions (Ong & Blumberg, 1994). Furthermore, the educational credentials of these recent Asian arrivals are striking: more than 61% of the adults ages 25 to 64 who have immigrated in recent years have at least a bachelor's degree. This is double the statistics of recent non-Asian immigrants, which makes the recent Asian arrivals the most highly educated group of immigrants in U.S. history (Pew Research Center, 2012).

The United States continues to grow more diverse. According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, the Asian population grew faster than any other race group in the United States between 2000 and 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). The modern immigration

wave from Asia is nearly a half-century-old and has increased the total Asian American population in the United States to a record 18.2 million in 2011, or 5.8% of the total U.S. population, up from less than 1% in 1965. By comparison, Whites constitute 197.5 million and 63.3%, Hispanics are 52.0 million and 16.7%, and Blacks are 38.3 million and 12.3% (Pew Research Center, 2012). The Asian population continues to be most concentrated in the West, and the Chinese population was the largest detailed Asian group, followed by Filipino and Asian Indian as the second- and third-largest detailed Asian groups (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Table 1 illustrates the six largest U.S. Asian groups in the United States in 2010.

Table 1

The Six Largest Country of Origin Groups Each Number More Than a Million People in 2010

U.S. Asian Groups	Number of Asians	% of Asians
Chinese	4,010,114	23.2
Filipino	3,416,840	19.8
Indian	3,183,063	18.4
Vietnamese	1,737,433	10.0
Korean	1,706,822	9.9
Japanese	1,304,286	7.5

Note. Data source from *The Asian Population: 2010*, U.S. Census Bureau, March 2012.

In summary, the different circumstances under which the waves of Asian American groups immigrated to the United States are linked to varied socioeconomic statuses and educational levels within the Asian American groups. What holds true is

that each Asian American subgroup had suffered personal and institutionalized discrimination during their time in America (Kim-Qvale, 2012).

Asian American's History of Discrimination

Asian Americans faced racial discrimination and language barriers in the United States. Despite that there is a general perception of Asian Americans as "honorary whites" most Asian Americans felt that they have experienced racial prejudice or have encountered significant problems assimilating into the majority culture (Tuan, 1998). According to Takaki (1998), Asian Americans will never be fully accepted as members of the majority because of their outer appearances, making them "invisible" and "strangers from a different shore" (p. 18). Many stereotypes and myths of Asians as aliens and foreigners are pervasive in American society, and many history books portray a narrow view or overlook them altogether. Instead of getting to know Asian Americans primarily as statistics, it is critical to view these men and women with minds and voices. These voices tell stories of their hardships as well as their triumphs (Takaki, 1998).

Historically, Asian Americans were first welcomed by Caucasian Americans as laborers, merchants, artisans, and gold miners; however, they were later resented because they worked for lower wages than other miners (Fong, 2002). Anti-Chinese laws were enacted when the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869. Federal and state laws were passed to exclude Asians from economic and social justice. One such law was the 1852 Foreign Miner's Tax that required extra taxes from foreign miners, which included Asian workers who could not receive citizenship (Fong, 2002; Takaki, 1998). Other discriminatory laws that Asians faced included the California Supreme Court ruling, *People v. Hall* (1854) where it was decided that the Chinese could not testify in

court against a White person; the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 where Congress passed a bill to suspend the immigration of Chinese laborers for 10 years; the Alien Land Law, which prohibited those ineligible for citizenship from owning and leasing land; the Immigration Act of 1924, which extended the immigration ban to include virtually all of Asia; the forced relocation and internment camp of about 120,000 Japanese Americans after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941; and the passing of the McCarran-Walter Act in 1952, which made it impossible for people of all races to become naturalized citizens (Dowdell & Dowdell, 1972; Fong, 2002; Pew Research Center, 2012). Because of the many laws placed against Asian Americans, many Chinese Americans who were frustrated and depressed with the limited opportunities in America returned to China. Those who remained in the United States kept to themselves, maintained their own customs and institutions, stayed in Chinatown areas, and looked toward the day when they could go back home to China (Yung, 1986).

It was not until World War II that the statuses of various Asian groups were elevated. The Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed in 1943 and the War Bride's Act of 1945 allowed war veterans to bring Chinese and Filipino wives into the United States (Fong, 2002). Furthermore, a high percentage of Asian immigrants, between 1971 and 1998, were given the right to immigrate to the United States if they were people with professional skills and education (Fong, 2002; Takaki, 1998; Woo, 1994).

Even though Asians as a group experience material prosperity, social prestige, and upward mobility, they still experience racial discrimination (K. L. V. Chin, 1998). In the last few decades, there has been a large increase in the number of Asian Americans in our society and the workforce; however, even with the increase of Asian Americans, the

percentage of Asian managers in public and private sector is still very small (Tosi, Rizzo & Carroll, 1994). The authors unveiled that Asian Americans, as with women, experienced a glass ceiling, which restricted their career advancement. Furthermore, under affirmative action laws, the numbers of Caucasian women who have been promoted "through the glass ceiling" have increased while the progress of Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, African Americans, and other culturally diverse groups still lags behind that of White Americans (Tosi et al., 1994). The history of Asian individuals who have faced racial and linguistic discrimination, as well as their cultural values and its impact on career choice tendencies, may have had a great deal of influence on the current shortage of Asian American educators in the K-12 educational setting (K. L. V. Chin, 1998; Fong, 2002; Kim-Qvale, 2012; Qin, 2010; Takaki, 1998).

Asian Americans in Public Education

Asian Americans as a minority group grew faster than any other racial group in the United States between 2000 and 2010, increasing in size by 43%. By 2050, this population will grow five times (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Data show that even though Asian American students continue to grow in numbers, Asian American educators are underrepresented in the K-12 educational field (Gall, 1995; Goodwin, 1995; Kwong, 1987). Without Asian American principals serving as role models, Asian American educators may be less likely to pursue an administrative career in the K-12 educational field (Rong & Preissle, 1997).

The NCES (2009) revealed that 49.5% of students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools are White, 25% are Hispanic, 16% Black, 5% Asian-Pacific Islander, and approximately 1% are American Indian-Alaska Native students. However,

in 2011–2012, there were 10,750 school principals in both the public and private schools in the United States, and of those 10,750 school principals, less than 3% are of Asian descent (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). These statistics validate that there continues to be a disproportionately small number of Asian American educators in comparison to the number of Asian American students. To understand fully the reasons behind the dearth of Asian Americans in public education, one must begin by investigating the historical trends of Asian American teachers, and how cultural values and career choice tendencies affect the decisions Asian Americans make about their career paths into K-12 administration.

Historical Trends of Asian American Teachers

Even though Asian Americans immigrated to the United States in the 1780s, they were discouraged from pursuing careers in education until the 1940s (Tsai, 1986). Yung (1986) reported that the first Asian American public-school teacher was Effie Chew in 1918, and Alice Fong Yu was the first Chinese American teacher in a San Francisco public school. Fong Yu was initially denied admissions to a teacher's college because of her race. She was later admitted only after she told the president of the college that she would not teach in the United States; rather, she would go back to China to instruct her people (Low, 1981).

Historical trends asserted that minority teachers were initially hired for specific skills and areas, such as bilingual education or special multicultural projects; therefore, their experiences are limited to particular students and curricular content (Ortiz, 1982). L. Chin (1972) remarked that the stereotypes about Asian people suggested that they were not good educators because they had an accent, lacked initiative, and were too soft-

spoken. L. Chin wrote:

> The perception of Caucasian school administrators, who selected school staff, is that since Asian people are bilingual, then they must not be effective in the classroom in teaching any subject other than language. That is, a bilingual speaker is handicapped and considered less capable of handling the curriculum because he or she needs to deal with two languages: English and his or her native language. A Caucasian English monolingual speaker is viewed as a better teacher since he or she needs to deal with only one language. This point of view has discouraged Asians from becoming public school teachers and administrators. (p. 50)

Furthermore, many Asian American teachers are perceived as task-oriented, conscientious, hardworking, and quiet. Unfortunately, being perceived as quiet has a negative connotation that is linked to being a reserved person rather than having inner confidence (Low, 1981). Low (1981) theorized that Asian American teachers encountered two major hurdles in their careers: an oral interview to detect whether an Asian has an accent in his or her speech and racial discrimination where Asian American male teachers were thought as “ethnics” while Asian American female teachers were thought as “culture”, which does not carry a negative connotation.

Rong and Preissle (1997) looked at the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s decennial census data to postulate whether there were patterns that contributed to the shortage of Asian American teachers as compared to Hispanic American and African American teachers and found that Asians as a group were simply not interested in the K-12 teaching careers. The researchers reported, “In 1990, Asians constituted 2.8% of the labor force, 3.7% of

all professionals, 5.1% of college professors, but only 1.2% of pre-collegiate teachers" (p. 276). Asian Americans currently constitute more than 5% of teachers in California, but J. Gordon (2000) found that Asian Americans have the lowest participation rate in teacher education of all minority groups, suggesting that the number of Asians in education is unlikely to increase in the near future.

The pipeline from being a classroom teacher to administrator typically involves a teacher working in the classroom, acquiring an administrative credential, and working as a dean or assistant principal before gaining a principal position. The transition from teaching in the classroom to leading a school as an administrator in the K-12 educational setting is becoming more difficult, as accountability measures demand increasingly more from school leaders (Brown, 2006). The role of an administrator has been very complex and stressful as the responsibilities assigned continue to increase (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2003). Some of the responsibilities assigned to school principals include being accountable for the performance of students, adhering to the changing and growing number of government regulations, working on site budgets, modeling as instructional leaders, and overseeing all of the teachers, staff, and students at the school (Sodoma & Else, 2009). Districts across the United States are finding it difficult to recruit highly qualified school principals, especially those from minority groups, because of the high demands and stresses on school principals (Cooley & Shen, 1999; Fenwick & Collins-Pierce, 2001; Groff, 2001).

Historical Trends Among Asian American Principals

Asian Americans are underrepresented in administrative positions in both elementary and secondary schools (NCES, 2009). Without Asian American principals

serving as role models, Asian American educators may be less likely to pursue an administrative career in the K-12 educational field (Rong & Preissle, 1997). One of the many factors that impact the underrepresentation of Asian American K-12 principals can be seen directly in the low numbers of Asian Americans going into K-12 teaching, which is a prerequisite to becoming a principal (Rong & Preissle, 1997). Even though Asian Americans are the most educated ethnic population in America, the largest proportion of teachers, teacher educators, and administrators is Caucasian Americans (K. L. V. Chin, 1998).

Historically, Elizabeth Hall was the first Asian American female administrator in San Francisco public schools in 1957 (Low, 1981). Ortiz (1982) maintained that culturally diverse individuals prior to the mid-’60s and early ’70s were only given administrative positions to calm the social unrest of the Civil Rights Era, which focused on the elimination of racial discrimination. Only in rare cases did culturally diverse individuals obtained administrative positions through promotion for their competence and accomplishments.

As with Asian American teachers, Asian American principals are stereotyped as passive, inscrutable, or lacking the aggressiveness required in administration (Y. C. Suzuki, 1994). Fukuda and Kashima (1972) reported that Asian Americans were discouraged from entering the field of education and administration, and wrote:

> The hiring and promotion practices regarding Asian Americans remained unsatisfactory to much of their community. The absence of Asian-American principals, vice-principals, specialists, and other higher echelon people presents a wide array of problems related to the education of youngsters. (p. 40)

Nationally, during the 2015–2016 school year, the Asian American student population made up 5% of the U.S. school population, but less than 2% of K-12 principals are of Asian descent (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). In California, which has one of the highest percentages of Asian American students in the country, Asians make up 8.85% of the student population, but only 4% of the principals are of Asian descent (California Department of Education, 2016). For example, in Orange County, California during the 2014–2015 school year, there were 7.7% Asian American students enrolled in elementary and secondary schools, but less than 4% of the principals were Asian (Orange County Department of Education, 2016). As noted from the national, state, and local statistical data, there continues to be a disproportionately small number of Asian American administrators compared with the number of Asian American students. Data show that Caucasian men still control the operation of most public and private institutions in this country (Regules, 1995), and Asian Americans are discouraged from entering the field of education and administration (Fukuda & Kashima, 1972). Table 2 illustrates the percentage of Asian American students, teachers, and principals during the 2015–2016 school year in California and the U.S., with statistics compiled from the California Department of Education Web site, the U.S. Department of Education (2016) and Edsource (2007).

Table 2

United States and California Asian American Student, Teacher, and Principal Representation

	U.S.			California		
	Student	Teacher	Principal	Student	Teacher	Principal
2015–2016	5%	2%	2%	8.9%	5.4%	4%

Note. Data found in The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce (2016) from the U.S. Department of Education, and from Edsource (2007).

As shown in Table 2, the need to investigate the factors that underlie the underrepresentation of Asian American principals is critical because the Asian population is projected to grow five times its current size by 2050 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Therefore, decreasing the gap between the percentages of Asian American students versus the percentages of Asian American principals is relevant to this study. Some of the factors that influence the underrepresentation of Asian American principals cited in the literature include the model minority image, acculturation, glass ceiling, discrimination, lower returns on education, perception of language barriers, physical and behavioral characteristics, and lack of leadership skills and experiences.

Model minority image. “Model minority” refers to minority groups that have achieved a high level of success in the United States, a label often associated with Asians, which assumes that all Asian Americans are successful in education and economic wealth (S. E. Lee & Rong, 1988). Sociologist William Peterson coined the term model minority in 1966 when he wrote an article titled, “Success story: Japanese American style” for *The New York Times Magazine.* Peterson deduced that the Japanese Americans were able to overcome racial discrimination by having a family structure and a cultural emphasis

focused on hard work (Caliendo & Mcllwain, 2010). That same year, Chinese Americans were praised for their remarkable achievements in the *U.S. News and World Report* (Osajima, 1988).

Politically, the model minority theory was used to paint America as a land where minorities can attain success as long as they display specific attributes, such as perseverance and hard work (Osajima, 1988). The term has been used mostly to describe Asian Americans, who according to national statistics have attained educational and financial success in comparison to the other immigrant groups (Caliendo & Mcllwain, 2010). The authors argued that this may be true at face value but model minority is also a myth because the assumption that Asian Americans are all doing well is overgeneralized and inaccurate (Caliendo & Mcllwain, 2010). First, using household income as an indicator obscures the fact that many Asian American families have larger households with more adults working than White families. Second, there are many Asian American ethnic groups that do not fare as well. An example is the Cambodians who, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2000), have a per-capita income of $10,215, and more than 90% of their population do not have a bachelor's degree. Third, Asian Americans are also uninsured at a higher rate than Whites (18% vs. 11%). Merely focusing on the Asian Americans who are successful makes those who continue to struggle invisible (Caliendo & Mcllwain, 2010).

Kwong (1987) further clarified that the term model minority included the early immigrants who came to America with marketable professional skills under the Immigration Act of 1965, whom he coined the term "Uptown Chinese". Even though these Uptown Chinese were well educated, skilled in the English language, and rose in

the American middle-class system, they earned less than Caucasians with equivalent levels of education and similar professional positions. The report argued that these Uptown Chinese were regularly bypassed for promotions to management positions.

Asian Americans are also viewed as a group that does not rock the boat with demands for services and fair treatment (Osajima, 1988). On the surface, these characteristics may have positive connotations, but from a leadership perspective, they make Asian Americans appear ill-suited for leadership (Chan, 1991; Chang & Kiang, 2002; Duleep & Sanders, 1992; J. Lee, 1996; Osajima, 1988). For example, a participant in Wu's (1997) study said, "Upper-level management regards Asian Pacific American workers as hardworking, diligent, but nevertheless to be seen but not heard, to be bossed, not bosses" (p. 167). In essence, the reputation of the model minority for Asian Americans could work against their career advancement because conformity, obedience, and quietness are seen as substitutes for the lack of communication and leadership skills (J. M. Wong, 2002). As a result, Asian Americans pursuing principal positions have to confront a widely shared belief that they lack leadership skills and do not possess the attributes with management potential (Sue, Ino, & Sue, 1983).

Acculturation. Acculturation is defined as the process that an individual goes through when he or she is exposed to two different cultures (Suinn et al., 1987). M. M. Gordon's (1964) notion of cultural assimilation, or acculturation, argues that a significant component of the acculturation process for Asian Americans is that of identification. The United States is a melting pot where immigrants melt into the majority group and assimilate into the dominant culture by acquiring the language, behaviors, and characteristics of the majority group (Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997). Takaki (1998),

Okihiro (2001), and Oyserman and Sakamoto (1997) maintained that the melting pot might have worked for European immigrants but not for Asian Americans, even if they wanted to melt into the dominant group because their physical features, language, and cultural norms differ greatly from the dominant American culture. To protect their children by preparing them to face discrimination, parents reared their children by preserving their native language, cultural customs, and pushing them to do well in school to prove their intelligence (Takaki, 1998).

Glass ceiling. The term glass ceiling first began in 1986 to describe the barriers women and culturally diverse groups faced in going beyond midmanagement positions (Reskin & Ross, 1995). Stith (1996) argued that while the glass ceiling is invisible, it denies women and culturally diverse groups from full participation and personal achievement in society. Awareness of the glass ceiling effect has since included people of color, and research has shown that the glass ceiling metaphor has negatively affected Asian Americans. While many Asian Americans perceive themselves as marketable when they graduate, studies have shown that they do not earn as much as White Americans in similar positions (Zhou & Kamo, 1994). According to an in-depth analysis of earning patterns based on U.S. Census Bureau data, Zhou and Kamo (1994) found that Asian Americans overall received significant earning disadvantages compared to their White colleagues with identical credentials, regardless of college education or state of residence. Similarly, Friedman and Krackhardt (1997) and Woo (2000) also reported lower returns for education of both immigrant and American-born Asian Americans in comparison to White Americans. Woo (2000) took it one step further by suggesting in *Glass Ceilings and Asian Americans* that subtle racism and prejudice are quietly

reproduced and embedded into the routine activities of the institution. She argued that many of the barriers that Asian Americans face are systematic and invisible, not easily traceable to individuals or specific procedures (Woo, 2000). In her study, she concluded that organizations are unable to recognize managerial styles that departed from the traditional White American male leadership model.

Discrimination. According to a Gallup Poll, 30% of Asian Americans surveyed reported incidents of employment discrimination, the largest of any group, with African Americans constituting the second largest at 26% (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2005). Morrison (1993) noted that there is still a great deal of resentment and hostility from subordinates who dislike that they need to report to anyone who is not male and Caucasian. One of the participants in her study, a Chinese manager, reported that her boss had told her to "be as un-Asian as possible" and to instruct her Asian subordinates to "be un-Asian" as well because the department "looks like an Asian connection". Similarly, in Poon's (2014) study, he reported that seven of the 25 participants discussed their perceptions of how racial inequalities in the labor market and stereotypes played roles in hindering them from pursuing their careers. Some of the participants were aware of the racial disadvantages and barriers in their fields of interest. An example from Poon's (2014) study, a participant said:

> Because I'm really into film and editing and stuff like that, it'll be harder for me to go into that industry than for other people. Even in like music, it's harder for us, for an Asian people to go into. Asians are only good for engineering, things like that, sciences and math. But when it comes to those other industries like music and film and anything else, it seems harder for them. I think it draws

> people away from saying like, "I want to go into that career," to "I'll just make it a hobby." (p. 10)

Another example of racial discrimination that Asian Americans faced was demonstrated in Hune and Kenyon's (1997) study that reported racial discrimination was one of the barriers that inhibited Asian Americans in their job advancement, irrespective of their educational attainment. Their research found that the rate of career advancement is much slower for Asians than any other cultural groups as a result of the glass ceiling effect. Additionally, the authors reported that other barriers to the path of Asian Americans to management positions included cultural biases, perceived language limitations, accent discrimination, and lack of recruitment and mentorship.

Lower returns on education. Asian Americans as a group have reached the highest percentage of any group in terms of level of education, median household income, and managerial positions (Woo, 1994). In a report published by U.S. Census Bureau (2014), *Income and Poverty in the United States*, the median household income of Asian Americans was $74,297, which was higher than Whites ($60,256), Hispanics ($42,491), and Blacks ($35,398). However, the amount of education Asian Americans received is not reflected in their occupational attainment. Woo (1994) reported that education did not reward Asian Americans the same opportunities as it did White males when it came to career advancement, even after controlling variables such as work experience, English ability, industry of employment, marital status, and disability. Takaki (1998) supported this similar claim by reporting that in 1980, the median personal income for White and Japanese men as comparable; however, the Japanese men did so by acquiring more education and by working more hours. For other Asian American

subgroups such as Chinese, Korean, and Filipino, the disparity was even greater (Takaki, 1998).

Perception of language barriers. Theories of leadership work against Asian Americans because it places a large emphasis on clear and articulate communication skills that symbolize strength, confidence, assertiveness, and charisma (J. M. Wong, 2002). Wong (2002) asserted that Asian Americans for whom English is not their native language and who speak with an accent tend to be overlooked for leadership positions. An example of how language barriers affect Asian leaders include Tien (1998), who upon being appointed the Chancellor of the University of California-Berkeley, reported that some of his colleagues encouraged him to get coaching to eliminate his accent.

Tien (1998) wrote:

> While British, German, and French accents are acceptable or even prestigious in academic circles, Asian and Latino inflections are problematic. A European inflection conjures up images of Oxford or Cambridge.…In contrast; an Asian or Latino accent is more likely to be considered an indication of a lack of schooling. (p. 34)

Moreover, Tien (1998) wrote that the selection committee members doubted his ability to excel at fund-raising and his ability to support athletics, manifestations of the stereotypes that Asian Americans lacked communication skills and the ability to deal with large groups.

Physical and behavioral characteristics. Studies showed that Asian Americans' physical and behavioral characteristics are stereotyped not to measure up to expectations of leadership, which are primarily associated with White men (Bensimon, Neumann, &

Bimbaum, 1989; Cheng, 1996; Hune, 1998). For example, Hune (1998) reported that Asian American administrators were often not taken seriously because of their youthful appearance and small stature, symbolizing that they were immature. Asian American men faced similar but different stereotypes than Asian American women in that they were perceived as not being "management material" and described as "cheerful, gentle, naïve, shy, quiet, too nice, and passive" (Cheng, 1996, p. 181). Moreover, in Cheng's (1996) study, 13 Asian American male students volunteered to be team managers, but students in the group elected none of them to a leadership position. In contrast, 23 of the 25 White male volunteers in the study were selected as team managers (Cheng, 1996).

Lack of leadership skills and experiences. Another common stereotype of Asian Americans is that they are not interested in leadership positions so, therefore, they lack the required leadership skills and experiences to become managers and leaders (Wong & Nagasawa, 1991). The researchers found in their study that Asian American scientists were seen as highly qualified in technical areas but lacked the essential attributes for administrative or executive positions. Furthermore, the Caucasian participants in their study reported that Asian Americans were "too passive and self-effacing for administrative roles, not interested in climbing the corporate ladder, and content with their careers" (p. 5).

Having the needed skills, experiences, and opportunities are all critical components to prepare all ethnic groups for leadership positions. Ortiz (1982) and Takaki (1998) both reported that culturally diverse groups are not given the same opportunity to interact with others in leadership roles at professional and social events. Asian American educators are often placed in "special projects positions" which prepare

them to deal only with culturally diverse groups and minority issues and are not prepared to become administrators. When culturally diverse individuals are selected to be principals, they are often assigned to schools with mostly minority students (Ortiz, 1982). These placements continue to isolate Asian Americans and fail to prepare them to be principals in the K-12 educational setting.

The next sections will explore the literature of some of the common Asian cultural values, career choice tendencies of Asian Americans, how cultural values impact and intersect with the career choice tendencies of Asian Americans, and finally the perceptions of those who chose the road less traveled and became Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting.

Asian Cultural Values

Nieto (1996) defined culture as the ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, and worldview created and shared by a group of people who are threaded together by common history, geographic location, language, social class, and religion. Asians are diverse in their ethnic demographics, and each group has its own language, culture, and traditions (Min & Kim, 1999). Values are important in helping guide people toward making different decisions throughout their lives, and values provide insight into things people do to satisfy their needs (Super & Sverko, 1995). Some of the shared Asian cultural values were identified in the study conducted by B. Kim et al. (1999), to understand better how these values were used in the process of developing a tool to measure Asian American acculturation. They developed an Asian Values Scale to identify 112 Asian traits that were generated and tested by a survey administered to 303 Asian Americans and 63 European Americans (B. Kim et al., 1999). The authors defined

Asian's shared cultural values gathered through the Asian Values Scale as filial piety, humility, collectivism, conformity to norms, emotional self-control, family recognition through achievement, and values education (B. Kim et al., 1999). It is critical to keep in mind that the immigrant generation will reflect a stronger adherence to a traditional culture than second and third generations that have acculturated into the American culture (K. L. V. Chin, 1998).

Filial Piety and Humility

B. Kim et al. (1999) defined filial piety as the importance of taking care of one's parents when the parents become unable to take care of themselves and knowing that elders have more wisdom than younger people. The family is paramount in the Asian American culture. They believe that they owe a debt to their parents and ancestors and feel that it is their responsibility to work together to ensure the family's future (K. L. V. Chin, 1998).

Asian Americans prize humility and consider boasting of one's accomplishments as rude; however, "tooting one's own horn" is an American tradition (K. L. V. Chin, 1998). For example, in the Chinese culture, to boast about or even exaggerate a person's accomplishment, educational background, personal qualities, experience, responsibilities, and abilities is considered rude and an unacceptable part of the Chinese character (Sung, 1967). This humility virtue in the Asian culture often inhibits them from advancing in their careers because this trait is often misinterpreted as signs of passivity, nonassertiveness, lack of goal orientation, or resignation (Namkoong & Namkoong, 1992); whereas those individuals who boast their accomplishments to gain recognition in the work place often get promoted.

Values Education and High Academic Expectations

Asian Americans value the importance of education because they believe that education is a means to breaking through the class barriers (K. L. V. Chin, 1998). Kwong (1987) reported that Asian Americans pursue higher education for practical reasons because it was their opportunity to enter white-collar occupations, and they value education because it is a means to upward mobility rather than because of their Confucian cultural backgrounds, as most Americans believe. On the contrary, J. Gordon (2000) and Park (1981) reported that Asian American parents value education because educational excellence is a tenet of the Confucian tradition and cultural values. Louie (2004) supported this claim by reporting in her study that Chinese American parents' view of the importance of education was derived from the parents' cultural norms of their homeland and from the Confucian concept where the Chinese Imperial academic examination system rewarded those who passed as scholars with monetary and prestigious awards. Whether it is for upward mobility or Confucian concept, it is clear that Asian Americans value the importance of education (Siu, 1992).

Family has a high degree of influence over their children's achievements (Gall, 1995). F. H. Lee (1998) found that Asian American parents overall had higher expectations for their children's educational achievement than Caucasian parents. Many Asian parents are overly confident about their children's academic abilities and expect very high levels of achievements as marks of American success (E. Kim, 1993). In E. Kim's (1993) study, the Korean parents viewed investing in their children's academic future as a significant financial obligation and many moved to wealthier neighborhoods beyond their financial means to give their children access to schools that have better

reputations, thinking that these better schools would help their children get into Ivy League colleges and universities. In addition, in Kim-Qvale's study (2012), the participants felt that the Asian cultural value of high academic expectations from their family members was a factor that supported their careers as principals in the K-12 educational setting.

Collectivism

B. Kim et al. (1999) defined collectivism as the importance of thinking about the group before oneself and considering the needs of others before considering one's own needs. The Asian American culture is essentially a collective one, and the "loss of face" has severe consequences from the families and Asian community (Yeh & Huang, 1996). This extreme fear of shame can be a powerful motivator for Asian children to please their parents (Shon & Ja, 1982). In addition, Asian Americans view collectivism as parents sacrificing for their children's success (Kim-Qvale, 2012). This Asian cultural emphasis on collectivism may also hinder some Asian Americans from getting promoted to principal positions because their cultural ideals not to stand out, put others' needs ahead of theirs, and not boast about their accomplishments (B. Kim et al., 1999).

Family Recognition Through Achievement

B. Kim et al. (1999) defined family recognition through achievement as the importance of not bringing shame to the family by avoiding occupational or educational failures and by achieving academically. Most of the participants in Kim-Qvale's (2012) study shared that the cultural value of family recognition through achievement was acknowledged highly by both groups of participants. Additionally, they stated their need to make their families proud by achieving first at school and then in their work life (Kim-

Qvale, 2012). Asian Americans who feel that they have not "measured up" to the "yardstick" of parental expectations feel that they have "lost face" (Kibria, 2002).

In summary, an in-depth examination of Asian cultural values of humility, filial piety, values education, high academic expectations, collectivism, and family recognition through achievement all have influences on the lives of Asian Americans. The next section will explore how some of the cultural values impact the career choice tendencies of Asian Americans.

Asian Cultural Values and Their Impact on Career Choice Tendencies

A large amount of theoretical and empirical literature exists on the career development of young people, but little that focuses specifically on Asian American young people. Therefore, many people have questioned whether traditional career development theories and research findings apply to Asian Americans (Sandhu, 2014). Even though there is no career theory that applies to Asian Americans, many common ideas and hypotheses overlap, including extrinsic values, acculturation, and generational status (Tewari & Alvarez, 2009).

Asian Americans are overrepresented in some occupations such as science and technology fields while underrepresented in other careers such as entertainment, social, and humanistic fields (Fouad et al., 2008; Leong & Gupta, 2007; Leong & Hardin, 2002; Tang et al., 1999). U.S. Census Bureau data showed that although Asian Americans constitute 4% of the U.S. population, they represent 25% of computer engineers, 30% of medical scientists, 17% of physicians, and 14% of dentists, but only 1% of social service workers (as cited in Fouad et al., 2008). Factors such as family desires, discrimination, homophily, Asians choosing careers in the science and medical fields, extrinsic

motivators, language manipulation, and lack of role models may contribute to the lack of Asian Americans principals in the K-12 educational (K. L. V. Chin, 1998; Kim-Qvale, 2012; Poon, 2014).

Family Desires

Consistent with research on Asian American career development, family played an extremely critical role in their career paths (K. L. V. Chin, 1998; Kim-Qvale, 2012; Poon, 2014) where many choose careers based on their family's mission rather than their own interests (Leong, 1998; Leong & Gupta, 2007; Tang et al., 1999). In general, Asian American parents do not value K-12 teaching as a valuable profession for their children (Louie, 2004). Asian American parents view only a small number of professional career fields as financially competitive jobs for their children, and teaching is not included in that field of choice (Louie, 2004). J. Gordon (2000) found that Asian American parents tend to equate success and prestige with high income, and many Asian parents sway their sons from teaching because of its low wage and low social reputation (G. Suzuki, 1998).

In Poon's (2014) study, he found that the participants either considered the career paths chosen by their parents or family relatives, and those who decided to follow their own path based on their personal interests were still mindful of navigating their career and vocational paths that were familiar and proven means of achieving economic and social status stability. Research found that family influences and desires play a critical factor in Asian American's career choices, encouraging them to pursue career pathways that are perceived to bring financial gains (Poon, 2014). Asian Americans, especially immigrant families, have cited that they feel more pressure to immerse into mainstream society by expecting their children to choose well-paid jobs (Chung & Bemak, 2007).

Most of these immigrant parents work many hours in blue-collar jobs, and they wish that their children would earn a higher social status than them in jobs that are seen as financially prestigious (J. Gordon, 2000). An Asian American teacher participant in G. Suzuki's (1998) study said:

> Parents, especially the first immigrant parents, emigrated because of a hope for a better life. My mom used to say, "I lived like this so you don't have to. You know with the 12 hour days and the 80 hours weeks…You can't make enough money. Look into business. Look into medicine. Look into everything else except teaching. (p. 120)

Unfortunately, if Asian American parents continue to devalue K-12 teaching as a profession, then their children would follow that same thinking pattern because research shows that Asian culture utilizes a collective decision-making process regarding career selections for Asian youth (Tang et al.,, 1999).

Homophily

Homophily is the tendency for people to interact and develop relationships with those who are like themselves "based on greater ease of communication, acceptance, trust, and predictability among those who are similar" (Friedman & Krackhardt, 1997, p. 321). Since there are few Asian American administrators in the United States, there is a lack of role models for those who are seeking to be promoted in that career field. Chun (1995) stated in her study:

> Teachers and occupational counselors may come to believe that the existing pattern is a reflection of Asian Americans' aptitudes and preferences and they may unknowingly steer Asian American youths into those fields where there are

role models and proof of occupational attainability. (p. 107)

Chun (1995) also wrote that if Asian Americans are viewed as only fitting to work in certain occupations, they will continue to be limited to ethnic networks and support systems if they choose to pursue careers in underrepresented fields.

Subjective Career Fields

There is a historical trend that Asian Americans do not choose careers that were considered "subjective" such as humanities and K-12 education where they have to deal with social networking, politics, and manipulation of language and instead lean heavily toward the science and medical fields (Cheng, 1997; Song & Glick, 2004; Woo, 1994). One reason that Asian Americans prefer to enter the science and engineering fields is because those fields do not require as much speaking and writing skills, as do other professions such as K-12 administration (Namkoong & Namkoong, 1992). Asians are stereotyped and told that they do not articulate themselves well and speak with an accent. The Asian accent is perceived as a problem whereas European accents do not experience the same discrimination (Namkoong & Namkoong, 1992). Furthermore, Kwong (1987) reported that Downtown Chinese, those who came to America by having relatives sponsor them, often do not have a high school diploma, and lived below the poverty line, tend to major in fields such as medicine, engineering, and computer science because they were more likely to get better-paying jobs. Only a few chose to major in the humanities and social sciences fields because of the idea that they were not likely to get paid a lot (Kwong, 1987).

Extrinsic Motivators

The career paths that attract Asian Americans include those that value extrinsic

motivators such as high earning power, status, prestige, and job security (Kelly et al., 2009; Leong, 1991). Asian American parents in Louie's (2004) study showed that there are only a few professions that are valuable for their children, and those professions are in a small number of fields that yield the highest financial stability. One parent in his study reported that her son must become a doctor because "this world is a white man's world" (Louie, 2004) and her son should do what Asians have been doing for some time rather than "forging into new territory" with teaching as considered forging into new territory.

In the United States, the field of education has been viewed as low-status and an area that employs predominately women, not men (Johnson, 2008; Spencer, 1996). Johnson (2008) reported that teachers' pay had been low, at times barely subsistence levels, and females were often paid even less than men. Auguste, Kihn, and Miller (2010) confirmed and reported that teachers' average salary has fallen significantly in the percentage of gross domestic product, market value, per capita during the past 30 years, and does not compare to other professions such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers, despite the high levels of education required. Because of the low-status of K-12 education, Asian Americans are less likely to pursue a career in teaching, and teaching is a prerequisite and the first pathway in getting into administration.

Language Manipulation

Another factor that sways Asian Americans from entering the K-12 administration is their language manipulation. Namkoong and Namkoong (1987) reported:

> Communication is a common reason why many Asian Americans enter science and engineering. These fields do not require as much speaking and writing skills, as do other professions. Asian Americans are told they are inarticulate and speak

> with an accent. The accent is perceived as a problem at work. But, Caucasians with German, French, or English accents do not seem to be similarly handicapped. (p. 33)

Asian Americans are also perceived as being excellent workers who put long hours but are not perceived as being equipped to step into positions that require communication skills such as management (Takaki, 1998). Duncan and DeAvila (1988) reported that English proficiency is the most consistent predictor of achievement among language minority groups, and only those who speak standard English without an accent are accepted by the majority culture.

Lack of Role Models

Without Asian American principals serving as role models, Asian American educators may be less likely to a pursue an administrative career in the K-12 educational field (Rong & Preissle, 1997). Su (2001) and G. Suzuki (1998) reported that Asian Americans in teacher education programs found that having role models is powerful and is the most important factor for recruiting more Asians into the profession. Role models can help encourage others to join the teaching profession. Current Asian American educators believe that more professional requirements for teachers will increase the status of teaching, and role models need to exemplify having these professional requirements (Su, 2001). Research on minority teacher candidates revealed how candidates have preferred minority teachers assisting them in addressing different educational needs that may differ profoundly from the majority of Caucasian Americans that make up the field (Hood & Parker, 1994).

In summary, the extant literature provided support that certain Asian cultural

values impact the career choice tendencies of Asian Americans. One of the most consistent findings is that Asian American's cultural emphasis on collectivism (B. Kim et al., 1999; Kim-Qvale, 2012; Shon & Ja, 1982; Yeh & Huang, 1996) and humility (K. L. V. Chin, 1998; Namkoong & Namkoong, 1992; Sung, 1967) play a factor in hindering the promotions of some Asian Americans as they strive not to stand out, put others' needs ahead of theirs, and not boast about their accomplishments (B. Kim et al., 1999). Asian American's culturally driven conservative behaviors could have affected their upward mobility into principal and other administrative positions (Kim-Qvale, 2012). Likewise, Asian American's cultural value on conformity through honoring the hierarchy by not deviating from cultural norms and the Asian cultural emphasis of valuing emotional self-control through minimal expression are also found to be barriers to getting Asian Americans promoted (B. Kim et al., 2001; Kim-Qvale, 2012).

As the research and study in Asian Americans' cultural values and career choice tendencies continue to grow, it is vital to draw on theories and frameworks for identifying some of the factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting. Additionally, the history of individuals, as well as institutionalized discrimination faced by Asian Americans, may have a huge influence on the underrepresentation in the K-12 principal pipeline (Kim-Qvale, 2012). The next section will go deeper into three theories that emerged in research that set the foundation for the study.

Theories

In reviewing past research on Asian immigration trends, Asian cultural values, and career choice tendencies, the researcher identified three theories that emerged in

literature, which included the Critical Race Theory, Expectancy Theory, and Role Theory. Each of these theories was reviewed in order to establish their relevance and to provide an understanding of how cultural values impact the career choice tendencies of current K-12 Asian American principals (Anfara & Mertz, 2006).

Critical Race Theory

One theory to consider is the Critical Race Theory that promotes the recognition of inequities by making them explicit, promoting collective action, trying to empower oppressed groups, and advocating for openness to new ideas and critique (Lopez, 2003). Critical Race Theory stems from the idea that White dominance in society can be extrapolated through race (Huber, Johnson, & Kohli, 2006; Lynn & Parker, 2006; Solorzano, 1997). Solorzano (1997) posited that Critical Race Theory is "a framework or set of basic perspectives, methods, and pedagogy that seeks to identify, analyze, and transform those structural and cultural aspects of society that maintain subordination and marginalization of People of Color" (p. 6). Lopez (2003) further contended that the democratic process fails to address that most of the power in this country is dominated by White, middle-class men.

Critical Race Theory in the context of education could be described in five tenets—the intercentricity of race and racism, the challenge to the dominant ideology, the commitment to social justice, the centrality of experiential knowledge, and the interdisciplinary perspective (Yosso, 2006). The goal of Critical Race Theory is to collaboratively work toward eliminating racial oppression, to have a common language to name the experiences of those who have been oppressed because of their race, and to find a voice to challenge injustice and feel a sense of community in their experiences (Kohli,

2013). Drawing on Critical Race Theory to examine the issues of underrepresentation of Asian American K-12 principal positions and the difficulties matching their representation to demographically changing schools in the United States is critical to understanding the needs of the growing Asian American student population (Kim-Qvale, 2012).

Expectancy Theory

Another theory to consider is the Expectancy Theory (Herzberg, 1996; Vroom, 1964). Expectancy Theory posits that the more attractive a reward is to an individual, the more effort he or she will put in to achieve it. Expectancy Theory further described that the individual would only increase his or her effort if he or she mentally connects the concept of his or her actions and the likelihood that he or she will get the reward (Vroom, 1964). Kim-Qvale (2012) contended that the Expectancy Theory is connected to Asian Americans' career choice tendencies, and their willingness and desire to pursue a K-12 leadership role are closely tied to their perception of the payoffs (reward).

Role Theory

Role Theory deduced that people who experience role conflicts tend to avoid that conflict (Regules, 1995). For instance, the theory proposes that Asian Americans seeking leadership positions often come into conflict with the role they need to assume as a leader in the Caucasian world; therefore, Asian Americans may then choose a role other than that of a leader to avoid this role conflict. Ortiz (1982) explained this phenomenon by adding that Role Theory is concerned with understanding others' expectations that are expressed through norms and reference groups and involves the mediation between self-interpretation and others' evaluations. Ortiz described that this behavior is one's degree

of conformity to expectations. Synthesizing these points concluded that when social expectations are different from an individual's expectations, then role conflict occurs.

All three theories contribute to the study, but it was clear from reviewing the background research that Critical Race Theory best represents the underrepresentation of Asian American K-12 principals since the majority of K-12 principals are White, and minorities in America are discriminated against because of their race (Kim-Qvale, 2012). For educational leaders, it is critical to support public education and the democracy upon which it was founded while recognizing inequities and developing inclusive and reform-minded social communities (Cooper, 2009). Critical Race Theory generalizes to the Black-White paradigm, but adding Asian Americans to the dynamics of race relations in American offers a fresh and much-needed perspective (Menon, 2016). Furthermore, Critical Race Theory provides a scholarly approach to articulate the ways in which race intersects with the other social identities to structure and give meaning to people's experiences (Poon, 2014).

After reviewing the three theories that situate this study, we need to review the gap and the *why* of this study. Why is it important to have Asian American role models be represented in the K-12 educational setting? What is the gap in the literature regarding the perception of Asian American principals' cultural values and their impact on their career choice tendencies? The next section will dig deeper into these areas.

Asian American Principal Perceptions

Looking at the history of discrimination against Asian Americans, the underrepresentation of Asian American principals because of cultural values that do not value career choices in the K-12 educational setting, one would wonder the reasons

behind those who chose the road less traveled and defy the barriers and became principals. When Asian Americans choose to go into K-12 education, data confirmed that Asian American parents do not value K-12 teaching as a valuable profession because of the low status and low pay teachers receive in the United States (Leong, 1998; Leong & Gupta, 2007; Louie, 2004; Tang et al., 1999). However, when Asian American teachers are promoted to principal positions, the higher prestige and higher pay bring a sense of pride to their family name (Sandhu, 2014). Tang's et al. (1999) study further supported this prestige hypothesis and found that when Asian Americans are driven to pursue high prestige occupations as a means to survive and attain upward social mobility, higher parental satisfaction also follows.

When Asian American educators attain principal positions with few Asian American administrators in positions to serve as role models or peers, there is a question about whom these Asian American principals surround themselves with in their social network. Leonard, Mehra, and Katerberg (2008) and McGuire (1984) reported that Asian Americans who successfully became principals in the K-12 educational setting with few Asian American role models or peers were able to find social network support by seeking out members of other minority groups to establish identities and friendships within their environments to compensate for the lack of same-ethnicity peers. Mehra, Kilduff, and Brass's (1998) study also supported the notion that Asian Americans welcome those from other minority groups into their social network to support themselves. The authors found that scarcity of a group in a social context promoted the members' use of that group as a basis for shared identity and social interaction. In other words, they found that the exclusionary pressures from the main group rather than their preference supported

within-group bonding (Mehra et al., 1998).

Additionally, research revealed that the importance of having culturally representative role models could not be ignored. Literature points to the fact that having Asian American educators as their role models offers an alternative career path to the historical trend of Asians leaning heavily toward the science, medical, and engineering fields (Cheng, 1997; Song & Glick, 2004; Woo, 1994), and Asian American students could benefit from engaging with culturally representative role models who understand and advocate their unique cultural needs (Kiang & Lee, 1993; Kim-Qvale, 2012). Having more Asian American administrators will also have an immediate impact by providing schools with broader and richer perspectives on the diverse ways to lead schools and lead student learning (Salleh-Barone, 2004).

Summary

This chapter reviewed scholarship literature associated with the variables involved in this constructivist inquiry research study. It included data that continuously confirmed that Asian Americans principals are underrepresented in the K-12 educational setting, and how cultural values have an impact on the career choice tendencies of the current Asian American K-12 principals. To recruit and retain the best Asian American administrators, it is important to identify and understand how cultural factors impact the career choice tendencies of Asian Americans. Seminal findings and key data from various authors were synthesized to understand better how Asian cultural values, such as parental influence, the importance of education, and the low status of K-12 education. These were a few of the themes that significantly affected the career choice of Asian Americans who entered the K-12 education field. Literature also noted that barriers such

as language manipulation and lack of role models were some of the factors that contributed to Asian Americans not being promoted to administration.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

Chapter I provided an introduction to the study and background to the research. It also provided the research question, the statement and significance of the research problem, definitions, delimitations, and organization of the study. Chapter II reviewed the literature focused on the underrepresentation of K-12 Asian American principals. The chapter examines the factors of how Asian cultural values impact the career choice tendencies of Asian Americans in the K-12 educational setting.

This chapter presents the methodology utilized to conduct the research study. It reviews the purpose statement and research question, along with the research design, study population and sample, instrumentation used, data collection and data analysis, and potential limitations of the study. The chapter presents the steps used in the research to increase reliability and validity of the study (Creswell, 2013). Data were collected using a variety of tools, including demographic questionnaire, interviews, and artifacts. The purpose statement and research question established the foundation of the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this constructivist inquiry study was to identify and describe the perceptions of Asian American principals of how cultural values impact their career choice tendencies in the K-12 educational setting.

Research Question

The research question for this study was as follows: How do Asian cultural values impact the career choice tendencies of Asian American K-12 principals?

Research Design

Selecting a research method by the researcher is integral in identifying the most effective method of answering the research problem (Asteliin, 2013). A common difference between qualitative versus quantitative research is that qualitative research involves asking deeper questions, using open inquiry, and describing data. As stated by Patton (2015), "Capturing and understanding diverse perspectives, observing and analyzing behaviors in context, looking for patterns in what human beings do and think—and examining the implications of those patterns—these are some of the basic contributions of qualitative inquiry" (p. 8). For this study, the purpose statement and research question guided the study to a qualitative approach because a qualitative study made it possible to elicit deeper thoughts and insights into the individual motivation and perceptions of these Asian American K-12 principals (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009). Moreover, this approach was deemed the most suitable because using a qualitative method allowed the researcher to identify commonalities and themes for the research study (Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 1994). Three qualitative methods were considered and constructivist inquiry was the most appropriate, based on the unique needs of this study.

The first qualitative method considered for this study was ethnographic research because it focuses on an in-depth investigation of a culture and its cultural issues (Patton, 2002). Ethnographic inquiry makes its central and guiding assumption that any human group of people interacting together for a long period of time will create a culture of its own and this culture is a set of behavior patterns and beliefs that constitute the standards for a way of life (Patton, 2015). This study does focus on a specific culture and its cultural issues; however, the researcher is not conducting intensive fieldwork, thus it does

not fit the unique needs of this study.

The next qualitative method considered for this study was case study because the purpose of a case study is to test a particular study or establish causality or inform program improvement and policy decisions from the patterns established and lessons learned (Patton, 2015). This study could use a case study approach because of its concept of helping a group of people reflect on ways of improving what they are doing or understand a specific concept; however, since this study does not aim at obtaining thorough knowledge of a school or district over a long period of time, it is not a case study.

This study lends itself fittingly to the constructivist inquiry method because, "Constructivism is the recognition that reality is a product of human intelligence interacting with experience in the real world. As soon as you include human mental activity in the process of knowing reality, you have accepted constructivism" (Andrew, Pedersen, & McEvoy, 2011, p.11). The process of constructivism is generated from a world that is observed and understood by the participants in the study (Cupchik, 2001). The strength of a constructivist method is that knowledge is constructed in the mind of the learner through results of a lifelong process in which the learner tries to organize, structure, and restructure his or her experiences in light of existing schemes of thought, and gradually modifying and expanding these schemes (Bodner, 1986). This approach was deemed the most suitable because of the complexity of the subject matter and the multiple variables that are involved in real-life context, along with the importance of understanding Asian cultural values and their impact on career choice tendencies; therefore, the researcher determined that a qualitative constructivist inquiry research

design was the most appropriate approach for the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Population

Patton (2002) defined population as a group of individuals that the researcher is interested in using in research. The entire population of K-12 school principals during the 2011–2012 school year, according to NCES (2016), was 115,540 elementary and secondary principals in both public and private schools. Of the 115, 540 principals, there were approximately 2,310 Asian American principals (NCES, 2016). The target population is the list of sampling units from which the sample was selected (Creswell, 2007). The target population selected for this study was 328 Asian American principals out of 8,197 principals in California (Edsource, 2007).

Sample

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) defined sample as a group of individuals within the population from which data were collected. This is the group of participants selected from the target population. Sampling could be conducted in many ways such as random sampling, systematic sampling, proportional sampling, cluster sampling, purposeful sampling, convenience sampling, and quota sampling (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). For this study, snowball sampling, also known as chain referral sampling, was used because it was useful to find and recruit participants who are not easily accessible to researchers through other sampling strategies (Mack & Woodsong, 2005).

Additionally, the sample participants in this study were selected from the target population because it is typically not feasible, as a result of time and cost constraints, to study large groups; therefore, the researcher chose population samples from within a

larger group. According to Creswell (1994), an appropriate size for a qualitative research study is five to 25 participants, while Morse (1994) recommended at least six participants. For this reason, the sample size of 15 current Asian American K-12 principals fits the purpose, availability, time, and interests of the study.

The researcher first reached out to the three principals who were of Asian descent who she knew were current Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting. Then the participants with whom contact had already been made used their social networks to refer the researcher to nine other principals who could potentially participate in or contribute to the study. After the researcher had interviewed the 12 principals, she had a difficult time finding the remaining participants as a result of the limited number of Asian American principals who work in the Los Angeles and Orange County, CA school districts. Two of the 12 principals who had already been interviewed then referred the researcher to a few participants through searching for Asian American principals on the school Web sites, contacting them via e-mail, and interviewing them after consent. It is important to note that the snowball sampling methodology was fitting for this study because of the sensitivity and vulnerability of the topic for the researcher to delve deeper into different aspects of asking personal questions about the participants' intentions and experiences of how they defied their Asian cultural backgrounds in order to go into the K-12 educational field. The principals who were interviewed had a pleasant experience with the researcher and thus felt comfortable in referring their colleagues to be interviewed by the researcher.

Instrumentation

The researcher, also an Asian American administrator, was considered the

primary instrument in this research study. Patton (2002) cautioned that using the researcher as the sole data collection and instrumentation is subjective and lacks scientific inquiry; however, he also asserted that qualitative approach adds a layer of trustworthiness and authenticity to the role of the researcher.

Researcher as an Instrument of the Study

The phrase *researcher-as-instrument* refers to the fact that the researcher is also an active respondent in the research process (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). The researcher was the primary instrument in the semi-structured qualitative interviews and thus opened a number of potential biases and might influence the collection of the empirical materials (Pezalla, Pettigrew & Miller-Day, 2012). However, the researcher as the sole instrument could have beneficial aspects because it helps respondents feel safe to share stories about their experiences and the real-life world (Owens, 2006). For this study, the researcher designed the demographic questionnaire, conducted the face-to-face interviews, and gathered the artifacts.

Interview Questions

A series of scripted interview questions that were based on the review of literature were developed prior to the data collection period, and the questions were intended to help answer this study's research question. This sample of 15 Asian American K-12 principals using field tests was conducted using both the interview schedule with other principals who were not part of the main study. Feedback from the field tests was used to determine whether these Asian American principals (a) understood the definitions used in the instrument, (b) understood the questions, and (c) felt that the responses directly addressed the purpose of the study and the research question. The suggestions solicited

from the principals in the field studies, who acted as experts, were used to modify and help improve the clarity of the interview questions.

Validity and Reliability

Validity

Validity in a qualitative study is whether the research being studied truly measures what was intended to be measured, thus determining the accuracy of the results (Patton, 2015). Specific steps were taken to ensure the validity of this study. The use of criterion validity, which is the extent a measurement is related to an outcome, was addressed through the completion of a pilot interview and field testing. The goals of the pilot interview were to (a) provide validation on the interview skills such as pacing, timing, appropriateness of the follow-up questions, and to field-test the interview questions to ensure alignment to the purpose statement and research questions; and (b) field-testing the interview questions as a measure of validity. The pilot interview was conducted with a doctoral student who was also a high school teacher. The doctoral student has been trained in qualitative pacing and provided meaningful feedback about the structure and format of the questions, which were then discussed and incorporated into the interview protocol. After this process finished, the questions remained the same for all interview candidates to maintain content validity. Additionally, the researcher employed a standard protocol script to provide a brief introduction and overview of the interview process to maintain validity for all participants in the study.

This study used three methods of data collection: demographic questionnaire, face-to-face interview, and artifacts. The demographic questionnaire (Appendix C) provided useful data on the participants' background information while the interviews

were used to dig deeper to produce rich data. It is important to demonstrate internal validity by using multiple methods of data collection, and data analysis was designed to support triangulation by using multiple sources (Kim-Qvale, 2012). As similar themes and patterns emerged from the different data set, the triangulation added validity to the findings. The participants were also asked to review the transcriptions and provide feedback to verify the accuracy of the data, which added another source of validity to the study.

It is noted that the characteristics of the research may provide potential bias when evaluating internal validity in a qualitative study. The researcher is a female Asian American who spent 11 years as a high school counselor and is in her fifth year as a high school assistant principal. While there are biases in any study, there were three safeguards the researcher took to limit biases, which included the following:

1. The researcher underwent training and has a certificate of completion from the National Institutes of Health certifying that she has completed the National Institutes of Health web-based training course Protecting Human Research Participants.
2. Content validity. The researcher performed mock interviews with volunteer subjects prior to the data collection, and recorded the conversations using an iPhone app called Voice Record Pro. The audio recordings were reviewed by the researcher and an active researcher for feedback on delivery, pacing, and other interview techniques. This process helped validate that the interview skills of the researcher was appropriate.
3. The researcher developed and refined the interview questions with panel

experts prior to using them during the interviews. This panel of experts included K-12 Asian American administrators as well as the researcher's dissertation chair.

Reliability

Reliability in research, as defined by Patton (2002), is the degree to which an assessment yields consistent results. Additionally, reliability is described within the context of obtaining similar results if the research procedures were duplicated in subsequent studies. Although this study is qualitative in nature and not designed to be replicated, the researcher utilized several methods of triangulation to ensure the data were reliable and established conclusive results. The two types of triangulation utilized included methods triangulation and researcher triangulation. Patton (2002) described method triangulation as employing two methods to collect data from one group of participants. In this study, method triangulation was employed through the use of interviews and demographic questionnaire. Similarly, Patton (2002) described researcher triangulation as utilizing researchers with diverse backgrounds to strengthen the study by providing more than one perspective when collecting and analyzing data. Researcher triangulation was used in this study through utilizing the expertise of two industry experts to review data collecting procedures and the results of the data.

To ensure reliability and validity, the researcher reviewed several approved surveys from other scholars before creating the interview questions. Additionally, the researcher reviewed the interview questions with other professional educators for accuracy and relevancy (Patton, 2002). Through this assessment process, the researcher gained a clearer understanding of the participants' experiences to help identify the Asian

cultural values that impact their career choice tendencies. Ensuring reliability of the methodology was critical in establishing conclusive results of the study.

Internal reliability. In order to establish internal reliability, the researcher triangulated three types of data: demographic questionnaire, interviews, and artifacts. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) stated that triangulation is the "cross-validation among data sources, data collection strategies, time periods, and theoretical schemes. To find regularities in the data, the researcher compared different sources, situations and methods, to see where the pattern keeps recurring" (p. 379). The researcher and an expert in the K-12 educational field participated in coding the data to ensure the analysis was accurate and the findings were described. This process of coding the data and putting similar categories into themes is critical because it helps "develop manageable classification or coding scheme…to recognize the patterns into meaningful categories and themes" (Patton, 2002, p. 463).

External reliability. External reliability refers to the extent to which the researcher could replicate a study and get the same or similar results to the original study (Saldana, 2016). This issue of generalization was not as significant for qualitative research such as this study because of the difficulty in recreating the unique lived experiences, human behaviors, and human interactions (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). Since the results will not be generalizable, external reliability of the data is not a concern for this study.

Intercoder reliability. Intercoder reliability is the degree to which independent coders evaluate characteristics of a message or artifact and reach the same conclusion (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002). Intercoder reliability is important in

qualitative research because it helps explain how the data were supported with consistent conclusions. Lombard et al. (2002) emphasized the importance of the extent to which independent coders evaluate a characteristic of a message and reach the same conclusion. Additionally, Neuendorf (as cited in Lombard et al., 2002) suggested that intercoder reliability is a necessary step in validating a coding scheme because it establishes a high level of reliability and it divides the coding work among several different coders. For this study, a second researcher was utilized to review, code, and interpret the themes generated by the primary researcher. The goal of 90% concurrence in coded data was considered optimal and was utilized as the benchmark of the coding. Similarly, this study followed the appropriate minimum acceptable level of reliability for the index using Lombard's et al. (2002) suggested coefficients of .90 or greater as always acceptable, .80 or greater as acceptable in most situations, and .70 as appropriate in some exploratory studies. The following steps were taken to ensure intercoder reliability:

1. The interview transcriptions were coded into the NVivo program by the researcher.
2. A second researcher reviewed the transcribed interviews to check and validate the themes developed by the primary researcher.
3. The second researcher independently coded the data using the same procedures as the primary researcher.
4. A comparison of results between the primary researcher and the second researcher revealed the need for further discussion on some of the identified themes. The desired results was 80% or above agreement on the frequencies of the codes (Lombard et al., 2002). A lower percentage of results would

have required the two researchers to have further discussion focused on the patterns and themes collected.

Data Collection

For the purposes of providing the most authentic and genuine lived experiences and perceptions of these Asian American principal participants, the researcher engaged in three primary methods of collecting data, which included demographic questionnaire, interviews, and artifacts. Prior to interviewing the participants, the application for research involving human or animal participants was submitted to the Brandman University Institutional Review Board for review, recommendations, and approval. Following Brandman University Institutional Review Board approval (Appendix B), the researcher e-mailed the participants to schedule formally a personal interview with each of them.

The study received a sponsor endorsement from the superintendent of ABC Unified School District (Appendix H), which assisted the researcher in identifying and scheduling of interviews with the Asian American principals who work in the ABC Unified School District. This sponsor is Asian American and has been with ABC Unified School District since 1989 and served as District Deputy Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services prior to becoming Superintendent in 2012. She is a member of the State Board of Directors for the Association of California School Administrators; Founder of Association of California School Administrator’s Region XIV Valuing Diversity Award in 2011; ASCA’s Administrator of the Year in 2010; Association of California School Administrator’s Valuing Diversity Award recipient in 2011; Woman of the Year Award recipient from California State Senator Alan Lowenthal

in 2012, and California State Senator Tony Mendoza in 2016; Founder and Creator of the Parent Leadership Academy in ABC Unified School District that won the National School Boards Association Magna Grand Prize Award in 2015; and Association of California School Administrator's 2017 State Superintendent of the Year (Ethington, 2017).

The researcher identified Asian American K-12 principals who work in Los Angeles and Orange County, CA and e-mailed the participants to seek their interest in participating in the study. After the participants were identified, the researcher followed up with phone calls to provide an overview of the research and answered any questions and concerns they had. Expectations and clarifications were discussed to ensure a smooth interview process. It was important to consider school and personal calendars to be sensitive to the participants. After verbal commitments were made, the researcher provided an anticipated timeline for the interviews.

Types of Data

Multiple sources of data collection were incorporated into the research process for triangulation of findings. Demographic questionnaire, interviews, and artifacts created opportunities for rich and meaningful data for the study. All types of data collection aligned with the purpose of the study, which was to describe the perceptions of Asian American K-12 principals on whether their Asian cultural values impacted their career choice tendencies.

Demographic questionnaire. The researcher sent e-mail to the identified participants who are current Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting in the Los Angeles and Orange County, CA to see if they would be interested in the

research study. Those who volunteered, the researcher thanked and asked them to complete an online demographic questionnaire to confirm that they belonged to the Asian American population.

Interviews. The researcher conducted semistructured interviews for the participants and used narrative analysis to analyze their life stories about their career paths into K-12 administration. Advantages of semistructured interviews include the ability to record the interviews and then examine them carefully at a later date (Patton, 2002). The researcher used an interview protocol that included a set of in-depth questions that generated perceptions of their lived experiences. Distinct interview questions were designed for all of the participants and are found in Appendix D. Some of the questions included reasons they became principals, and whether their family and cultural values were factors that impacted their career paths into K-12 administration.

The purpose of the interviews was designed to elicit cultural values and career choice tendencies that were specific to Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting. The researcher selected the 15 principals to be interviewed from September to December 2017. The participants were selected based on their Asian American racial ethnicity and that they worked in Los Angeles and Orange County, CA.

All 15 participants were interviewed at a location that was most convenient for them. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and the comments were classified into different themes under the appropriate research variables. The participants were told that each interview would last between 30 and 45 minutes. Additionally, all of the participants were advised that the data collection process would take place outside of working hours. Short 15- to 20-minute follow-up calls were made if clarification or

expansion were needed to a specific interview response. Each participant received a gift bag as a token of appreciation for his or her time.

Data from the interviews were used as the basis for comparing the results of this study to other studies in the literature on whether Asian cultural values impacted the career choice tendencies. The qualitative analysis of the data revealed a number of key findings, which are discussed in the next section. The analysis of data also suggested conclusions, recommendations, and implications for action, which are presented later in the chapter.

Artifacts. The researcher also collected artifacts related to the Asian American administration in the K-12 educational setting. Examples were Asian American workshops for K-12 administrators, a news release episode from NPR StoryCorps' archival recording, and invitation e-mail to participants. Although a wide variety of artifacts were collected based on availability and the willingness of participants to share, final analysis of these data concentrated solely on artifacts that supported cultural values and career choice tendencies of K-12 Asian American principals.

Data Collection Procedures

Before the collection of data, the research methodology and instruments were evaluated and approved by the Brandman University Institutional Review Board (Appendix B). The researcher ensured that the participant rights were protected by following all of the rules and regulations set by the Institutional Review Board. The researcher reached out to the interested participants and provided an overview and purpose of the study. The procedures were categorized by preparation and initial steps, demographic questionnaire, interviews, and collection of artifacts.

Preparation for data collection. Careful planning is integral to the success of the data collection process. The researcher used the following steps during the planning process:

1. Contacted ABC Unified School District Superintendent through e-mail to provide an overview and purpose of the study. After the superintendent endorsed the study, the researcher proceeded with the data collection.
2. The researcher contacted the Asian American K-12 principals via e-mail and text messages to elicit interest.
3. For the participants who expressed interest in participating in the study, the researcher provided an overview and purpose of the study and answered any questions the participants had. The benefits and minimal risks of the study were communicated, expressing the value of participant input to generating results for the study. Once this was completed, consent forms were sent to the participants via e-mail and each was thanked for his or her role in the study.
4. The researcher then sent an online demographic questionnaire to each participant.
5. The researcher scheduled the interviews with each participant via e-mail and text message. After the agreed upon date and time, the researcher sent the participants a Google invite to remind them of the date, time, and location of the interview.

Demographic questionnaire. The researcher sent an online survey to the 15 study participants to complete a 5-minute online demographic questionnaire to confirm that they were part of the Asian American population and to gather basic demographic

information. The responses were collected using a Google form.

Interviews. After the preparation steps and demographic questionnaire were completed for each individual, the researcher conducted interviews with the participants. Utilizing interviews as part of the study is critical because it gave the respondents the voice and authority over their experiences and shifted the approach from being portrayed to having an active role in portraying (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffman Davis, 1997). Using interviews also allowed the researcher to uncover some of the beliefs, values, motivations, and perceptions on why these respondents became principals. The following steps were taken in relation to the interviews of the participants:

1. Conversations and selection process during a predata collection meeting with other colleagues in the K-12 educational setting allowed the researcher to identify the best candidates to interview.
2. After the predata collection meeting, the researcher contacted each interviewee to request his or her participation in the study.
3. All participants received a research invitation letter that provided an overview, purpose of the study, and detailed procedures (Appendix E). Potential risks as well as benefits were explained. Participants were welcomed to ask questions through e-mail, phone, or text to contact the primary researcher, whose contact information was on the invitation letter.
4. The researcher collaborated with the participants of the day, time, and location that was most convenient for them so the interview was not intrusive on their work and personal life, thus providing ample time to conduct the interviews without rushing through the interview.

5. At the time of each interview, the researcher reviewed the participant's rights to stop, end, or take a break at any time during the interview.
6. The researcher provided time for any questions and concerns the participants might have.
7. The researcher then reviewed participant's bill of rights (Appendix G) and the informed consent form (Appendix F) and acquired the signature of each participant.
8. Interviews lasted between 30 minutes and 2 hours and 30 minutes and were audio recorded with an iPhone app called Voice Record Pro.
9. The researcher used a laptop to take field notes regarding data that could not be captured on audiotape, such as body language, tone, and facial expressions.
10. The researcher thanked each participant at the end of the interview and explained the next steps of sharing the transcription for review in the proceeding weeks. The participants also agreed to be called if the researcher had additional follow-up questions. Additionally, a gift bag was given to each participant who participated in the study.
11. The researcher transcribed the transcriptions using a third-party transcription company and reviewed the transcriptions manually to ensure accuracy.
12. The researcher sent a copy of transcription to each participant for him or her to review for 100% accuracy.

Artifacts. In addition to demographic questionnaire and interviews, artifacts were collected to enrich the consistency of the findings. The following procedures were used to collect artifacts:

1. The researcher communicated the intent to collect artifacts that pertained to the study. Examples were Asian American workshops for K-12 administrators, a news release episode from NPR StoryCorps' archival recording, and invitation e-mail to participants.
2. A follow-up thank you e-mail was sent to participants. The researcher ensured to remove any identifiable marks such as names, gender, and age.

Data Protection and Control

The researcher took extreme caution to protect the participants' data and to minimize risk. Each interview was recorded with the permission of the participants, the identity of the participants was assured, and the participants were assured that no personally identifiable information would be used. The participants were told that the recorded interviews and transcriptions were kept in a locked cabinet in a locked office, and that the researcher is the sole person who has access to these resources.

Data Coding and Analysis

Data coding was considered an essential part of the qualitative research process (Saldana, 2016). Prior to analyzing the data in this study, analysis procedures were organized to identify effectively and group common themes.

Data Coding

Data coding is the process of focusing a mass amount of free-form data with the goal of empirically revealing answers to the research question in the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The researcher organized and prepared the data by having a third-party transcription service transcribe the audio recordings. These transcriptions were then shared with the participants to review for accuracy and allow an opportunity for

feedback. The artifacts collected were logged and sorted according to title and data elements within the artifacts. The researcher then devoted time to read, review, and reflect on all of the data elements to generate a sense of the overall impressions and meanings behind the data gathered. From the time spent gathering and reflecting on the gathered data, a preliminary list of themes, patterns, and categories emerged. The data were then formally coded to identify patterns that were naturally sorted into categories, subcategories, themes, concepts, and then assertions (Saldana, 2016).

The data were carefully reviewed multiple times during the process of developing the initial codes and themes. These codes were used to identify words and sentences to help extract emerging themes related to the research question. The researcher used predetermined initial codes based on the literature review that referred to themes such as model minority myth, acculturation, glass ceiling, manipulation of language, etc. The coding process was designed to help arrange similar ideas into systematic order and allow the division, grouping, and reorganization of data to bring meaning and to develop explanations (Saldana, 2016). The researcher loaded the interview transcriptions into NVivo, a qualitative data analysis computer software program, to assist with the initial and ongoing refinement of the coding and theme identification process.

Data Analysis

The researcher organized and prepared the data for coding by transcribing the face-to-face interviews first by a third-party transcription service and then reviewed the transcriptions manually a second time to ensure 100% accuracy. The demographic questionnaires were organized using a Google document and the artifacts were organized by title and content area. After a comprehensive review and reflection of the data, a

preliminary list of patterns, themes, and categories was created. The researcher then utilized the categories to identify patterns and formally coded all of the data. Coding is an important process because it helps the researcher uncover new concepts and new relationships (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The data were coded twice for themes and frequency counts using the NVivo software system, which enabled the ability to upload audio files utilized to code the words for patterns and themes.

The coding from the collected data was further analyzed to evaluate trends and patterns that coincided with Asian cultural values that may have impacted the career choice tendencies of the current participants. The researcher also utilized the NVivo software to analyze themes and frequencies to answer the research question. If a theme has a high frequency count, it is likely to be very significant. For instance, a theme with a high frequency from the participants on low status of K-12 education would indicate that this theme is significant. Moreover, a theme with a low frequency would indicate that topics such as discrimination might not be part of the reason the participants chose a career path in K-12 principal positions.

The data coding process involved the following steps:

1. Codes were scanned for themes.
2. Frequency counts from the NVivo software were used to code for potential themes.
3. All themes and frequencies were analyzed for a deeper level of understanding.

Limitations

Limitations are areas in the study that may adversely affect the results of the study (Roberts, 2010). The researcher made every attempt to reduce the effects of potential

limitations. Some examples included collecting data using multiple methods for triangulation and adding an additional researcher to review the interview questions, data coding, and trend analysis. The researcher understands that there are inherent limitations to any research design, including the qualitative constructivist inquiry design of this study. Because of the limited number of sample participants in the study, the results of the study were not generalized beyond the study sample. Moreover, even though the sample included elementary, middle, and high schools, it should not be assumed that their responses and experiences are representative of all Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting. The following examples outlined efforts made by the researcher to decrease limitations in this study:

1. Researcher as instrument: In this study the researcher served as the instrument for preparing the interviews, creating the interview questions, and asking the questions during the interviews. Acknowledging this limitation, the researcher became certified by the National Institutes of Health (Figure 2) and also acquired Institutional Review Board approval before any research was conducted.
2. Sample size: Another limitation to this study was the small sample size; however, many qualitative studies usually involve small sample sizes. The researcher asked meaningful and open-ended questions to elicit as much lived experiences for the participants as possible to generate a healthy level of useful information for this study.
3. Self-reported: The respondents generated self-reported data and information, as this is a limitation because of the accuracy of their memory and recollection

of past experiences.

Summary

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the research design, data collection, methods, and analysis used to study Asian cultural values and their impact on the career choice tendencies of Asian American K-12 principals. The researcher included the research question, justification for using a qualitative research, data collection methods, and trustworthiness and validity of the findings. In the next chapter, the research discusses the findings based on the data gathered from this population, which was guided by the research question within the scope of this study.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Overview

Chapter I provided an introduction to the study and background to the research. Chapter II reviewed the literature on Asian immigration, historical trends of Asians in public education, Asian cultural values and their impact on career choice tendencies, and Asian American principals' perceptions of their careers in K-12 education. Chapter III outlined the methodology of a qualitative constructivist inquiry study exploring the perceptions of Asian American principals of how cultural values impacted their career choice tendencies in the K-12 educational setting. In this chapter, the purpose statement and research question for this investigation are restated, along with a summary of the research methods, data collection procedures, population, sample, and demographic data. This chapter also presents a detailed analysis of the research data in the form of a summary of the study findings.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this constructivist inquiry study was to identify and describe the perceptions of Asian American principals of how cultural values impact their career choice tendencies in the K-12 educational setting.

Research Question

The research question for this study was as follows: How do Asian cultural values impact the career choice tendencies of Asian American K-12 principals?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

The researcher sought to tell the stories of the experiences of current Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting. The primary data collection used in

this study was a qualitative constructivist study, which utilized demographic questionnaire, semistructured interview questions, and the examination of artifacts gathered to examine the lived experiences of the 15 participants. The demographic questionnaire provided a snapshot of the participants' backgrounds, but the face-to-face interviews and artifacts allowed the researcher to collect rich information about the background, family stories, and reasons that offer a deeper look into some of the Asian cultural values that impact their career choice tendencies.

The face-to-face interviews occurred during the months of September 2017 through December 2017. The researcher conducted 23.5 hours of recorded interviews with the participants, and individual interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 2.5 hours. The interviews took place at locations chosen by the participants. All of the interviews were captured using an iPhone app called Voice Record Pro, a professional voice recorder, and the recordings were transcribed and coded. The researcher took notes during the interviews, which provided additional information and context for interpreting the interview transcripts during the analysis. Each interview was transcribed and reviewed for accuracy. A final copy was sent to each participant for his or her feedback on its accuracy and participants were encouraged to make comments and return to the researcher if they had any feedback and/or questions. One interviewee returned an amended transcript and the researcher made the appropriate changes. The NVivo software was used to help identify themes, findings, conclusions, and implications for actions from the data.

Demographic Questionnaire Collection

All of the participants were asked the same questions on the demographic

questionnaire found in Appendix C which asked questions such as with which Asian American ethnic group they identify most closely and the title of their current position to confirm that they belonged to the Asian American population and are currently K-12 principals. The researcher sent a Google form to each participant and responses were recorded and collected using the Google form Excel spreadsheet.

Interview Data Collection

Prior to interviews, participants reviewed and signed the informed consent, which was approved by the researcher's home institution, Brandman University. Each participant was asked the same scripted semistructured interview questions and follow-up questions were asked as needed. The list of interview questions used are found in Appendix D and all responses with the 15 participants were audio-recoded by using an iPhone app called Voice Recorder Pro, and notes were taken by the researcher during the interviews to capture the participants' nonverbal cues and gestures. The audio-recorded statements were then transcribed by a third-party transcription service and coded for emergent themes. The identities of the participants were kept confidential, and each participant was identified by his or her principal number, for example, Principal 1 and Principal 2.

Artifact Collection

Supporting artifacts were obtained either directly from the participants or from public reports such as newsletters and public news releases. Examples were Asian American workshops for K-12 administrators, a news release episode from NPR StoryCorps' archival recording, and invitation e-mail to participants.

Population

Patton (2002) defined population as a group of individuals that the researcher is interested in using in research. The entire population of K-12 school principals during the 2011–2012 school year according to the NCES (2016) was 115,540 elementary and secondary principals in both public and private schools. Of the 115, 540 principals, there were approximately 2,310 Asian American principals (NCES, 2016). The target population is the list of sampling units from which the sample was selected (Creswell, 2007). The target population selected for this study was 328 Asian American principals out of 8,197 principals in California (Edsource, 2007).

Sample

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) defined sample as a group of individuals within the population from which data was collected. Potential interviewees were identified through a number of different strategies. The researcher utilized snowball sampling, also known as chain referral sampling, where participants were asked to recommend other Asian American K-12 principals they knew who would be appropriate for the study (Fouad et al., 2008). Once the interviewees confirmed their interests, the researcher sent them a copy of the consent form, a copy of the demographic questionnaire, and coordinated face-to-face interviews with them.

Demographic Data

The researcher had reached out to a total of 26 Asian American principals, 19 of them responded, one had already retired, three of them were unavailable for the face-to-face interview because of time constraints, which led to the final sample size of 15 participants. The sample of 15 respondents that was interviewed one-on-one by the

researcher was formed to represent reasonably current Asian American K-12 principals who work in Los Angeles and Orange County, CA. Males dominated the study, representing 60% of the respondents, while females represented 40% of the respondents. The principals took a brief online demographic questionnaire to determine and confirm their ethnicity. The interviewees identified their Asian American ethnic group from a list of 23 groups, including "other Asian not specified." Table 3 details the sample with regard to their principal number, gender, respondents' self-identified Asian American ethnic group, grade level school they work at, the generation they identified with based on the following choices: First (born and raised outside of the United States), 1.5 (born outside of, but mostly raised in the United States), Second (born in the United States with at least one parent born outside), Third and higher (self and parents born and raised in the United States), their undergraduate major, and highest degree earned.

Table 3

Description of the Sample

Principal Number	Gender	Asian American Ethnic Group	Grade Level	Generation	Undergraduate Major	Highest Degree Earned
1	Male	Korean American	Middle School	1.5	General Studies	Master's
2	Male	Korean American	Middle School	1.5	Architecture	Master's
3	Male	Chinese American	Middle School	Second	Biological Sciences	Master's
4	Male	Chinese	Elementary	Second	Civil Engineer	Master's

		American	School			
5	Male	Filipino American	High School	1.5	English	Master's
6	Female	Vietnamese American	Middle School	Second	Political Science	Master's
7	Female	Chinese American	High School	First	Education	Doctorate
8	Female	Chinese American	Elementary School	1.5	Child Development	Master's
9	Female	Korean American	Elementary School	Second	Sociology and Business	Master's
10	Male	Filipino American	Elementary School	Second	Law	Juris Doctor
11	Male	Chinese American	Middle School	1.5	Physical Education	Master's
12	Male	Japanese American	Elementary School	Third	Psychology	Master's
13	Female	Korean American	Elementary School	1.5	Spanish & Psychology	Master's
14	Female	Korean American	Elementary School	1.5	Sociology & minored in Education	Doctorate
15	Male	Filipino American	High School	First	Physics	Master's

Based on the demographic questionnaire, the participants were composed of five Chinese Americans (33%), five Korean Americans (33%), three Filipino Americans (20%), one Japanese American (7%), and one Vietnamese American (7%). Of the principals, 13% reported as first-generation Asian Americans; 47% of the principals were from the 1.5 generation, which indicates that they were born in a different country and immigrated to the United States at a young age; 33% of them reported as second generation; and 7% of the participants reported as third generation Asian American. As for grade-level of the schools they serve, seven of the principals (47%) work in an elementary school, five of them work in a middle school (33%), and three of the respondents work in a high school (20%). Additionally, a little more than half (eight out of 15) of the principals interviewed majored in humanities-related areas during their undergraduate years. Respondents demonstrated high levels of education with 12 of the 15 participants' highest degree earned being a master's degree (80%), with two of them currently enrolled in a doctoral program. Two of the 15 participants earned a doctorate degree (13%), and one of the 15 participants earned a Juris Doctorate degree (7%).

The information gathered from the demographic questionnaire illustrated that all of the interviewees in the study are well-educated and all have had extensive experiences in the K-12 educational setting. In addition to the demographic questionnaire, in-person interviews provided the researcher with rich data that delved deeper into how Asian cultural values impacted their career choice tendencies.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

The findings presented in this chapter arose from data collected through using anecdotal accounts of lived experiences in response to semistructured questions posed

during the face-to-face interviews, and triangulation of those accounts with data from the demographic questionnaire and artifacts collected between September 2017 through December 2017. After more than three months of data collection, reflection, interpretation, and evolution of themes related to Asian cultural values and their impact on career choice tendencies, the researcher organized the data into eight overarching themes. As discussed in the review of the literature, some of the shared Asian cultural values include humility, strong value of education, collectivism, and family recognition through achievement. Moreover, existing literature points to these factors that may have influenced the underrepresentation of Asian American K-12 principals, which included homophily, discrimination, the perception of a language barrier, physical and behavioral characteristics, low pay and status of K-12 education, and lower returns on education. The researcher examined the principals' stories collectively and on an individual level to create the themes that emerged.

As recommended by Creswell (2013), the researcher utilized the data collection bottom-up strategy method by first organizing how the data would be sought, which then prompted the researcher to collect the data, transcribe the data, reread the data, and reflect on the gathered data to gauge for emerging themes. The findings of this study are organized under broader categories and themes that were predefined by the research question and themes that emerged from exploration during the interview process.

Development of Themes and Frequencies

Following the data collection, audio transcription, and verification, the researcher scanned the data to form a list of preliminary themes to answer the research question. An additional researcher was elicited to review and refine the list of categories and themes.

This preliminary list of 27 themes was used in NVivo as a basis of the formal data coding process. Through this process, the number of themes was reduced to eight overarching themes, with three child themes. Table 4 outlines the themes and frequency counts developed from the data analysis process.

Table 4

Themes and Frequency Counts

Themes	Sources (of 15 total)	Frequency Counts
1. Strong work ethic facilitated their success	12	44
2. Value education for upward mobility	15	38
3. Encourage "typical" career fields because of the higher pay and status		
Doctors	8	12
Lawyers	10	15
Engineers	3	5
4. Discourage K-12 career path due to low pay	10	20
5. Family recognition through high achievement	9	16
6. K-12 viewed as a female-dominated career path	6	11
7. Discourage K-12 career path due to low status	5	11
8. Humility assisted their promotion	7	8
Total	85	180

These themes were then assessed in light of answering this study research question: how do Asian cultural values impact the career choice tendencies of Asian American K-12 principals? It is worth noting that most of the respondents suggested the interplay of race and culture by themselves, making connections among values often associated with Asian cultures such as strong work ethic, the value of education, high academic expectations, and family recognition through achievement as having an impact on their career choice tendencies.

Theme 1: Strong work ethic facilitated their success. This study reveals that many cultural tendencies do impact the career choices of Asian Americans. The most prominent tendency that emerged from the data is the idea that a strong work ethic facilitated the success of Asian educational professionals. In Asian homes, parents have a tendency to push their children to have a strong work ethic and this was evident because the theme of strong work ethic was reported by 12 of the 15 participants in the study. For this theme, 44 references were coded, which indicates that the respondents' parents instilled in them the cultural value for working hard and striving for excellent work values, and these were influential in their career decision making. The participants described their work ethic by repeatedly mentioning that they were always at work early and were always the last to leave, putting in long hours, working hard, and doing the best job they could as reasons they have been promoted, but also because it was a cultural value that their parents had impressed on them all their lives. For example, Principal 8 remembered, "Growing up, my mom and dad always emphasized (hard work), and my dad was a super hard worker. And you know they always instilled that if you work hard, then you'll get where you want to go." Principal 7 said that she takes her work and

everything seriously where if the task required 100% effort, she would put in 120% because of the strong work ethic she grew up learning from her parents. Principal 5 echoed similar sentiments about his parents' modeling of a strong work ethic to the path of success. He recalled:

> My dad was an accountant in the Philippines and when we moved to New York, he had to start taking odd jobs so he had to almost start all over again and work his way up. So, I think he valued good work ethic and stability more than an actual title. And when I told him about my promotions, he would be like it's because you worked more hours than everybody else and also said things like that's why you've been working late all those nights.

By the same token, Principal 13 remembered that while growing up her parents worked very hard and had to put in extremely long hours at the dry cleaners because they had to start all over in a new country after immigrating from Korea. What her parents imparted to her and her two sisters was the need to work hard and do well in school so they could find a career that would allow them to be financially secure.

Similarly, a few of the participants also mentioned the same notions of working hard and letting your work show for itself. Principal 4 affirmed this theme by sharing this narrative of his experience:

> Growing up, my parents and even my siblings were like, "Oh don't stir the pot, don't stir the pot." My father used to say that there are only two things you need to say at work, "Good morning and good night." It was instilled in us that you lay low, work hard, let your work speak for themselves, and shut your mouth.

Examples of how parents instilled the need to work hard was overwhelming in the

responses. Another participant, Principal 14, reminisced about her parents' journey to America from Korea and they were separated for a full year where her father came to America first with a few bucks in his pocket and found a job working days and nights at a local liquor store. He bought himself a bike for transportation, and raised enough money to bring her and her mother to America. During the interview, she shared that this entire process taught her the value of hard work with the understanding that life is tough and you have to earn every penny. As a result, her family's cultural value of working hard was impressionable when she was choosing careers because she understood that no matter what profession, hard work was necessary and success hinges on her dedication and work ethic.

Conversely, Principal 7 offered a slightly different take on this Asian cultural value of a strong work ethic to being secretive of her hard work in the event that she does not succeed. This was an interesting perspective because while working hard was still a cultural tendency in her family, she was not open about sharing it. In her words:

> I kind of feel embarrassed that if I worked that hard and I am still not successful, then that's kind of embarrassing. So, what I do is not tell others how hard I try even though I tried 10 times harder than I let people know.

What is consistent with all of these stories from the participants is the Asian cultural influence of hard work and its positive impact on helping them with their career promotions and career choice tendencies. This theme was observed 44 times throughout the data and was the dominant theme, coming from 12 of 15 interviewees.

Theme 2: Values the importance of education for upward mobility. Asian Americans value the importance of education because they believe that it is a means to

break through the class barriers (K. L. V. Chin, 1998). This theme had the second highest frequency count, with 38 references from all 15 of the participants, with respondents saying that their parents highly value education and that going to college was mandatory, not an option. As shown in Table 3, a whopping 80% of the participants had earned a master's degree, with two of them were enrolled in a doctoral program, 13.4% of the participants had attained a doctorate degree, and 6.6% participants earned a Juris Doctor degree. The most comprehensive articulation of many other analogous comments was made by Principal 15 who noted:

> I came from the Philippines and it is a third-world country. The only thing that can get you to a better status in life is education. So, in third-world countries education is really, really important because that's the only thing you have or can have that will get you a fighting chance to climb out of poverty. So, teachers are seen and revered highly. Kids value education because they know that it's their gateway to a better life.

The value of education has been etched into these participants' beliefs system so much that almost all they could recall their parents ever repeating was the need to study and do well in school. This message was especially important for those families that grew up with parents who did not attain very much education and had to work in blue-collar jobs. Principal 11 remembered that while growing up, the drive and the message he and his siblings received from their parents was always to do well in school so they could climb up the social ladder even though his parents did not understand the American education system. Principal 11 shared:

> You know, my parents came from Hong Kong and they didn't know the

> American education system and they were not around. Mom and dad always have to work hard, so you know the times I saw them was like after 6 or 7. We were pretty much on our own, but they always still stressed that education is important. So, every time if I got in trouble or if my grades weren't good they made the time to go and see my teachers, so they value education and I learned from them that education is always important.

Similarly, Principals 4 and 6 both shared stories about their parents utilizing reverse parenting on them where they did not push their children very much because they trusted that they would do well in school and be successful. This was indeed true because Principal 6 ended up going to UC-Berkeley and Principal 4 attended Princeton University, two of the top colleges in the United States. Principal 4 commented:

> So, my parents weren't the typical like you better study or you can't go out! Sometimes I call it reverse parenting. Yes, they did reverse parenting. They gave us 100% freedom and I don't know if it was on purpose or it was just their style. I was allowed to just hang out with my friends and go out whenever. They really trusted us—the four of us to do well. They didn't even look at our report cards sometimes. I still remember my mom saying, "I know your teachers will tell me that you're doing good." So, I think because they gave us so much trust we didn't rebel or anything.

It was very evident from the overwhelming responses from the interviewees that education as a cultural norm was highly valued in their homes and it was understood that education can play a pivotal role in improving social mobility. From the interactions with participants, the researcher identified a shared sense that postsecondary education

was not an option in their households because of the strong encouragement from their family members that in order to be financially stable and be successful they must obtain as much education as they could to climb the social ladder.

Theme 3: Parents encourage typical Asian careers such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers because of the higher pay and status associated with those jobs. Education plays a vital and important role in the Asian culture, and yet it is not a career field actively promoted in Asian American families. Furthermore, familial influences on vocational development were pervasive, as evidenced in this study where 10 of the respondents, referenced 32 times, said that their parents had encouraged them to go into "typical" Asian American career paths of doctors, lawyers, and engineers growing up. Respondents used words such as "pushed," "only options," and "all they knew" when describing their parents' salient influence on their career paths growing up, and a few mentioned that this familial influence even extended into adulthood. Principal 9 remembered the limited number of occupations that were available as options to her:

> I was given two choices: a doctor or a lawyer. I'm a middle child of three girls and the oldest, my sister, was very academic so they had high hopes for her to become a doctor. They said maybe with my tendencies perhaps into law. And they were immigrants, but they were trying very hard to kind of look and match our personalities to our career choices within the two choices.

By the same token, Principal 1 remembered the roundabout conversations he had with his parents when he told them that he was interested in going into K-12 teaching and his parents were insistent on deterring him from the field into any other career choices that could provide him with a more practical skill or trade that he could use in the future.

Although his parents did not blatantly tell him that they forbade him going into teaching, they tried multiple times to convince their only son that K-12 career was not good enough for him. This was best articulated by Principal 1 when he said:

> My parents when they found out that I wanted to be a teacher was like, "Why are you going to be a teacher? What's that about? You know, we didn't raise our only son to be a teacher." My parents did have subtle clues like, "Hey, why don't you learn a skill or why don't you like go into the military or learn a trade?" This was when I was telling them that I wanted to be a teacher so that's how I knew they were not fully approving of it without saying don't be a teacher.

Many of the other participants concurred that teaching was frowned upon by their parents and their siblings because they believe that being a teacher was a waste of his or her education and intellect. Principal 4 remembered his older sister, who is a pediatrician, blatantly told him that he "absolutely cannot" go into teaching because he should not "waste his Ivy League degree" on a career path such as K-12 teaching. When Principal 4 insisted that was what he wanted to do, his sister said, "You can do that whatever passion thing later but not now" to emphasize the lack of importance a career in K-12 education meant to her. Principal 4 understands and, in some ways, agrees with his family to a degree. For this reason, he is interested in pursuing a doctorate degree in education from another Ivy League college, Harvard College.

Examples of how parents encouraged these typical Asian careers was overwhelming in the responses. Another participant, Principal 3 echoed the same sentiments of having limited career options by sharing that during seventh grade, his father asked him to take over the family's restaurant business, and when he replied,

“Heck no, it’s a lot of work,” his father then quickly persuaded him to choose between the three typical career options of doctor, lawyer, and engineer. Although Principal 3 did not end up choosing any of the three career choices, he mentioned that his sister, who is the eldest in the family, ended up becoming an optometrist and hating her job. When asked why she hates her job, Principal 3 shared during the interview:

> My sister is the first one and she hates being an optometrist, but she felt like she had to go there because yes, it was a family thing and that’s where again, for a woman it was a nice, comfortable, safe job, and you make a lot of money and you get the title. But this is kind of her story where she wanted to be a teacher but was told by my parents that no, that you don’t want to be a teacher because you don’t make any money and so for her, being the eldest, she also felt the pressure of having to take care of the parents as they got older and knowing that if she was a teacher, she wouldn’t have the necessary income. That was kind of where she felt pressured to go into the medical field and become a doctor.

The low socioeconomic status of the families in society and the experiences of the parents also had an impact on their recommendations for their children’s career choices. One of the reasons that these parents pushed for the typical Asian careers is because they had struggled for money while working in blue-collar or manual labor jobs as a result of their immigration status and their low education level. The respondents in this study remembered their parents working hard in low-paying jobs ranging from working as a special education aide to being a domestic servant in the Philippines to owning small businesses; all trying to survive and make ends meet to provide for their children. These were done because they want their children to be successful so they do not have to work

as hard as their parents did. Principal 4 described his parents' immigrant story of barely scraping by to put their four kids through college:

> My mom was an immigrant from China, you know immigrated dirt poor. Worked in a sweatshop sewing machine in Chinatown, you know, 100 degrees whatever three cents a piece that she sews. So, she's kinda the immigrant story. She didn't get an education. She would have because in China, she was selected for some sort of education program college, you know, in different provinces choose a couple of students to go but she immigrated here instead. My dad was born in New York, but his parents immigrated from China—Chinese laundromat so there were my grandfather and grandma on my father's side opened up a laundromat in Queens. So, my dad's education wasn't so good, like he squeaked by and just barely made it through high school. My dad worked in the laundromat I think like his middle school and high school and helping out and take whatever jobs he could find in the neighborhoods.

Similar to Principal 4, Principal 10 recalled during his interview how his mother worked as a domestic servant for a contractor in the Philippines and his grandparents from his father's side had worked in the Dole pineapple plantations in the 1920s to have the opportunity to put all three of their kids to private school throughout their K-12 and college years. He said:

> My father was the son of a pineapple field worker in Maui. So back in the early 1920s, I think it was Dole who invited Filipino farmers to help work the pineapple fields in Maui, and they offered them the ability to go and work there and to bring their families. My grandmother and my grandfather ended up in Maui in the '20s

and my father was born on the island of Maui in 1927, so technically my father was an American citizen. So, my father never really got a full-blown education, never really finished high school, but he did make it through when he got jobs that allowed him to go to different places in Hawaii, and he eventually ended up in California. And he worked at the El Toro Marine Corps station for 30 years as basically an odd jobs kind of guy—he never really had a specific job title, but he was able to do different jobs and he was able to work for them for a long time. My mother, on the other hand, was a domestic servant for a contractor who had a construction business in the Philippines.

Figure 1 is a link that Principal 10 had sent to the researcher to illustrate a personal story he had shared with NPR's StoryCorps that captures his parents' struggles in America.

Figure 1. NPR StoryCorps http://www.scpr.org/programs/storycorps/2011/06/20/10445/

Several participants reported choosing a career path in which they thought they would excel and a way to express their interests and to grow as an individual. However, not all of the respondents mentioned that their parents were supportive, at least not initially. During the interview, Principal 9, shared that when she began her teaching

career, her mother would omit her entirely in conversations with their friends because her mother viewed K-12 teaching, especially teaching younger kids, as an unworthy career path. She furthered explained that once she was promoted to principal, it was a "whole new story" because of the higher pay and prestige associated with a career as a principal versus a teacher.

A few of the participants during the interviews mentioned the idiom, "Those who can, do; those who can't teach" and additionally shared that their families thought that teaching was viewed as a "backup career for those who can't make it as doctors, lawyers, and engineers." One of the participants, Principal 4, said:

> First, you don't see Asian educators, and you think of that (teaching) as a career for those who couldn't quite make it to become a doctor, lawyer, engineer, consultant, finance person. It's kind of viewed as like a back-up for failure career.

For those families that were either supportive or ambivalent about their children's careers, a few of them said that though their parents were fine with them being K-12 educators, they were also concerned with the stresses of their jobs and their lack of home-life and work-life balance. Principal 4, whose mother is a special education aide, has seen instances where a belligerent student threw a chair toward the classroom teacher and is worried that it would happen to her son (which did happen once according to Principal 4). Another participant, Principal 12, whose mother is a special education teacher, is concerned with the demands of principals and worries about his well-being. Overall, even though some of the participants reported parents and siblings dissuading them from pursuing a K-12 career, all of the family members eventually came around in support of

their decisions, especially after they were promoted from being a teacher to a principal because of the higher pay and higher prestige that is associated with school principals.

Theme 4: Discouraged K-12 career path because of low pay. Asian American parents tend to equate a person's success with a high-income career. In this study, 10 of the participants, said 20 times, that their parents tried for a long time to discourage them from entering the K-12 education field because of the low pay associated with the career field, and they viewed being financially stable as an important factor that affected their career decision making. In addition, the main reason their parents pushed their children not to go into a low-paying career was because the parents had to struggle with their careers working in low-paying jobs and did not want to see their children encountering the same obstacles they had encountered. Of the 15 total participants, 12 of them mentioned that their parents held at least a college degree. However, their parents had to work in blue-collar jobs as a result of relocating to America. Many of them shared that in the country from which their parents immigrated, many of them had high-level professions such as teacher, accountant, and pharmacist. But once they came to the United States, they had to work in minimum wage jobs such as a custodian, home-health aide, and some owned small businesses to make ends meet because of their lack of English skills or because their education, credentials, and/or license did not transfer to the United States.

This theme of low pay associated with teachers in the K-12 educational setting was more prevalent with the male principals in this study. The cultural value of men as the breadwinner is still very evident in many of their lives. Principal 4 remembered vividly that his starting salary as a high school math teacher was $37, 619, which was a

57% pay cut from his previous career as a project engineer, and both of his parents and his in-laws were very concerned whether he could survive on such a low income. Moreover, Principal 3, shared that when he told his parents of his desire to be a teacher, their initial reaction was the low income of a teacher and whether he was able to support financially his family. Principal 3 remembered in his own words:

> I think it was during Christmas break, I went around and I want to tell my dad and my mom about wanting to become a teacher. It was during dinner time, they had to sit down and they were trying to discourage me from going into teaching. They go, "Why don't you think about, you know if you go into teaching, you're not going to make much money." They even made a comment like, "How are you going to feel as a man if your wife makes more money than you?" My comments were, "And the problem is? I don't see that as a problem." I didn't see it as an issue. For them, the perception is there aren't that many males in general that go into K-12 teaching.

Principal 3 continued with his narrative comparing the status of teachers in Asia versus the status of teachers in America and because his parents had to start all over in a new country immigrating from Hong Kong, they had a desire for their children to choose a career path that is of higher status and pay. The same participant went on to say:

> I'll tell you one thing, if you're a teacher in Hong Kong or even in China or even in other Asian countries, you're considered higher up the totem pole, but yet here, and I think there's a difference between the Asian teachers in Asia versus Asian Americans trying to make their way in America and wanting their kids to be successful and to be a teacher where they know that teachers are not treated or

> paid and considered as a high social value that it's not thought of as a worthy job. Status-wise, pay-wise, especially if you're talking about for them coming over, given up everything that they had coming over here and starting from scratch. You know they want us to be rich and successful. I think that for them to say that it's stupid or useless to choose a low-paying career such as K-12 teaching.

A few of the participants recapped the main reason their parents discouraged them from going into K-12 teaching was because of the relatively low salaries paid out to K-12 educators. It is a key factor in the less than desirable view the Asian culture has of an educational career. During the interview, Principal 9 mentioned that teachers and principals are underpaid and undervalued, and he shared an analogy comparing K-12 educators to doctors. In his own words:

> In general, I think the value and salaries of teachers and principals do not reflect the true value they bring to the community. You know I can argue that a doctor might see 50 patients in a day, you know even in an emergency situation. Perhaps even less, 20 patients depending on the actual incident. A teacher sees 150 students minimum in a day depending on their class size, right? And has the ability to affect them since they see them every day. For doctors, if you have an ailment, I can match your ailment to my solution. A lot of times when dealing with students it's a little harder to get a match because two different kids with the same ailment do not get the same solution because it affects them differently. So, I think this is one of the most underpaid professions I feel. Probably the only other profession I can think of is parents.

The belief about principals being underpaid is related to the high workload and

responsibilities, as well as the stressful nature of the job. Principal 1 remembered an incident where there was a fight with a few of his middle school students at a nearby park and all of the administrators ran to the park to gauge the incident. When they arrived at the park and saw a few police officers shooing the kids away, one of the cops said to Principal 1, "Man, I hate to have your job," which was ironic to Principal 1 because he was thinking the exact same thing about being a cop these day, especially with the whole Black Lives Matter movement. Principal 1 told this story to illustrate the stresses and complexities of a principal position in relations to the low pay:

> Our role as a principal is much more complex than it was ever before—moving from being a manager to a leader. It's about being knowledgeable about the curriculum in education and it's about understanding the complexities of mental health, it's about understanding how to motivate and encourage people to new directions that are changing. Common Core was an example of that. We are expected to know the content, we are expected to know teaching strategies, we are expected to know it all. And with that, I think comes the challenge like how do you get the changes? Changes are difficult and with this culture shift and the changing world, we have to adapt to all those things if you got to move people along.

Three of the respondents who said their parents had discouraged them from pursuing a K-12 career field because of the low pay also acknowledged that it was also considered an honorable and noble profession. When Principal 4 told his company that he was going to leave his high-paying project engineer position to teach, his supervisor viewed his decision as a noble cause but also said that if teaching did not work out, to call

him and come right back. Likewise, Principal 3 mentioned that prior to going into teaching, he knew that the job would be low paying but was also viewed as a "socially noble position."

Many of the participants voiced that one of the main reasons their parents and siblings deterred them from going into K-12 was because of the low pay associated with that career path. They mentioned that if the pay and prestige were higher, and if more Asian Americans were in the field to model that it is a good field to be in, it would have made their decision and transition into K-12 a lot smoother.

Theme 5: Family recognition through high achievement. This theme speaks to the Asian cultural value of not bringing shame to the family by avoiding occupational or educational failures was prevalent in this study. Family expectations, such as parental expectations through high achievement such as attaining advanced education and achieving prestige and status, were pervasive and salient influences on the participants' career choices, which were found in nine of the respondents and referenced 16 times. Some interviewees made comments such as "You know Asians, we have to prove ourselves," and "It's just expected of my siblings and me to be good in school and do well," to suggest that these cultural values have been ingrained in their households all of their lives. One participant, Principal 9, highlighted this theme in the following statements:

> When I recall my childhood, it was always why the A-minus. You know never applaud for you know, an A, whether it is A minus or not but it's always how can you be better? How can this be elevated? How can this be you know next time? Bs were unheard of in our home and we were also told that if you don't go to

> college, don't consider yourself a person. I mean I can translate that for you in Korean.

The Asian cultural value of family recognition through achievement was also acknowledged in the need to make their families proud of them by achieving first at school and then in their work life. Many of the respondents said that when they became principals, their families were extremely proud of their achievements and would often brag to others about them. Some examples included, "My dad didn't use to brag about me when I was a counselor, but now he tells his friends that I'm a principal at this young age," and "I see that there was an expectation on us to do something reputable, you know." Additionally, Principal 12 recalled that when he was promoted to principal, his grandmother who knew one of the board members in his school district, talked to the board member at length about the promotion. Similarly, when Principal 14 informed her mother-in-law, who happened to be in the United States from Korea during the time she was promoted to principal, was so shocked that she almost did not believe the news. Principal 14 reminisced:

> She (mother-in-law) didn't believe me because in Korea, almost all of the assistant principals and principals are a lot older. You really don't see young principals like me there, so she was impressed and almost didn't believe me. So, we drove by the school, but at that point, I was still an assistant principal but anyway she was like, "Wow, there are a lot of kids here!" and I was like, "Yeah mom, it's a regular school I'm telling you!" I know she was very proud of my achievements.

One participant, Principal 8, had an incredible story and she shared that when she

was promoted to principal at a school in Hacienda Heights, CA, she was immediately interviewed by two Chinese newspapers, *Sing Tao Daily* and *World Journal*, both located in Los Angeles. This is a narrative in her own words:

> I got promoted to a principal in Hacienda Heights and that was my first principalship, so immediately all over the newscast they came and interviewed me. I think overall the Chinese people were very proud that there was a Chinese principal. You know it was just very strange, it's like I didn't even know. They just showed up at my first interview with my board member and the board member was Chinese and he just called all of the reporters without me even knowing. I was like okay, so that was my first experience being a principal and everybody was really proud that there was an Asian person who became a principal.

Likewise, Principal 7, said that in addition to her family being proud, her friends felt the same way and would boast about her accomplishments to their friends back in Taiwan. Added to this boasting was that she immigrated to America in her 20s, she was able to become the head of a school even though English is her second language, and she spoke with an accent. Principal 7 said:

> I think the status, especially principal in Asian country, is a very, very high and powerful position and they just continued feeling they never thought about you will become a principal one day and they felt like how did you do that? They still cannot believe they still ask, wow, how did you do that? Not many people can become a principal and especially the one that just landed in a new country where English is always my second language.

When Principal 9 was promoted to principal, her parents finally acknowledged her value and self-worth and that process brought a lot of closure for her. With tears in her eyes, Principal 9 shared with the researcher this very emotional portion of the interview:

> My mom goes around telling her friends about me and I go, oh so now you go around talking to your friends that I'm a principal! Yeah, now it's fine you know. And my dad and he passed away last year, but he did pass away saying I am very proud of you. So, in that, it brought a lot of closure. I don't want to get all emotional on you now but it brought a lot of closure to my life. It brought a lot of like him saying that was kind of that recognition not because I became a principal I didn't get that feeling like, oh you became a principal so I'm proud of you. It was I'm proud of your pathway that you chose something that was meaningful to you. So that's the sense I got. And then he passed away last year.

During the interviews, all 15 participants said that their families were very proud of their achievements when they became principals, and whether some took it with pride and others were more embarrassed with the boasting and bragging, the interviewees all agreed that their success made them feel good about themselves.

Theme 6: K-12 viewed as a female-dominated career path. Asian parents often view K-12 careers as mostly female dominated because of the low status and low pay associated with that career. Since the traditional Asian cultural norm views men as the head of the household, they were often thought of as the breadwinners in the family. This theme was reported in six of the participants in the study and referenced 11 times. Of the six respondents, five (83%) of them were Asian males who said that their families

frowned upon their decisions to go into K-12 teaching and suggested that they go into more typical career paths such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers so they can make more money and have more prestige. One participant, Principal 3, explained how this expectation intersected with gender:

> I have a sister-in-law who is a teacher too. For her, her parents are okay with that. I think there's a perception also that Asian females, it's a little bit more acceptable. I don't know if you've experienced that before, where they think it's more acceptable. But for Asian male, you get that sideways look. Parents don't like that because there's just a lot of perceptions all around. Being Asian male and becoming a teacher, not exactly like you know, bragging rights.

Similar to Principal 3, Principal 1 said that it was very difficult for him to tell his parents his desire to go into K-12 because he was the only child (and son) in a very traditional Korean family. Growing up, his parents encouraged him to learn a skill or trade, do anything but teaching, because it was viewed as a profession for women. Principal 1 said during his interview:

> I'm not sure if it's a gender thing but it might be my mom's perception that teachers should be female, I don't know, I'm making presumptions and assumptions, but my dad never really spoke about any of those things, just kind of let me be. Dad never expressed opinion one way or the other, but mom gave me subtle hints like, "Why don't you try that?" And I'm like, "I'm in this, what are you talking about?"

Besides the perception that K-12 is a female-dominated career, one participant, Principal 4, believes that it has to do with our historical past. He asserted, "I mean back

when females couldn't get into these careers cuz of gender discrimination and sexism, teaching was viewed as acceptable for a woman."

Of the six participants, one of them was a female who reported that because of her gender, her parents were fine with her decision to be a K-12 teacher, especially since they viewed that teaching would be good for women who would later need to raise a family. Principal 14 remembered:

> Growing up yes, of course, Asian parents, yeah, my parents said what do you want to be when you grow up? Doctor? Lawyer? You know it's the typical fields that they want their children to get into. But I have to say being a female, teacher was also one of them. I think like for my brother you know they would always push in those areas. But for me, I personally loved kids growing up, so I wanted to be a teacher. I was the babysitter, tutor, or whatever. And so, they wanted me to be a teacher. They were fine with that. So, I wanted to be a teacher. They were fine with that. I think because I honestly think it's because I'm a female.

Principal 14 elaborated that her parents valued the teaching profession because it allows her time to spend with her family and she is able to balance her home life with her work life. From these participants who mentioned that their families thought K-12 was a female-dominated career, by the time they reached their current principal position, all of their family members had accepted their career path and are even proud of their achievements.

Theme 7: Discouraged K-12 career path because of low status. The issue of social status is a significant factor among Asian Americans because they place great emphasis on professional status as a predictor for success (Louie, 2004). This theme

captures the view of K-12 career prestige in the Asian homes and five of the participants, referenced 11 times, said that their parents discouraged them going into K-12 because of the low status associated with that career path. A few of the respondents mentioned that one of the reasons their parents had that notion stemmed from their own early struggles when they first immigrated to the United States and having to work in blue collar or manual labor jobs because of their low education levels. Principal 3 shared an entertaining anecdote based on a conversation with his parents while he was an undergraduate at UC, Irvine. He wanted to major in sports medicine and his dream job was to be a trainer for the Lakers. When he told his parents about his career path, they instead persuaded him to become a chiropractor because of the higher prestige that comes with it. Principal 3 highlighted his story by describing his conversation with his parents:

> When I told them about my dream job was to be the trainer for the Lakers, my dad was like why don't you become a chiropractor because you can get a doctor's name and my mom was like why don't you throw in an acupuncturist license too, and your herbal medicine so you can be all of that. But I wanted to work in a sports field, my dream job was to be a trainer for the Lakers. But again, that's kind of where the cultural influences like you had talked about: I should go into sports medicine or be a physical therapist or a chiropractor so you have a doctor's name. Teaching was considered low status and prestige.

Principal 8 shared that before he went into K-12 education, he went to law school and earned a law degree. His parents were extremely happy and proud of his accomplishments; however, when his first son was born on the day he graduated from law school, he suddenly had the realization that he did not want to continue with law and

instead teach. When he informed his parents of this career change, they were very disappointed with the decision because lawyers are considered more prestigious and make a higher income than K-12 educators.

Current research indicates Asian American parents respect teachers, but do not respect the teaching profession because of its low status (Park, 2005). Principal 4 remembered that not only did his family and friends discouraged him from going into teaching, but the community he currently serves wonders why anyone with an Ivy League degree would go into such a low-status job as K-12 teaching. He said:

> People in America don't view K-12 education as all that good, right? You know when I became a teacher, when the parents and students found out that I went to Princeton, they were like what? What are you doing here? And these are parents of all races. But then I was like, wait, don't you want someone with a college degree to be teaching your kid? They were like but why are you wasting your degree on us?

The data suggested that many of the families of the participants discouraged them from going into K-12, but a few also mentioned that over time, their parents became more understanding and began to accept their choice to become K-12 educators as an honorable and noble profession. The next theme illustrates another cultural value that aligns positively with their career choice tendencies.

Theme 8: Humility assisted their promotion. Asian Americans generally prize humility, and boasting of one's accomplishments is considered rude and unacceptable (Sung, 1967). This theme was evident where seven of the interviewees, referenced eight times, stated that being humble, letting your achievements speak for themselves without

boasting, sharing the credit with others, trusting the decisions of their superiors, and not showing arrogance helped them to become a principal. One of the participants, Principal 4, shared that his parents had always instilled in their children the need to be "humble, lay low, do a good job, let your results speak for themselves, and you will be rewarded." Similar to Principal 4, Principal 2 said that his personality and values align with the Asian culture of not boasting and being humble. He strongly believes that his hard work will pay off and that his immediate supervisors will continue to mentor and help him with his career path.

Additionally, a few of the participants mentioned that their innate personality is not to boast about themselves as a result of their cultural values; however, they reported that to earn the respect from their colleagues and supervisors, they had to speak up, promote their schools, and to tell their story. Principal 8 was very intentional with her career decisions and she added in her interview:

> Unless you establish, you kind of have to earn the respect as an Asian American I think more so than a Caucasian person. I really do think so because even within the principals, you kind of have to earn your place because then they think that number one, you're not going to speak up a lot versus I think the principals who are Caucasian or maybe African American or Hispanic, they do speak up a lot more, just whatever comes to their mind they say it. Whereas Asian Americans, we are more reserved, we want to think it through before we kind of pass on our message. I think that's just our nature.

When asked about the cultural value of humility in the Asian culture, Principal 1 asserted that he believes it is prevalent in the Asian culture, but he does not want humility

to be mistaken for meekness or the absence of strength. He elaborated:

> If you abide by your beliefs, it's not the absence of confidence, it's our culture, right? We are raised that way. Don't brag about, let someone else brag about you instead. I think that's a real challenge for all of us. It's not weakness and not meekness and not the absence of strength, it is an exercise of strength. When you are strong, in a position of power, and confident, you don't need to boast. That's what I believe. I mean if you are truly confident, you don't need to because you are and I think that is an inherent difference. I don't think people really understand that is not a weakness. It's about being humble. That perception is real. I don't think a lot of us realize it.

Five respondents said during their interviews that although they were raised with the Asian cultural value of humility, they felt that they also had to promote themselves to get recognized. All five of the principals acknowledged that boasting about their accomplishments is not something that is "natural" to them; it is the opposite, but they also know that in order for them to be recognized, they need to do so. Here are Principal 13's comments:

> I think humility was instilled in me by my parents. But being in this role I know that you can't sit back, so I do a lot of bragging. Not because it's natural for me but because I know that's an essential part of being a school leader is promoting yourself because if you don't promote yourself, someone else will and maybe not in a good way. I've learned on the job that this is something you need to learn to do. And even though it's not maybe something I would have done in the past, but in this role, I've learned to not embrace it but I guess accept it and that comes

> with part of the territory. And I think as a school leader you have to be the number one advocate, so I don't see it as bragging; I see it more as like promoting and telling your story. So, I'm doing it for my school, for the benefit of my students in the long run, and not because I'm trying to elevate myself.

On the topic of humility, Principal 4, believes that the Asian cultural value of humility could negatively impact the promotion of Asian Americans. He believes that the louder you are and the more opinionated you are, the quicker you advance in your career. Principal 4 said:

> There are two things you need to do to be promoted: actually, speak up publicly in meetings or whatever and you have to make sense. You know you've got to be competent and I've seen my brother and brother-in-law get promoted because of those two things. I have a friend who said this, "Dear God, please let me have the confidence of a mediocre white man."

This last theme in context illustrated that the Asian cultural value of humility was experienced by many of the participants in this study; however, some viewed it as a cultural trait that had supported their career promotions and others viewed it as hindrance because if you do not promote yourself and tell your story, someone else will tell it for you. What they all agreed is that this theme of humility as an Asian cultural value was taught and modeled by their parents and impacted their career choice tendencies when they were growing up.

Conclusion

The participants in this study chose the road less traveled even though many of their family members discouraged their K-12 career path because of personal reasons.

Some of these personal reasons ranged from their love of children, their desire to give back to the community, an altruistic desire to help others, the need to promote social justice, as well as their ambition to move up in their careers to administration. Principal 14 commented on her love of working with children for as long as she could remember, "I personally loved kids growing up so I wanted to be a teacher. I was the babysitter, tutor, or whatever." Principal 8 remembered how much fun she had playing with the kids when she was a recreational leader. She commented:

> I was a recreational leader at the time and my area felt like my little castle that kids come and I teach them all these things. And I felt like gosh, I just played all day! I felt like you know, I love teaching and I just love being around the kids. If I watched them on the playground, I just want to jump in you know. So, to me teaching it's not work to me, it's just something I really enjoy.

A few of the participants noted it was the positive impact and the need to give back to the community that influenced their decisions to go into K-12 teaching and then K-12 administration. Principal 3 remembered:

> To have that kind of effect as an administrator over the whole school. I think we talked about having a moral obligation. I think working here, I've only worked at title 1 schools. I think some of the toughest schools around. It's very rewarding you know personally, but also, I think beyond is kind of not just for my own self-satisfaction but for what it means to the kids; to provide the kids a good education and a safe place to learn, you know, safe place in general. For some of our kids, it's important for them. They're going to grow up and whether they like it or not and to be contributing citizens to society and all that.

Principal 6 said that one of the reasons she decided to pursue a career in K-12 was because of her parents' immigrant story where the importance of promoting social justice and serving the community was etched in her memory. This is how she told her story:

> I think a lot of that is shaped by my parents being immigrants to the United States and understanding that their success in the United States happened from the support and goodwill of other people and especially what is going on right now politically. I am even more grateful for the political climate at the time that my parents were accepted as immigrants because that's not always the case. And so going into some type of social justice career was something that I was always interested in.

Besides the love of children and promoting social justice, 11 of the principals interviewed reported that they saw the principalship as the next step in their career process. Two principals, in particular, mentioned their egos and that they "could do better" as reasons for moving up from being in the classroom to administration. Principal 11 noted that after 10 years in the classroom, he felt that it was time to move up because he couldn't imagine being in the classroom when he retired because of his personal ego. He commented:

> So, it was my own personal goal I guess because I couldn't see myself retiring as a teacher because I had an ego and wanted the prestige like you said. I wanted that, and you know it's not like it's a bad thing. I'm not saying that it's a bad thing to be a teacher forever but for me, I just knew that I wanted to be at a different place.

Similarly, Principal 10 indicated that after being in the classroom for 12 years, he

felt that he could do something “better,” which was administration, and he had the ambition to represent the Filipino culture and community in a positive manner because he noticed that K-12 administration was filled by mostly Caucasian men and women. He stated:

> I was a classroom teacher for 12 years, loved it, but I think there was a time in which I thought you know, you could do something better. And towards the end of those 12 years, I actually went and got my master’s degree in education and at the same time got my administrative credential. And you know there’s also a desire to be in a leadership role. I think I’d had since I was a kid and I also you know there was a sense of, hey you know there’s not a lot of Filipinos that are out there as APs let alone principals. So, there was a bit of that involved.

In conclusion, many of the participants in this study reported that their Asian cultural values influenced their occupational choice. Moreover, when discussing specific Asian cultural values that impacted their career choice tendencies, most of the interviewees suggested the interplay of race and culture by making connections between values often associated with the Asian culture such as strong work ethic, the value of education, and being humble that impacted their career choice tendencies. These participants also indicated a strong desire to represent their culture and community in a positive manner and serving as role models of Asian Americans who were successful in their chosen career path in the K-12 educational setting. The principals realize that they are the minorities in the K-12 educational setting, but when asked if they regret choosing the road less traveled, every single one of them answered a renouncing no. They all reported the importance of their career in shaping and influencing the next generation.

Summary

This chapter examined the findings that emerged from the Asian American principals' collective stories based on the research question for this study. The principals shared their family background, Asian cultural values, and how all that connect to their career choices growing up. As discussed in the review of the literature, the underrepresentation of Asian American principals may be related to Asian cultural values and their negative impact on their career paths into K-12 education. This study did find a few of the participants reported K-12 as an acceptable career to go into, especially if one of their parents (usually the mother) were K-12 educators, so teaching was viewed in a positive light. In fact, those participants even mentioned that teaching was an honorable and noble profession that also provided a steady income with good benefits. Moreover, the principals cited time to raise family, a stable job with great benefits, teachers inspiring them, the joy of working with children, and at least one family member influencing them as reasons they pursued a teaching career, which is the first step in becoming a principal.

This chapter provided a detailed review of the purpose statement, research question, and methodology, including the data collection process, population, and sample. A comprehensive presentation and analysis of the findings developed from the data, which included 15 interview participants, demographic questionnaires, and artifacts. The data were coded and synthesized, which yielded eight overarching themes that answered the research question for this study. The analysis identified the lived experiences of the current K-12 Asian American principals and how their Asian cultural values impacted their career choice tendencies.

Chapter V presents a final summary of the study, including major findings,

unexpected findings, and conclusions from the results of the study. These are followed by implications for action, recommendations for further research, and concluding remarks and personal reflections.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter I provided an introduction to the study and background to the research. Chapter II reviewed the literature on Asian immigration, historical trends of Asians in public education, Asian cultural values and their impact on career choice tendencies, and Asian American principals' perceptions of their careers in K-12 education. Chapter III outlined the methodology of a qualitative constructivist inquiry study exploring the perceptions of Asian American principals of how cultural values impacted their career choice tendencies in the K-12 educational setting. Chapter IV restated the purpose statement and research question for this investigation along with a summary of the research methods, data collection procedures, population, sample, and demographic data. It also presented a detailed analysis of the research data in the form of summarizing the study findings. Chapter V begins with an overview of the research study, starting with the purpose statement, research question, methodology, population, and sample. This chapter then describes the major findings, unexpected findings, conclusions from the findings, implications for action, recommendations for further research, concluding remarks and reflections.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this constructivist inquiry study was to identify and describe the perceptions of Asian American principals of how cultural values impact their career choice tendencies in the K-12 educational setting.

Research Question

The research question for this study was as follows: How do Asian cultural values impact the career choice tendencies of Asian American K-12 principals?

Methodology

The methodology used for this study was constructivist inquiry method. Multiple sources of data collection were incorporated into the research process for triangulation of the findings. Demographic questionnaire, interviews, and artifacts created opportunities for rich and meaningful data for the study. All types of data collection aligned with the purpose of the study, which was to describe the perceptions of Asian American K-12 principals on whether their Asian cultural values impacted their career choice tendencies.

Population

Patton (2002) defined population as a group of individuals that the researcher is interested in using in research. The entire population of K-12 school principals during the 2011–2012 school year according to the NCES (2016) was 115,540 elementary and secondary principals in both public and private schools. Of the 115, 540 principals, there were approximately 2,310 Asian American principals (NCES, 2016). The target population is the list of sampling units from which the sample was selected (Creswell, 2007). The target population selected for this study was 328 Asian American principals out of 8,197 principals in California (Edsource, 2007).

Sample

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) defined sample as a group of individuals within the population from which data was collected. This is the group of participants in the study selected from the target population. Sampling could be conducted in many ways such as random sampling, systematic sampling, proportional sampling, cluster sampling, purposeful sampling, convenience sampling, and quota sampling (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). For this study, snowball sampling, also known as chain referral

sampling, was used because it was useful in finding and recruiting participants who are not easily accessible to researchers through other sampling strategies (Mack & Woodsong, 2005).

Additionally, the sample participants in this study were selected from the target population because it is typically not feasible, because of time and cost constraints, to study large groups; therefore, the researcher chose population samples from within a larger group. The researcher first reached out to the principals who were of Asian descent who she knew were current Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting. Then the participants with whom contact had already been made used their social networks to refer the researcher to other principals who could potentially participate in or contribute to the study. The researcher also found a few participants through searching for Asian American principals on the school Web sites, contacting them via e-mail, and interviewing them after they consented to participate. According to Creswell (1994), an appropriate size for a qualitative research study is five to 25 participants, while Morse (1994) recommended at least six participants. For this reason, the sample size of 15 current Asian American K-12 principals fits the purpose, availability, time, and interests of the study.

Major Findings

When examining the body of research, it became clear that Asian Americans are underrepresented in the K-12 educational setting. However, there remains a gap in the literature in understanding how cultural values of Asian Americans may explain their underrepresentation. In this study, after substantial review and triangulation of the data collected through demographic questionnaires, interviews, and artifacts, the researcher

uncovered four significant findings. Following data collection and analysis, the researcher made the following four assertions.

Major Finding 1: Asian American K-12 Principals Were Encouraged by Their Parents to Pursue Typical Asian Careers Such as Doctors, Lawyers, and Engineers

The first major finding of the study is that Asian American K-12 principals were strongly encouraged by their parents to pursue typical Asian careers such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers because of the higher pay and status associated with those professions. Of the 15 participants, 10 (67%), referenced 20 times, asserted that their families had discouraged them from going into K-12 education because of the relatively low salary and low prestige. A common observation by many of the participants was that their family members thought being a teacher was a waste of their education and intellect. Despite initial discouragement though, all of the family members eventually came around in support after the participants were promoted from being a teacher to a principal because of the higher pay and higher prestige that is associated with school principals. It was evident to the researcher that this finding was substantial and the majority of the participants in the study widely agreed.

Major Finding 2: Parents of Asian American Principals Viewed the K-12 Career Path as Female Dominated

The second major finding of the study found that parents of the participants viewed the K-12 career path as female dominated. One of the traditional Asian cultural norms views men as the head of the household, so they are often thought of as the breadwinners in the family. Of the participants, 6 (40%), referenced 11 times, mentioned that being a male in the Asian family gave them the added pressure to provide for the

family, which in turn meant that they were pushed into careers that made more money and had more prestige. From the participants who mentioned that their families thought K-12 was a female-dominated career, by the time they reached their current principal position, all of their family members had accepted their career path and were even proud of their achievements.

Major Finding 3: Asian American K-12 Principals Grew up Significantly Valuing Education as a Vehicle for Upward Mobility

The third major finding of the study found that all 15 of the Asian American K-12 principals, referenced 38 times, that the value of education has been etched into their beliefs' system so significantly that all they could recall their parents ever repeating was the need to study and do well in school. This message was especially important for those families that grew up with parents who did not attain very much education and had to work in blue-collar jobs. It was evident from the overwhelming responses from the interviewees that education as a cultural norm was highly valued in their homes with the understanding that education can play a pivotal role in improving social mobility. From the interactions with the participants, the researcher identified a shared sense that postsecondary education was not an option in their households because of the strong encouragement from their family members that in order to be successful and financially stable, they must obtain as much education as a vehicle for upward mobility.

Major Finding 4: Asian American Educators Were Taught That Hard Work and Humility Will Help Them in Life

The fourth major finding of the study revealed that Asian cultural values of hard work and humility were taught by the participants' parents when they were growing up as

values that will help them in life. Of the 15 participants, 12 (80%) of them reported that their families' cultural value of hard work was necessary and success hinges on their dedication and work ethic. In addition to hard work, seven of the respondents (47%) mentioned humility as a cultural value that helped them get promoted to the current principal position. These cultural values were evident to the researcher as norms that were embraced by the Asian American K-12 principals in the study.

Unexpected Findings

The researcher found two unexpected elements following the data collection process with the 15 current K-12 Asian American principals. First, the researcher did not anticipate the significance of the humility theme as helping the participants advance their careers to have such a high frequency (46.6%). It was unexpected, and frankly surprising, that most of the respondents who mentioned this theme were men (71%) and not women (29%), because published literature indicated that women are generally more humble than men (Furnham et al., 2001). Second, it was unexpected that two of the 15 participants specifically used the same word "therapeutic" to describe the interview with the researcher. Other similar emotions mentioned during the interview included "this interview is so emotional that I want to cry," and "wow, your questions are really making me pause and reflect on my career journey thus far." Such authentic sentiments made the researcher appreciate and value the participants' stories even more.

Conclusions

It is clear that Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting are grossly underrepresented. Considerable pressures exist in Asian homes where parents encourage their children to go into careers that have higher pay and prestige. Particularly

for men, they are also discouraged from entering a female-dominated occupation. On the other hand, cultural values such as humility and work ethic are factors that support their upward mobility once they choose to enter the profession.

Based on the research findings of this study and the existing literature, the researcher drew four conclusions that grant deeper insight into Asian cultural values and their impact on career choice tendencies for Asian American K-12 educators.

Conclusion 1: The Belief That Being a Doctor, Lawyer, and Engineer Is a More Prestigious Career Because of Status and Higher Pay Is a Cultural Obstacle for Asian Americans Who Are Interested in a Career in K-12 Education

Based on the finding that Asian American K-12 principals were strongly encouraged by their parents to pursue typical Asian careers such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers because of the higher pay and status associated with those professions, it can be concluded that those who are interested in a career in K-12 education have to overcome the cultural obstacle and negotiate with their parents to go into the career field. The reason Asian American parents discourage a career in K-12 education could be because of the perception that a teacher's average salary does not compare favorably to the preferred careers of doctors, lawyers, and engineers (Auguste et al., 2010). This idea is further supported by other published studies that show that Asian Americans tend to support career choices that value extrinsic motivators such as earning power, status, prestige, and job security (Kelly et al., 2009; Leong, 1991). This is in contrast to other studies that show a career in education is one of the most sought after because of its relative stability and consistently increasing earning power (McMahon, 2013). It is difficult to change cultural values; however, it is important to take the time needed to

educate the Asian communities the importance of giving back. The Asian culture venerates an education, yet Asians also do not encourage their family members to enter into careers in education. This thinking needs to cease and evolve into one where the focus is on educating the next generation of children and enhancing the lives of others.

Conclusion 2: Male Asian American Educators Face Greater Pressure From Their Parents When Considering Teaching as a Career

Based on the finding that Asian parents view K-12 career path as female dominated, it can be concluded that male Asian American educators face greater pressure from their parents when considering teaching as a career. This study discovered that more Asian men are pressured against going into teaching than Asian women because of the cultural perception that K-12 teaching is a career that is of low pay and of low social prestige. Research indicates that when Asian parents do not value a particular career path, in this case, teaching, Asian youth follow in that pattern because of the Asian collective decision-making process when it comes to career options (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999; Tang et. al., 1999). Based on the finding of this study and published literature that indicates men, in general, face greater pressure from their parents when considering teaching as a career, men have a desire to move more quickly into administration (Park, 2005).

Conclusion 3: Acquiring Graduate Degrees, Certifications, and Taking Part in Ongoing Professional Development Allow Asian American Educators to Move up in the Educational System

Based on the finding from this study and the review of the literature, it was concluded that acquiring graduate degrees, certifications, and taking part in ongoing

professional development allows Asian American educators to move up in the education system. A few notable quotes were: "The only thing that can get you to a better status in life is education," and "every time if I got in trouble or if my grades weren't good they made the time to go and see my teachers so they value education and I learned from them that education is always important." The importance of education as an Asian cultural value is furthered evidenced in literature where Kwong (1987) reported that Asian Americans pursue higher education for practical reasons because it is their opportunity to enter white-collar occupations, and they value education because it is a means to upward mobility.

Conclusion 4: Asian Cultural Values Such as Hard Work and Humility Were Key Ingredients for Success for Asian American Educators

Based on the finding that Asian cultural values such as hard work and humility have assisted Asian American educators with their upward mobility and advancement, it can be concluded that these cultural values were key ingredients for the success of Asian American educators. Many of the participants in the study mentioned that values of hard work and humility were taught and modeled by their parents with the understanding that no matter what profession they chose, these valuable cultural values were necessary ingredients for success.

Implications for Action

In light of this constructivist inquiry study and the critical need of Asian American administrators in the K-12 educational setting, the researcher recommends five implications for action. These recommendations are directed to school district superintendents, board members, community leaders, Asian communities, and

educational policymakers. If school districts want to see the future of their school sites and their missions reflect diversity and excellence, then these implications for action should be embraced as essential next steps to develop the next generation of teachers and administrators.

Implication for Action 1: Leaders Working With Asian Communities Need to Focus on Providing Asian American Parents With Information on a Wider Range of Career Opportunities in Addition to the Typical Asian Careers

Based on the finding that Asian American parents encourage their children to go into typical Asian careers because of the status and higher pay associated with those professions, leaders working with Asian communities need to focus on providing Asian American parents with information on a wider range of career opportunities. The key to educating Asian American parents with information on career opportunities include consistent and frequent conversations and informational school meeting sessions such as Parent Teacher Student Association, Parent Leadership Academies, school career fairs, and Asian community meetings where Asian educators explain to parents the diverse job opportunities in K-12 and the positive impact educators have on children.

Implication for Action 2: To Recruit Asian American K-12 Educators, School Districts Must Utilize Veteran Asian American Educators to Model and Mentor Youth to Go Into the K-12 Education Field

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that school districts utilize veteran Asian American educators to model and mentor youth to go into the K-12 education field. Educating our youth about different career pathways is of paramount importance and school districts must pursue this goal as a strategic priority such that it

becomes a frequent and focused topic of conversation between the staff and the community. In the middle and high school years, students make choices that influence their lives, such as whether to go to college and what classes they need to take to get their high school diploma. During this time, it is essential that veteran educators educate and model to our youth the different K-12 career fields such as teachers, counselors, nurses, psychologists, speech and language pathologists, librarians, and administration so more Asian American students are educated on the different career paths available to them.

Implication for Action 3: Career Counselors Encourage Both Male and Female High School Students to Explore Career Opportunities in Education by Taking Potential Education Students on Field Trips Once Each Semester to Visit Classrooms Where Student Teaching Is Taking Place

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that career counselors encourage both male and female high school students to explore career opportunities in education by taking potential education students on field trips once each semester to visit classrooms where student teaching is taking place. There are numerous benefits in visiting classrooms where student teaching is taking place and two of the most important benefits include observing a graduate student work under experienced master teachers who act as their mentors and having the opportunities to see how a student teacher learns and gets feedback about their teaching skills. When high school students, who are interested in pursuing a career in teaching, observe a student teacher, they can understand how a school operates and learn how to discipline and manage a classroom.

Implication for Action 4: Asian Americans Need to Have the Courage to Navigate and Negotiate Against Asian Cultural Values and Family Pressures to Pursue a

Career of Passion

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that Asian Americans need to have the courage to navigate and negotiate against their Asian cultural values and family pressures to pursue a career about which they are passionate. Existing literature and findings in the study confirmed that Asian American parents have expectations of their children entering specific professions that afford them greater mobility and upward advancement, and parents do not see teaching in the K-12 educational setting as one of those professions (Louie, 2004; Park, 2005). A few of the participants in this study felt that they had to, to some extent, negotiate and even rebel with their parents about their desire to enter into teaching. This feeling of conflict between one's own professional choice and that of his or her parents is significant in Asian cultural values because of the guilt and high anxiety they go through when they defy their parents' wishes. Given the cultural values of "kinship, loyalty, and obedience to authority figures" in the Asian American family system, this feeling of conflict makes sense (Leong & Leung, 1994). This phase of negotiation with parents is a longitudinal process that times time to resolve (Park, 2005). As the researcher in this study, I argue the need for Asian Americans to find the courage to navigate and negotiate against their cultural norms, stand for what they believe in, and find a career about which they are passionate, even if their family members do not fully support their decision. All of the participants mentioned that over time, their parents became more understanding and accepting of their choice to become teachers as an acceptable and even honorable profession. Furthermore, when the respondents were promoted from classroom teachers to administrators, their families were extremely proud of their accomplishments to the point that they would boast about

them to others.

Implication for Action 5: School Districts Need to Develop a Mentoring Program Using Veteran Asian American K-12 Leaders to Create a Teacher-to-Administrator Pipeline to Mentor, Support, and to Increase the Number of Asian American K-12 Principals

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that school districts need to develop a mentoring program using veteran Asian American K-12 leaders to create a teacher-to-administrator pipeline for Asian American educators to help identify ways to support incoming principals and to increase the number of Asian American K-12 principals. There are currently Latino and African American administrative pipelines but none for Asian Americans (Allen et al., 1995; Arias, 2005; Bloom & Erlandson, 2003; Cooper, 2009; Young & Castaneda, 2008). The teacher-to-principal pipeline usually includes teachers moving out of the classroom to become deans, assistant principals, or a quasi-administrative position before becoming a principal (U.S. Department of Labor, 2012). Developing a teacher-to-principal pipeline where states can create a policy framework that supports this pipeline by (a) setting standards and articulating those standards to their employees, (b) creating professional development for those interested in becoming an administrator, (c) assisting them with the licensure process, and (d) providing evaluation and ongoing support would create a positive environment for Asian educators to become school leaders (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2014).

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends further research in the following areas in order to expand the understanding and knowledge of Asian cultural

values that impact career choice tendencies of current K-12 principals.

1. Extend and replicate the study to include Asian American K-12 principals to other parts of California and even across the nation with different influences and backgrounds. It would be valuable to explore whether other Asian American principals encounter the same experiences. This study only focused on the 15 sample Asian American principals, so the findings are not generalizable to the experiences of all Asian American principals across the nation. This is a gap in understanding that needs to be addressed.
2. Conduct a study with veteran K-12 Asian American principals who have served in the principal role for 10 or more years.
3. Undertake a comparative study of Asian cultural values and their impact on career choice tendencies at private and charter K-12 schools.
4. Explore the Asian cultural norms more deeply. While this constructivist inquiry study did highlight the impact of Asian cultural tendencies with their career choice tendencies, a more in-depth study is warranted. Some recommendations for a more in-depth study include having a larger sample size, using a quantitative study employing a correlations research method, and surveying other professions beyond the education field. Future Asian leaders and school districts would benefit from a deeper understanding of cultural norms and career choice tendencies and the ways in which those factors might influence the success in developing future Asian American leaders in the K-12 educational setting.
5. Study the relationship between race and gender and its impact on their career

choices. It would be valuable to explore the additional factor of gender into a study similar to this one.

6. Study Asian American youth and their perceptions of how cultural values may impact their career choice tendencies.
7. Based on the findings of this study, a study to explore the unique challenges, influences, and opportunities of Asian American educators would be valuable.
8. Last, it would be interesting to take the time to interview the participants' family members on their perceptions of the interplay between cultural values and how their child made his or her career decision. Afterward, compare the stories of the participants with their family members to reflect and go deeper into the lived experiences and perceptions through the differing lens.

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

This research study began with a passion to explore and reflect on reasons I chose the road less traveled and became a K-12 educator. Reflecting back, I remember reading a Confucius quote during high school that propelled me to think deeply about what I wanted to do with my life. The quote was, "Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." After reading that quote, at the age of 16, I decided to become a high school guidance counselor. When I told my family about my career aspiration, not only did they discourage me, they even ridiculed my decision. Trying to explain my decision to my parents was difficult because there are no Chinese words for school counselor, so instead I told them that I wanted to be a teacher. My father immediately told me that I was stupid for choosing such a useless career and to instead follow my sister's footsteps in business. My mother was ambivalent but was quick to

remind me that I should choose a career that is of high pay and prestige. My brother, who is an electrical engineer, laughed in my face and told me that I would never find a job majoring in education. My sister was supportive, but even she had her concerns about whether I would be able to pay rent and be financially independent on a counselor's salary. My aunt was the most supportive and the only one who truly embraced my career aspiration and told me how proud she was of my decision. Looking back, my decision to go into K-12 education was an uphill battle—constant mockery and criticism from my family and the need to defend the reasons I chose to work with children. I still remember the day of my undergraduate graduation when my father, instead of telling me how proud he was that I received both a bachelor's of arts and a bachelor's of science degree in four years, told me that I should get my MBA so I could do something worthwhile in the business world. He just couldn't understand why I wanted to choose the road less traveled. I remembered fighting back tears from rolling down my cheeks. Fortunately, I didn't listen to my family. After my undergraduate degree, I dove right into my master's degree and Pupil Personnel Services credential and began working as a full-time counselor at one of the most at-risk high schools in San Francisco. After stepping onto a school campus for the first time as a counselor, I never looked back.

After completion of this research study, I am further convinced that I made the right career decision. The process of completing this research study was nothing short of inspirational. The stories shared by the 15 participants had such powerful and profound meaning. I am humbled by the opportunity to share their stories, along with mine, in hopes that it would bring awareness to the problem of underrepresentation of Asian

American educators in the K-12 educational setting. My hope is for more Asian Americans to go into K-12 education and have the courage to defy Asian cultural perceptions, values, and norms and choose a career path that they love.

Five years ago, while I was pursuing my Administrative Services Credential, one of the books we had to read as a cohort was *Man's Search for Meaning* by Viktor E. Frankl. His book was so profound, it changed my life. Just the other day, I decided to pick up that book and reread it to remind me of where I used to be, where I am, and where I need to be. I would like to end my dissertation journey with a quote from Viktor E. Frankl that sums it all up: "The meaning of my life is to help others find the meaning of theirs"

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Synthesis Matrix

	THEMES	Asians leaning towards science and engineering fields	Collectivism and Humility	Conservative behaviors	Value extrinsic motivators	Family Desires	Conformity and emotional self control through minimal expression	Homophily	Having mentors helped with their careers in administration	Asian American Administrator Pipeline
REFERENCES										
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Chin, K. L. V. (1998). *An exploratory study of the perceived internal and external barriers that Chinese-American principals face in advancing from classroom teacher to principalship in selected California counties and the strategies they used to overcome these barriers*. University of La Verne, Ann Arbor.		x			x	x		x	x	
Edson, S. K. (1988). *Pushing the Limits, the Female Administrative Aspirant.* New York: State University of New York Press.		x							x	
Fouad, N., Kantamneni, N., Smothers, M. K., Chen, Y.L., Fitzpatrick, M.,		x			x	x				

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Friedman, R., & Krackhardt, D. (1997). Social Capital and Career Mobility: A Structural Theory of Lower Returns to Education for Asian Employees. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 33*(3), 316-334.		x	x		x	x		x		
Hu, M. Y. (2008). *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in higher education leadership: Challenges and opportunities for growth.* (Ed.D. Dissertation), University of California, Los Angeles, Ann Arbor.		x		x	x			x	x	
Irey, S. (2013). *How Asian American Women Perceive and Move Toward Leadership Roles in Community Colleges: A Study of Insider Counter Narratives.* (Ph.D. Dissertation), University of Washington, Ann Arbor.									x	
Johnson, S. (2008). Education policy brief: The status of male teachers in public education today. *Center for Evaluation & Education Policy, 6*(4), 1-12.					x					
Kelly, K. R., Gunsalus, A. C., & Gunsalus, R. (2009). Social cognitive predictors of the career goals of Korean American students. *The Career Development Quarterly, 58*, 14-28.					x					
Kim-Qvale, J. (2012). *Asian American and Pacific Islander Principals in K-12 LAUSD: Then and Now.* University of California, Los Angeles.		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x

Kim, B., Atkinson, D. R., & Yang, P. H. (1999). The Asian values scale: Development, factor analysis, validation, and reliability. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 46*, 342-352. doi:10.1037//0022-0167.46.3.342		x	x	x	x		x	x		
Lee, F. H. (1998). *Asian-American women in educational administration: Patterns of aspirations and advancement.* Harvard University, Ann Arbor.									x	x
Leong, F. T. (1991). Career development attributes and occupational values of Asian American and White American college students. *Career Development Quarterly, 39*(3), 221-230.		x			x	x				
Leong, F. T. L., & Gupta, A. (2007). Career development and vocational behaviors of Asian Americans. In F. T. L. Leong, A. G. Inman, A. Ebreo, L. H. Yang, M. Fu,…M. Fu (Eds.), Handbook of *Asian American psychology, 2nd* ed (pp. 159 – 178). Thousand Oaks, CA, US: Sage Publications, Inc.						x				
Louie, V. (2004). *Compelled to Excel: Immigration, Education, and Opportunity among Chinese Americas.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.						x				
Michael-Bandele, M., & ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education, W.D. (1993). Who's Missing from the Classroom: The Need for Minority Teachers. *Trends and Issues Paper,* No. 9.									x	
Park, C. C. (2005). *Factors shaping the career choices of Korean American*		x	x	x	x	x			x	x

teachers and teacher candidates. (Ed.D. Dissertation), University of Southern California, Ann Arbor.										
Pacis, D. C. (2005). *Asian American females in educational leadership in K–12 public schools.* University of San Diego and San Diego State University, Ann Arbor.		x				x			x	
Qin, X. (2010). *Family impact on Asian American's career choice.* (Ph.D. Dissertation), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Ann Arbor.		x		x	x		x			x
Rong, X., & Preissle, J. (1997). The continual decline in Asian American teachers. *American Educational Research Journal, 34*(2), 267-293.		x			x	x			x	
Salleh-Barone, N. (2004). *Asian American women educators: Narrations of their career paths to leadership*. State University of New York at Buffalo, Ann Arbor.			x						x	
Sandhu, G. (2014). *The influence of family and cultural values on the career development of Asian Americans.* (Ph.D. Dissertation), University of North Texas, Ann Arbor.		x			x	x			x	x
Song, C., & Glick, J. E. (2004). College attendance and choice of college major among Asian-American students. *Social Science Quarterly, 85*, 1401-1421.		x			x	x				
Spencer, D. A. (1996). Teachers and educational reform. *Educational Researcher, 25*(15), 15-40.					x					
Tang, M., Fouad, N.A. & Smith, P.L. (1999). Asian						x				

Americans' career choices: A path model to examine factors influencing their career choices. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 54*, 142-157.										
Woo, D. (1994). *The glass ceiling and Asian Americans.* Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/key_workplace/129		x			x				x	x
Woo, D. (2000). *Glass ceilings and Asian Americans: The new face of workplace barriers.* Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.		x			x	x			x	x
Xin, K. (2004). Asian American managers: An impression gap? An investigation of impression management and supervisor-subordinate relationships. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 40*(2), 160-181.		x		x	x		x	x		

APPENDIX B

BUIRB Approval

BUIRB Application Approved As Submitted: Melissa Chan-Nauli (2)

Institutional Review Board <my@brandman.edu> Today at 4:21 PM

To mchannau@mail.brandman.edu

CC jlee1@brandman.edu, buirb@brandman.edu, ddevore@brandman.edu

Dear Melissa Chan-Nauli,

Congratulations, your IRB application to conduct research has been approved by the Brandman University Institutional Review Board. This approval grants permission for you to proceed with data collection for your research. Please keep this email for your records, as it will need to be included in your research appendix.

If any issues should arise that are pertinent to your IRB approval, please contact the IRB immediately at BUIRB@brandman.edu. If you need to modify your BUIRB application for any reason, please fill out the "Application Modification Form" before proceeding with your research. The Modification form can be found at the following link: https://irb.brandman.edu/Applications/Modification.pdf.

Best wishes for a successful completion of your study.

Thank you,

Doug DeVore, Ed.D.
Professor
Organizational Leadership
BUIRB Chair
ddevore@brandman.edu
www.brandman.edu

APPENDIX C

Demographic Questionnaire

Thank you for your participation in this research study. This demographic questionnaire will take approximately five minutes to complete. All information will be kept confidential. Thank you!

1. **Which Asian American group do you identify with?**

    a. Asian Indian
    b. Bangladeshi
    c. Burmese
    d. Cambodian
    e. Chinese
    f. Filipino
    g. Hmong
    h. Indonesian
    i. Indochinese
    j. Japanese
    k. Korean
    l. Laotian
    m. Madagascar
    n. Maldivian
    o. Malaysian
    p. Nepalese
    q. Okinawan
    r. Pakistani
    s. Singaporean
    t. Sri Lankan
    u. Taiwanese
    v. Thai
    w. Vietnamese
    x. Other Asian not specified

2. **Are you considered an administrator?**

    Yes
    No

3. **Do you currently hold an Administrative Services Credential?**

    Yes
    No

4. What is your job title?

a. Dean
b. Vice Principal
c. Assistant Principal
d. Principal
e. Program Specialist
f. Program Coordinator
g. Director
h. Assistant Superintendent
i. Deputy Superintendent
j. Superintendent
k. Other: ___________________________(please specify)

5. Gender

Male
Female

6. What was your undergraduate major?

____

7. If you have advanced degree, what subject is it in?

____

8. Which of the following is your highest degree earned?

a. Bachelor's
b. Master's
c. J.D.
d. M.D., D.D.S., or equivalent
e. Ed.D.
f. Ph.D.
g. Other: ______________________ (please specify)

9. Age range at the time of your first administrative position:

a. 20 – 29
b. 30 – 39
c. 40 – 49
d. 50 – 59
e. 60 – 69

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions

Thank you for volunteering your time to meet and speak with me. This interview should take no more than 30-45 minutes to complete. Everything you say will be confidential, so please feel free to speak openly and honestly. Since I would like to concentrate on what you have to say, I would like to record our conversation so I can go back to review for 100% accuracy. The audio will not be shared with anyone, and I will only use it to transcribe the interview. If any time during the conversation you would prefer not to record what you are saying, you can press the stop button here. Thank you again for taking time out of your busy schedule to interview with me.

1. My dissertation is on Asian cultural values and its impact on career choice tendencies. For example, research points to the fact that many Asian parents encourage their children to go into the science and engineering fields because of the higher pay and prestige. Can you share with me some of your cultural values that are unique to being _____? (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Filipino, etc).

2. Cultural values are passed from one generation to the next. I suspect that these values were instilled starting in your early childhood. Can you share with me how you learned about these cultural values? Who taught you? When did you learn them?

3. I'm curious to see whether the cultural values you had mentioned earlier impacted your childhood? How about in your adult life?

4. In college, what did you study? Is what you studied what you are doing now?

5. How did you become interested in the K-12 education field? Do you have family or friends who are in the K-12 educational field?

6. Research points to the fact that Asian parents discourage their children from going into fields that are considered low pay, low status, and predominately women, not men are in, such as K-12 education, can you share with me your family's reaction when you told them that you wanted to go into K-12 education?

7. As a current K-12 principal, how have your Asian cultural values impacted your choice to be a principal?

8. Who was around you when you decided to be a principal? Can you share with me your family's reaction when you informed them of your promotion from a classroom teacher to a principal?

APPENDIX E

Overview Letter

INFORMATIONAL LETTER FOR RESEARCH SUBJECTS

Date: September 25, 2017

Dear Study Participant:

I am a doctoral candidate in the Brandman University School of Education, part of the Chapman University system, who is conducting a study to explore the perceptions of current Asian American K-12 principals on cultural values and its impact on career choice tendencies.

I am asking your assistance in the study by participating in an interview, which will take from 30-45 minutes and will be set up at a time convenient for you. If you agree to participate in an interview, you may be assured that it will be completely confidential. No names will be attached to any notes or records from the interview. All information will remain in locked files accessible only to the researchers. No employer or agency will have access to the interview information. You will be free to stop the interview and withdraw from the study at any time. Further, you may be assured that the researcher is not in any way affiliated with the employing agency and the administration.

The researcher is available at (626) 548-9644 and via email at melissa_sm_chan@yahoo.com to answer any questions you may have. Your participation would be greatly valued.

Sincerely,

Melissa Chan-Nauli
Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX F

Informed Consent

INFORMATION ABOUT: The Road Less Traveled: How Asian cultural tendencies impact the career choice tendencies of Asian American K-12 principals.

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: Melissa Chan-Nauli, Ed.D. candidate.

PURPOSE OF STUDY: You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Melissa Chan-Nauli, Ed.D. candidate, a doctoral student in the Brandman University School of Education, part of the Chapman University system. The purpose of this research study is to explore the perceptions of current Asian American K-12 principals on cultural values and its impact on career choice tendencies.

This study will fill in the gap in the research regarding the underrepresentation of Asian American principals in the K-12 educational setting. In order to understand the reasons for this underrepresentation, one must introduce the main topics of how Asian cultural values may have an impact on their career choices tendencies. This study is significant because without culturally representative role models to encourage and model career paths for Asian American students, the chances of broadening and increasing the number of Asian American administrators in the K-12 educational system would be slim. Furthermore, this study may provide valuable information to educational leaders and policy makers about the supports necessary to help Asian American educators access administrative positions in the K-12 educational setting.

By participating in this study I agree to participate in a one-on-one interview, which will last between 30 and 45 minutes and will be conducted in person. This research will begin and conclude between September 2017 and February 2018.

I understand that:

a) There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. I understand that the Investigator will protect my confidentiality by keeping the identifying codes and research materials in a locked file drawer that is available only to the researcher.

b) The possible benefit of this study to me is that my input may help add to the research regarding the underrepresentation of Asian American K-12 principals and how cultural values impact career choice tendencies. The findings will be available to me at the conclusion of the study and will provide new insights about the study, which I participated. I understand that I will not be compensated for my participation.

c) If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Jeffrey Lee, Ed.D. at jlee1@.brandman.edu.

d) My participation in this research study is voluntary. I may decide to not participate in the study and I can withdraw at any time. I can also decide not to answer particular

questions during the interview if I so choose. I understand that I may refuse to participate or may withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. Also, the Investigator may stop the study at any time.

e) No information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form and the "Research Participant's Bill of Rights". I have read the above and understand it and hereby consent to the procedure(s) set forth.

____

Signature of Participant or Responsible Party

____

Signature of Principal Investigator

____

Date

APPENDIX G

Research Participant's Bill of Rights

Any person who is requested to consent to participate as a subject in an experiment, or who is requested to consent on behalf of another, has the following rights:

1. To be told what the study is attempting to discover.

2. To be told what will happen in the study and whether any of the procedures, drugs or devices are different from what would be used in standard practice.

3. To be told about the risks, side effects or discomforts of the things that may happen to him/her.

4. To be told if he/she can expect any benefit from participating and, if so, what the benefits might be.

5. To be told what other choices he/she has and how they may be better or worse than being in the study.

6. To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study.

7. To be told what sort of medical treatment is available if any complications arise.

8. To refuse to participate at all before or after the study is started without any adverse effects.

9. To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form.

10. To be free of pressures when considering whether he/she wishes to agree to be in the study.

If at any time you have questions regarding a research study, you should ask the researchers to answer them. You also may contact the Brandman University Institutional Review Board, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research projects. The Brandman University Institutional Review Board may be contacted either by telephoning the Office of Academic Affairs at (949) 341-9937 or by writing to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA, 92618.

APPENDIX H

Sponsorship Letter

Dr. Mary Sieu, Superintendent
ABC Unified School District
16700 Norwalk Blvd.
Cerritos, CA 90703

Dear Dr. Sieu:

My name is Melissa Chan-Nauli and I am an doctoral student studying Organizational Leadership at Brandman University, part of the Chapman University system. I am about to start data collection for my dissertation, which focuses on perceptions of Asian American K-12 principals on cultural values and its impact on career choice tendencies. I have been informed by your colleagues that you are an innovative leader who might know a lot of others who potentially can participant in this study. I would like to seek your assistance; might it be possible to set up a phone call so I can share more about what I will be researching? I'm happy to also meet you at your convenience if you prefer meeting.

Here's some more information about me. I used to work as a counselor at Cerritos High School and my daughter currently attends Cerritos Elementary. My family and I have received very positive support from you and the rest of the ABC family.

Please feel free to reach me at melissa_sm_chan@yahoo.com and (626) 548-9644. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Melissa Chan-Nauli

Ed.D. Candidate

Figure 2

Protecting Human Research Participants Certification

Figure 2. A screen shot of National Institute of Health's protecting human research participants' certification provided to Institution Review Board (IRB) as evidence for student Melissa Chan-Nauli's successful completion of "Protecting Human Research Participants" training (National Institutes of Health, 2016).