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A Qualitative Exploration of the Effect of Age at Migration

on the Acculturative Processes of Filipino Immigrants:

Implications for Public Health Studies

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Public Health

by

Lourdes Cricel Molina

2012

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

A Qualitative Exploration of the Effect of Age at Migration

on the Acculturative Processes of Filipino Immigrants:

Implications for Public Health Studies

by

Lourdes Cricel Molina

Doctor of Philosophy in Public Health

University of California, Los Angeles, 2012

Professor Steven P. Wallace, Chair

Background and Significance: Acculturation is commonly used in public health studies to
examine and explain differences in health behaviors and outcomes between racial and ethnic
groups. Despite limitations, language preference, length of residence in the U.S., and nativity are
typically used as indicators of acculturation. The purpose of this dissertation research was to
explore the transition processes of recent Filipino immigrants via grounded theory and
qualitative data collection methods to gain a better understanding of their pre and post migration
experiences for future use in culture and health initiatives. Age at migration was a central point
of comparison, with the underlying use of a life course perspective. Methods: Semi-structured
interviews were conducted with 24 Filipino immigrants who migrated 15 years ago or less. Data
were collected on reasons for migration, expectations, post-migration experiences and
perceptions, Filipino-influenced behaviors and beliefs, American cultural norms, contact with

mainstream institutions, and several health-related domains. <u>Findings</u>: Immigrants described several factors related to ease of transitions, including prior knowledge of the U.S. and language skills as well as experiencing culture shock. These factors, in addition to reasons for migration, influenced the type and degree of exposure to mainstream institutions that resulted in further acclimation to the U.S. culture. Those that had higher levels of exposure to and encounters with institutions had more knowledge of American ways of life and appeared more integrated in the mainstream society. Further, while language, time since migration, and age at migration had secondary effects on post-migration experiences, they did not directly influence interviewees' integration to U.S. society. Immigrants' cultural values and beliefs were not replaced by those of the mainstream as is typically assumed via frameworks of acculturation. Further, the core cultural values that interviewees described like the importance of family and respect did not appear to diminish with increasing time since migration. Yet retaining these values also did not tend to hinder people's ability to acclimate to life in the U.S. <u>Conclusion</u>: Traditional acculturation theories and models that are commonly used in public health are not useful for understanding the migration experiences or cultural changes of Filipino immigrants. More effective frameworks would identify transition domains like language, knowledge, and skills and then examine changes to them. They would also focus on immigrants' contact with mainstream institutions and their ability at navigating through the new society. The Filipinos in this sample did not describe processes of being "more American" but rather the gaining of knowledge and skills needed to navigate the U.S. Public health efforts tailored to Filipino immigrants may be more effective if they incorporate knowledge on migration experiences, the notion of retaining core values and adopting traits needed to integrate to society, and specific values that have been identified to influence attitudes and behavior.

The dissertation of Lourdes Cricel Molina is approved.

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2012

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Celso and Cristina Molina, who as first-generation Filipino immigrants to the U.S., made sacrifices similar to those of the Filipino immigrants whom I interviewed. My parents' hard work and perseverance paved the way for my academic opportunities and success, and my gratitude to them is immeasurable.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The United States is the dwelling place for over 308 million people whose ethnic roots can be traced back to every corner of the world (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). In 2009, there were over 38 million foreign-born persons residing in the U.S. comprising 13% of the total population. Representing 1 in 8 residents, over 53 percent of immigrants are from Latin America, 28 percent from Asia, 13 percent from Europe, and 4 percent from Africa (U.S. Census, 2010). The number of foreign-born persons in the U.S. is the highest in history, with an increase from 31 million in 2000, 20 million in 1990, and 14 million in 1980 (U.S. Census, 2010). At a basic level, this data highlights the multiplicity in nativity and racial and ethnic composition of the U.S. population. From a public health perspective, the size and diversity of the foreign-born population reinforces the importance of understanding and addressing immigrant health, which is in large part because of their contribution to the overall health of our nation (Kandula, Kersey, and Lurie, 2004).

Within the field of immigrant health, areas of interest are expansive and include efforts such as identifying and addressing specific health issues of the heterogeneous immigrant population, providing appropriate programs and services, and collecting accurate disaggregated health data. Further, immigrant health research often incorporates cultural aspects of immigrants' transitions from their home country to the host. This notion of culture continues to be central to understanding potential causes for health differences across racial and ethnic groups, and studies on culture and health typically incorporate acculturation scales and measures. However, as will be discussed in the following chapter, there is very little standard for defining

and measuring culture in empirical studies. Yet a considerable number of studies do posit that acculturation influences health.

This dissertation research reviewed the use of acculturation models in immigrant health studies, but findings from semi-structured interviews among recent Filipino immigrants emphasizes the need for updated frameworks for identifying culture change or immigrant transitions processes.

I.   Importance of Research on Filipinos

Filipinos in the U.S. are a fast-growing and diverse ethnic group. The Philippines has the third largest country-of-birth group, with 1.7 million persons or almost 5% of the total foreign-born population in the U.S. emigrating from the Philippines (U.S. Census, 2010). There is an extensive history of migration from the Philippines to the U.S. because of early Philippine-U.S. relations involving the country's status as a U.S territory. "American culture" was and still is influential in the Philippines because of this history. English is spoken regularly, and people have adopted "American ways of life" which include fashion, food, and certain behaviors (Bautista 2002). Thus, Filipino immigrants have unique experiences when they move to the U.S. because they have had exposure to American culture, but are still new to America. Further, the degrees of exposure to American culture in the Philippines differ based on many socio-demographic factors and can influence the transition processes upon arrival.

There are many factors that contribute to the heterogeneity of Filipinos in the U.S. Potential differences exist between native-born Filipinos and foreign-born, between those that immigrated 30 years ago and those that immigrated a few months ago, between the Filipino immigrant community and other Asian immigrants, and among Filipinos who settled in various

parts of the country. However, despite the size and diversity of U.S. Filipinos and their rich immigration history, very little research exists on this group. Thus, the current research project aimed to study the transition processes of Filipinos – an understudied yet prominent immigrant group – in order to inform future work that uses acculturation in health studies.

II.   Specific Aims

This research project is a qualitative exploration on the acculturative processes of recent Filipino immigrants in which newly developed frameworks on culture change can be utilized in future health studies. Specifically, a grounded theory approach was utilized to examine if age at migration had an effect on immigrants' transitions by incorporating basic acculturation concepts into a theoretical framework that was modified throughout data collection and analysis.

The primary research question of this study is: How does age at migration affect the acculturative processes of Filipino immigrants? There were three main specific aims that drove this research:

Specific Aim 1—Describe how age at migration of recent Filipino immigrants affects their immigration experiences, their institutional points of contact within the host society, any changes to their cultural identities, beliefs, and behaviors, and the processes of these cultural changes. Using a grounded theory approach, explore reasons for migration, sociopolitical climates of the receiving country, social interactions and networks, family life, employment opportunities, financial circumstances, health issues, healthcare encounters, and any other relevant themes that may emerge.

Specific Aim 2—Map out the life course patterns of recent Filipino immigrants with respect to trajectories, transitions, turning points, and cultural/contextual influences and determine if these patterns are influenced by age at migration.

Specific Aim 3—Based on the adaptive processes and the life course patterns of change of recent Filipino immigrants, explore how well existing theories or frameworks of acculturation coincide with these findings, paying particular attention to the effect of age at migration. Using the qualitative results of this study, identify domains that should be included in future tools for measuring culture change.

III.   Organization of Dissertation

There are a total of seven chapters in this dissertation. After this introduction chapter, the second chapter provides a background on the three main research topics. First, I will give an overview of Filipinos migrants in the U.S. including a brief immigration history and demographic profile. Next, I will provide a review of acculturation theories, specifically those used in public health research. Last, I will provide a background on the increasing trend of late-life migration. In chapter 3, I will describe the theoretic framework that drove this research as well as the qualitative data collection and analysis approaches used. Chapters 4 through 6 are findings chapters and will compare the transition experiences of the immigrants in this study based on ease of transition (Chapter 4); analyze current acculturation frameworks using interview findings (Chapter 5); and describe the institutional points of contact encountered by people in the sample (Chapter 6). Chapter 7 provides a discussion that includes public health implications of this research, conclusions, as well as strengths and limitations.

Chapter 2

Background

This chapter will provide background on three relevant areas pertaining to this

dissertation – Filipinos, acculturation, and late-life migration. First, will be an overview of

Filipino immigrants in the U.S. including a demographic profile, a brief migration history, and a

summary of common Filipino cultural traits. Next, I will provide a synopsis of acculturation,

including theories and a literature review on public health and acculturation studies. Third will

be an overview on the trend of late-life migration, including a literature review of public health

studies on this topic and the health implications of migrating at later ages. The chapter will end

with a thorough discussion of the framework of conceptual domains that drove this research.

I.   Filipino Demographics, Migration History, and Cultural Traits

A. Demographic Profile

Filipinos comprise one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in the U.S and are the second

largest Asian-American subgroup[1]. There were approximately 2.5 million Filipinos living in the

U.S. in 2010, an almost 50% increase since the 1990 Census in which there were an estimated

1.5 million Filipino-Americans (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).   They live in communities across

the country, and the states with the highest proportion of Filipinos are California, Hawai'i,

Illinois, New Jersey, and New York respectively. California alone is home to roughly half of all

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[1] Data are reported for persons reporting Filipino alone as their ethnicity and does not include Filipino and any other combination of ethnicity.

Filipino-Americans and thus, was an optimal location to conduct research on this group (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

The gender distribution of Filipino-Americans is slightly different than the entire U.S. population, but the median age and age distribution of both groups is similar. Among Filipinos of all ages in the U.S., there are 56% females and 44% males compared to 51% and 49% respectively for the total population. Gender among Filipinos is fairly evenly distributed across younger ages groups (0-34). However, Filipino women begin to outnumber men after age 35 with 59% females and 41% males between ages 35-64 and 63% females and 37% males age 65 and over. These percentages for women are slightly higher than the total population. The median age of Filipino-Americans is 38.9 compared to 35.8 for the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

Filipinos in the U.S. have high levels of education relative to the total U.S. population. Of the Filipino-American adult population aged 25 and over, fewer than 9% have less than a high school education compared to nearly 16% of the total population. Further, more than twice as many Filipino-Americans have a bachelor's degree (40%) compared to the total population (17%). The median household income of Filipinos in the U.S. is approximately $72,000, which is quite high relative to that of the total population, which is $48,000[2] (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). However, the areas with the highest proportion of Filipinos are metropolitan cities like Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago. These urban areas typically have higher salaries and wages, which could contribute to the relatively high median income amount for U.S. Filipino. Further, the average household size of Filipinos is 3.34 and is slightly higher than the national average of 2.61 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). A larger household size might equate to more people working and contributing to the overall household income.

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[2] Both figures are 2006 inflation-adjusted.

The majority (66%) of Filipinos in the U.S. are foreign-born, of which 62% are naturalized U.S. citizens. Interestingly, 58% of current foreign-born Filipinos are women (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). As described in the following section on Filipino immigration history to the U.S., the overwhelming majority of Filipino immigrants between the early 1900's until 1965 were male. This gender shift may be due to the mass migration of Filipino women as nurses post-1965 (Liu and Ong, 1991).

B. History of Filipino Immigration to the United States

Filipinos have been migrating to the U.S. in waves since the early 1900's. An impetus for early Filipino immigration was the forty-four year U.S. colonization of the Philippines that began after the Spanish-American War in 1902 and lasted until Philippine independence on July 4th, 1946 (Shaw and Francia, 2002). Prior to the U.S. occupation, the Philippines was under Spanish rule for over 300 years. The colonization of the Philippines by both Spain and the U.S. have had lasting cultural effects on Filipinos including the proliferation of Catholicism, Spanish surnames, and English language use.

The first Filipino migration was to provide inexpensive labor for Hawaiian sugar and pineapple plantations and California farms that required a constant supply of cheap labor (Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000). In addition to labor migration, The Pensionado Act of 1903 was passed to encourage Filipinos to migrate for U.S. educations. Roughly five hundred qualified students, called *pensionados*, studied in the U.S. and then returned to the Philippines as highly educated and trained citizens with exposure to American ideals. (Alcantara, 1981; Liu and Ong, 1991; Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000). The *pensionados* typically came from wealthy elite families, which is in contrast to the migrant workers who were generally from rural parts of the

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Philippines and had minimal education. Thus, opportunities to work in America were highly desired.

On December 20, 1906, the Hawaiian Sugar Plantation Association brought the first fifteen Filipinos workers to Hawai'i. Filipino plantation workers became known as *sakadas*. Persistent recruitment and tales of success for the first immigrants led to subsequent Filipino migration to Hawai'i (Alcantara, 1981). Between 1906 and 1934, an estimated 120,000 Filipinos migrated to work in the U.S. (Liu and Ong, 1991). Many labor migrants, who were primarily single men, came to Hawai'i with the intention of working temporarily to earn money and then returning to the Philippines. However, many workers were not able to save enough money to return home or to live comfortably in the U.S. because the wages were very low (Alcantara 1981). In addition to the rough working and living conditions, life for the *sakadas* was a struggle.

As an American territory, the Philippines was afforded unique U.S. immigration policies. Movement of Filipinos to the U.S. was considered internal migration, and Filipinos were given the status of nationals (Bautista, 2002). However, ultimately they were denied naturalization rights, and their non-citizen status prevented them from pursuing jobs that required citizenship, from obtaining federal unemployment benefits, and from owning real estate.

The start of WWII saw many Filipino plantation workers leaving their jobs and the difficult conditions for higher paying employment in and around the military bases on the Hawaiian Islands (Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000). A 1924 strike of *sakadas* also saw a shift in the workforce, and the first major influx of Filipino workers from Hawai'i to the mainland occurred. The relocation due to the strike, as well as the U.S. Immigration Act of 1924 that banned Asian immigration particularly from China and Japan, were the impetus for California

farmers to turn to Filipinos as labor alternatives (Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000). By 1931, approximately 19,000 Filipino workers from Hawai'i moved to California where they joined the already 31,000 Filipino farm workers who had migrated there directly from the Philippines (Liu and Ong, 1991). Unfortunately, Filipinos on the mainland experienced heavy discrimination (Bautista, 2002). There were intense racial and economic clashes between Filipino and white workers with documented race riots against Filipinos occurring in the California communities of Exeter, Watsonville, Stockton, San Jose, and San Francisco (Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000). As a result of political pressure and for the safety of Filipinos, the U.S. Congress passed a Filipino Repatriation Act in 1935 in which the government urged and paid for Filipinos to return to the Philippines. Roughly 2000 Filipino migrant workers chose to return to their homeland, but a majority stayed in California. One potential reason for this decision is that they likely did not make and save enough wages to live comfortably back home. Their inability to gain financial independence through their work in the U.S., coupled with a strong sense of pride, made returning to their homeland undesirable (Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000).

Like the *sakadas*, Filipino farm workers did not intend to move to the U.S. in search of a new life with a new home and family. They came to take advantage of the job market or educational system and intended to go back to the Philippines. Prior to 1934, at the height of Filipino immigration, there were very few female Filipina immigrants. The ratio of Filipino men to Filipina women was 14:1 at the time (Bautista, 2002). Subsequent migration restrictions of 1924 in essence prevented Filipino immigrant men from future contact with women of their generation (Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000). Most of the Filipino migrant farm workers in California, or *manongs* as they are referred to, reached old age still living in the U.S. without families (Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000).

WWII not only brought significant changes to plantations and farms in terms of labor supply and demand, but it introduced a new role of Filipinos to Americans – that of soldiers. In 1942, President Roosevelt officially allowed Filipinos to be drafted, and Filipinos in both the U.S. and in the Philippines fought on the side of the Americans. This caused a positive shift in the American sentiment towards. Subsequently, an amendment to the Nationality Act of 1940 gave Filipinos who joined the military the opportunity to apply for citizenship. Approximately 10,000 Filipinos seized the opportunity (Liu and Ong, 1991).

On July 4, 1946, the Philippines was officially granted independence from the U.S., and organized Filipino labor migration ceased. Despite the halt in formal labor migration, Filipinos continued to work in California farms and were active members of unions, notably the United Farm Workers Union of America (Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000). The bulk of Filipino migration to the U.S. in the 1950's was a result of Filipino farm workers petitioning for their families. However, it was not until the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act's quota-based preference system that Filipino immigration began to diversify in terms of both gender and class (Liu and Ong, 1991).

The primary goal of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act was twofold – to promote family reunification and to recruit professional occupational immigrants. As a result, there was a dual chain of migration for Filipinos post 1965. One was the "relative-selective" and the other was the "occupational-selective." Based on the relative-selective priority, immigrants came as petitioned relatives of previously migrated Filipinos. In the first five years after the enactment of this legislation, more than 62% of Filipino immigrants had moved for family reunification. Most of the Filipinos sponsoring their families in this initial wave were farm and plantation workers or WWII veterans (Liu and Ong, 1991). In Hawai'i – the state with the largest Filipino settlement

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prior to 1965 – an overwhelming majority of the post-1965 immigrants came as relatives between 1966-1971. Very few came as occupational immigrants. Data on education levels of Filipinos in the state during this timeframe show that less than 3% of adults had four years of college education and less then 3% of the Hawaiian Filipino labor force worked in professional or technical jobs. These numbers suggest that the socioeconomic characteristics of this wave of Filipino immigrants are similar to those of the pre-1965 workers that petitioned for them. Almost one-fifth of all immigrants from the Philippines in the first five years after the act settled in Hawai'i (Liu and Ong, 1991).

The occupation-selective clause of the Immigration and Nationality Act was in part due to the shortage of professionals in U.S. health-related fields (Liu and Ong, 1991; Bautista, 2002). In the decade following the enactment, roughly one-third of all Filipinos entered the U.S. as occupational immigrants under the preference system, and a large number of them were doctors and nurses. There was a distinct socioeconomic difference between immigrants in the two chains. Another distinction is that since persons entering as professionals did not need to be sponsored by a relative, many of them came alone and/or without any social ties to the pre-1965 immigrants (Bautista, 2002).

A final and important difference between the relative-selective and occupation-selective chains of post-1965 Filipino migration is the eventual settlement location of each group. Since an overwhelming majority of petitioned families were sponsored by their pre-1965 immigrant relatives, most of them migrated to Hawai' and the West coast. In contrast, a surplus of jobs in healthcare was prevalent in New York and New Jersey and the city of Chicago (Liu and Ong, 1991; Bautista, 2002). Most Filipino professions migrated to these areas. Thus, there was an occupation distinction between Filipinos on the two U.S. coasts.

Overall, the dual chain migration that occurred post 1965 increased the number of Filipinos in the U.S. several times. In 1970, there were roughly 343,000 Filipinos living in the U.S. By 1980, that number rose to over 782,000 and in 1990 to over 1.4 million. Currently, that number has doubled to over 2.5 million Filipinos living in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The long and diverse immigration and colonization history of Filipinos has not only shaped the formation of Filipino communities for over a century, but will likely continue to influence the U.S. Filipino population of the present and the future, particularly in terms of settlement locations, the pursuit of economic opportunities, and the reunification of families.

C. Filipino Cultural Traits and Values

Many scholars have extensively studied the cultural characteristics that are central to being Filipino. These traits and values "have proven very useful in attempting to understand Filipino behavior" (Guthrie, 1970). In this section, I will describe these cultural characteristics, and they will be referenced in subsequent chapters when exploring culture change among the people interviewed in this study.

The most commonly referenced Filipino traits stem from an emphasis on relationships, a sense of community, and the importance of kindness and consideration. These traits include *pakikisama*, which refers to getting along well with others or group loyalty*; utang na loob* which is an obligation or a debt of gratitude; and *hiya* which is embarrassment or shame (Leoncini, 2005; Ceniza, 2000; Quito, 2000). As Leoncini points out, relationships for Filipinos are not merely based on individual interactions. They take on a familial orientation as an entire family's reputation or image is involved whenever an individual deals with others. *Pakikisama* is a trait as well as a cultural concept that has an overarching influence on the ways that Filipinos deal

with various types of relationships – personal, formal, and even interactions with strangers. Further, success or failure in the realm of interpersonal relationships is a "family affair" and does not merely affect the individual (Leoncini, 2005). It is believed that through *pakikisama*, "the practice of other values and traits is realized" (Leoncini, 2005). Thus the need to get along well with others is often facilitated by the sense of gratitude (*utang na loob*) or even that of embarrassment (*hiya*). These traits were influential in people's decision-making processes and their approaches to dealing with cultural challenges upon arrival to the U.S. and will be further elaborated on in the chapter on transitions.

Related to *pakikisama* is the cultural value of *pakikipagkapwa-tao* or having regard for others (Leoncini, 2005; Ceniza, 2000). It is common practice for Filipinos to be sympathetic and empathetic towards other people. It is part of the sociable and relatable aspect of Filipinos. "It results in camaraderie and a feeling of closeness to one another" (Ceniza, 2000). In conjunction with *pakikipagkapwa-tao* is the importance of respect and dignity for others, particularly those older than you. This emphasizes the strong family values held by Filipinos. Filipinos are family-oriented and "possess a genuine and deep love for the family, which includes not simply the spouses and children, parents, and siblings, but also grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, godparents, and other ceremonial relatives. To the Filipino, one's family is the source of personal identity, the source of emotional and material support, and the person's main commitment and responsibility" (Ceniza, 2000). The Filipino family is built upon the premise that parents and elders are respected, children are cared for, generosity is shared, and sacrifices are endured for the sake of the family.

Related to the willingness of Filipinos to make sacrifices for one's family is the cultural notion that Filipinos are hardworking and industrious. Ceniza points out that "Filipinos have the

capacity for hard work, given proper conditions. The desire to raise one's standard of living and to possess the essentials of a decent life for one's family, combined with the right opportunities and incentives, stimulate the Filipino to work very hard. This is manifested most noticeably in a willingness to take risks with jobs abroad, and to work there at two or three jobs. The result is productivity and entrepreneurship for some, and survival despite poverty for others." An assumption can be made that Filipinos who migrate to the U.S. as well as to other countries have a propensity towards hard work. As will be discussed in the chapter on immigrants' contact with mainstream society, nearly all of the people that were interviewed actively sought work regardless of age, socio-demographic information, work history, and reasons for migration. However, it should not imply that Filipinos who remain in the Philippines are not hardworking or are less industrious than those that migrate.

Another aspect of Filipino culture that has been heavily discussed is that of religion. The Catholic Church played a major role during the Spanish occupation of the Philippines as Spanish missionaries enforced Catholicism in a country that was predominantly Muslim. On faith and religion, Licuanan writes that, "Filipinos have a deep faith in God. Innate religiosity enables us to comprehend and genuinely accept reality in the context of God's will and plan. Thus, tragedy and bad fortune are accepted and some optimism characterizes even the poorest lives. Prayer is an important part of our lives." Intertwined in the religious faith of Filipinos are two cultural concepts, *bahala na* and *pampalakas ng loob*. *Bahala na*, which means to leave it up to God, is viewed as "defeatist resignation, may be considered positively as a reservoir of psychic energy, an important psychological support on which we can lean during difficult times" (Licuanan, 2000). Taking *bahala na* into account is integral within a health context as a strong faith in God can influence decisions that people make regarding their health as well as the manners in which

they cope with certain health issues (Culture and Health Among Filipinos and Filipino-Americans in Central Los Angeles, 2007). The concept of *pampalakas ng loob* involves becoming strong in the face of adversity and "allows us to act despite uncertainty" (Licuanan, 2000). This too is an important concept to consider in health-related situations for Filipinos.

Finally, according to several authors, Filipinos possess cultural attributes of joy and humor as well as adaptability. These qualities can be considered strengths when faced with the potential challenges of adapting to life in a new country. "Filipinos have a cheerful and fun-loving approach to life and its ups and downs. There is a pleasant disposition, a sense of humor, and a propensity for happiness that contribute not only to the Filipino charm, but to the indomitability of the Filipino spirit. Laughing at ourselves and our trouble is an important coping mechanism. Often playful, sometimes cynical, sometimes disrespectful, we laugh at those we love and at those we hate, and make jokes about our fortune, good and bad" (Quito, 2000). Quito states that in general "Filipinos have a great capacity to adjust, and to adapt to circumstances and to the surrounding environment, both physical and social. Unplanned or unanticipated events are never overly disturbing or disorienting as the flexible Filipino adjusts to whatever happens. We are creative, resourceful, adept at learning, and able to improvise and make use of whatever is at hand in order to create and produce."

All of these Filipino qualities and traits are generalizations that may be useful to our understanding of Filipino behavior. Thus, there are undoubtedly exceptions to these statements. However, from philosophical and psychological perspectives, this is a relatively methodical review of the cultural values and traits that are prominent among Filipinos. A final reflection on Filipino cultural values and thoughts on the notion of language as a standard:

"Much has been written about Filipino cultural values. Such characteristics such as

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warmth and person orientation, devotion to family, and sense of joy and humor are part of our culture and are reinforced by all socializing forces such as the family, school, and peer group. Aside from emphasizing interpersonal values, Filipino culture is also characterized by an openness to the outside which easily incorporates foreign elements without a basic consciousness of our cultural core. This is related to our colonial mentality and to the use of English as the medium of instruction in schools. The introduction of English as the medium of education de-Filipinized the youth and taught them to regard American culture as superior. The use of English contributes also to a lack of self-confidence on the part of the Filipino. The fact that doing well means using a foreign language, which foreigners inevitably can handle better, leads to an inferiority complex. At a very early age, we find that our self-esteem depends on the mastery of something foreign." Patricia Lucanan, Ateneo de Manila University, 2000

II.   Acculturation

Culture has become increasingly emphasized and questioned in trying to understand potential causes for health differences across racial and ethnic groups. In doing so, studies often conceptualize level of culture and cultural changes using acculturation scales and measures (Salant and Lauderdale, 2003; Hunt et al., 2004). However, culture and acculturation are typically not defined, there are problems with measurement, and many of the acculturation models do not take structural and socioeconomic factors into account. Many studies examine a rather narrow aspect of culture in acculturation research like language preference or duration in the U.S. and not broader socio-cultural issues that may shape the acculturative process.

Despite these challenges, a considerable number of studies on migrant health posit that acculturation influences health (Hazuda et al., 1988; Palinkas and Pickwell, 1995; Maxwell et al., 1997; Mehta, 1998; Gonzalez et al., 2001; Nishimoto and Foley, 2001; Gomez et al., 2004; Gomez et al., 2004; Chen et al., 2005; Wong et al., 2005; Antecol and Bedard, 2006; Dey and Lucas, 2006; Kim et al., 2006; Mui and Kang, 2006), and much of this work is built upon various theoretical frameworks of acculturation.

A. Definitions of Culture and Acculturation

Culture is broadly defined as the customs, behaviors, attitudes, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group (Landrine and Klonoff, 2004). Culture is used generally to describe the context of certain ways of life. Acculturation entails culture change resulting from contact between two cultures (Abraido-Lanza et al., 2006). A related concept is assimilation, which has generally been conceptualized as the process of integrating into the social and structural institutions of a particular society (Hunt et al., 2004). Theoretical models describe the process of acculturation as embedded within assimilation, but much contemporary research still uses them interchangeably or without adequately defining them. In health research, culture is often understood to be "a cluster of nebulous characteristics" determined by ethnic group membership and place of birth (Hunt, Schneider et al. 2004).

Culture is often assumed and many times undefined in studies of culture and health. In a review of studies on acculturation and health among Latinos, only 8% included any definition of culture (Hunt et al., 2004). The definitions that were provided were vague and based on general attributes. Thus, because acculturation theories are generally based on culture change, it is problematic that the concept of culture is not clearly defined.

B. History of Acculturation Theories

The concept of acculturation is rooted in both the fields of anthropology and sociology (Padilla, 1982; Hunt et al., 2004). Anthropologists began using it in the 1880's to describe the change that occurs with regards to artifacts, customs, and beliefs when different cultural

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traditions come into contact (Hunt et al., 2004). Over time, this perspective evolved and was used for studying the social effects of increased immigration to the U.S. In general, early studies used acculturation theory to strengthen arguments that less assimilated immigrants were at social, economic, political, and health-related disadvantages and that assimilation or acculturation into mainstream U.S. society would eventually dispel those disadvantages (Padilla and Perez, 2003). However, because anthropologists saw the potential negative and exploitive repercussions that this type of perspective could have towards immigrants, they made a concerted and collaborative effort in the 1930's to develop a standard definition of acculturation for future research and limit the negative ways it had been used in past studies. Thus, Redfield and colleagues defined acculturation as "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups" (Salant and Lauderdale, 2003). However, by the 1940's and 50's, American anthropologists instead became interested in cultural contact and cultural change. By the 60's, interest and use of acculturation among cultural anthropologists sharply declined, but was gaining interest in fields like psychology and epidemiology (Padilla and Perez, 2003). American cultural anthropology continues to oppose the concept of acculturation and prefers notions of culture change within a dynamic social context (Kleinman et al., 1978; Chun and Organista, 2003).

Sociologists, notably Park in 1914 from the University of Chicago, began to study the process immigrants underwent to incorporate into mainstream U.S. society. From his work of looking at what happens when people from diverse cultures come into contact with each other, Park developed a three-stage model of integration (Padilla and Perez, 2003). The three stages included contact, accommodation, and assimilation and posit that contact between people of

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different cultures subsequently leads people to accommodate one another in order to minimize conflict. Specifically, Park theorized that after increased contact, immigrants to the U.S. had to accommodate to those of the host or "dominant" society. A byproduct of this accommodation is increased interaction that leads to eventual assimilation. Park's model is linear and describes a directional process of losing one's original or native culture through increased acculturation (Abraido-Lanza et al., 2006).

Several decades later, the Social Science Research Council contributed to the evolving definition of acculturation and in 1954, defined it as "culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems" (Hunt et al., 2004). In the 1960's, another sociological view of acculturation and assimilation was developed by Gordon that is similar to Park's in terms of direction (Alba and Nee, 1997). Gordon's framework was slightly more multidimensional in that it incorporated the influence of social structures on culture change. He was the first to make a distinction between acculturation, which he defined as cultural or behavioral assimilation, and social structural or institutional assimilation. According to Gordon, structural assimilation is the entry of members of an ethnic minority group into primary-group relationships with the majority or host group. These relationships may include cliques, clubs, and other institutions of the core society like schools and the workplace. Acculturation, on the other hand, is used to describe the adoption of the cultural patterns of the host society or minority group. This model states that acculturation comes before assimilation and is inevitable (Alba and Nee, 1997). He defined a cultural standard in terms of the direction and magnitude that acculturation is measured, and that standard included the cultural patterns of middle class, Protestant, White Ango-Saxons. Further, Gordon's framework states that acculturation is a one-way process in which one must almost completely accept the core cultural

patterns of the majority in order to acculturate. This unidirectional process invariably means that as one accepts the patterns of the "majority" society, one must let go of the patterns of the "minority" group (Alba and Nee, 1997). These unidirectional, unimensional, and linear features define Gordon's framework and are subsequently the ones that are most controversial.

These foundational theories of both acculturation and assimilation have influenced subsequent frameworks that have evolved over time. Critiques of contemporary acculturation models argue that there is a lack of recognition of or explanation for the possibility of bicultural and multicultural contexts (Salant and Lauderdale, 2003) and that the outcome of acculturation and/or assimilation is believed to be a distinct result rather than a multifaceted, multidirectional process. This is often the case because latent variables like place of birth are used as outcome measures of acculturation. However, place of birth alone tells us very little in terms of one's integration into the U.S. mainstream society or how culture influences integration. Further, the underlying assumption that culture change is relative to a "standard" is limiting and problematic. Despite the numerous arguments against the utility and applicability of a broad concept of acculturation (Salant and Lauderdale, 2003; Hunt et al., 2004; Abraido-Lanza et al., 2006), it has been widely used in explaining the processes that immigrants undergo when introduced to different norms of new societies. In general, the two most common frameworks are based on the unidimensional model and the bidimensional model of acculturation theory. Brief descriptions of each will be provided in the following section.

C. Unidirectional Model of Acculturation

The unidirectional model, also referred to as unidimensional, dates back to Park and includes the traditional view that acculturation is the "shedding off of an old culture and the

taking on of a new culture" (Flannery et al., 2001). This model is described as linear because there is only one outcome of acculturation, which is assimilation. Two cultures exist within this model, but what is most important is the movement from one (the home or original culture) towards another (the host or new culture). Also of importance in this framework is the adoption of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of the new culture and replacing home cultural attributes with them.

In public health research, unidirectional frameworks of acculturation prevail in exploring the relationship between culture and health, and an explanation may be the use of linear regression models in investigating this relationship (Abraido-Lanza, Armbrister et al. 2006). Specifically, linear models are common as evidenced by the use of non-scale, single variable measures of acculturation. For instance, a review of research on acculturation and health in Asian immigrant populations shows that a considerable number of studies used linear measures like nativity, length of time in the U.S., percent lifetime in the U.S., generation, and language to determine level of acculturation (Salant and Lauderdale, 2003). Studies that used scales largely explored mental health indicators and some health service use, but not health status or specific outcomes.

D. Bidirectional Model of Acculturation

The bidirectional model, or bidimensional framework, has become an accepted alternative to the unidirectional perspective (Flannery et al., 2001). Outside of public health, research on acculturation – particularly acculturative stress within the field of psychology – has moved away from unidiminsional models and adopted a more bidimensional approach. This framework incorporates two cultural orientations; one is in relation to a home culture or culture

of origin and the other to a host culture (Flannery et al., 2001). These orientations are conceptually independent and make it possible for multiple trajectories of acculturation.

Berry is the most notable proponent of the bidimensional framework, and his model describes four types of acculturation. Separation is a result of positive home culture attitudes and negative host culture attitudes; assimilation results from negative home culture attitudes and positive host culture attitudes; marginalization from negative attitudes towards both home and host cultures; and integration from positive attitudes toward both home and host cultures (Berry 1997). Different adaptations to Berry's model sometimes use different labels for the types of acculturation, but they describe the same processes (Flannery et al., 2001; Padilla and Perez, 2003). The bidimensional models attempt to capture the complex multilinear and multidirectional process of acculturation and move away from the cultural dichotomy of a unilinear model. However, there is still the assumption of a quantifiable difference between two distinct cultures in question, that of the mainstream versus an "ethnic" or "traditional" culture. Further, there is no explanation for or incorporation of the changes that occur to the host culture as a result of contact with immigrants. Within these frameworks, transitions and changes appear to only affect the recent immigrant and not non-immigrants, more established immigrants, or societal institutions and structures.

E. The Use of Acculturation Models in Empirical Studies

A basic premise driving many studies on acculturation and health is that level of acculturation can explain or predict health differences found within and between various ethnic groups. It is embedded in a lifestyle or behavioral model stating that culturally based knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs influence people's behavioral choices and that these choices

influence observed health patterns that are largely independent of other contextual influences (Hunt et al., 2004). There is a large body of research focusing on culture and health among immigrants that use the described acculturation models to investigate this principle. These studies tend to focus primarily on Latino and Asian immigrant groups because most contemporary immigration is from Latin American and Asian countries. Also, there is an underlying assumption that immigrants from these countries bring cultural norms and values that are protective of good health and buffer the negative effects on health of the U.S. mainstream culture (Jasso et al., 2004). However, the general conclusion is that as immigrants acculturate to mainstream culture, they lose the health advantages afforded them through cultural buffering.

Major limitations of this framework lie not necessarily in the underlying argument, but in both the conceptualization (or lack thereof) of important concepts as well as the methods used for investigating the relationship. The multifaceted concept of culture is rarely if ever fully studied or explored. Public health research on acculturation typically measures level of culture by using proxy variables like length of time in the U.S. or nativity status (Abraido-Lanza et al., 2006). Correlations between health differences and variables like nativity, length of time in the U.S., or language preference are then taken as evidence that acculturation predicts health (Hunt et al., 2004; Abraido-Lanza et al., 2006). In other studies on immigrant health, variables like length of time in the U.S. and nativity are used to illustrate differences in health (Hunt et al., 2004) . Yet proxy variables do not adequately provide us with information on culture or immigrants' adherence to both traditional and mainstream values.

Despite the limitations of linear proxy variables, findings from acculturation and health studies report considerable evidence of a relationship between level of acculturation and health outcomes. For Latino immigrants, "high levels of acculturation" are associated with an

increased rate of a broad range of physical health problems including increased adult all-cause mortality, chronic liver and kidney disease, hypertension, obesity, certain measures of mental health, disability measured by limited activity and bed disability days, infant mortality, low birth weight, and asthma (Hazuda et al., 1988; Abraido-Lanza et al., 2006). Interestingly, increased acculturation has also been found to be associated with decreased rates of diabetes and positive self-assessed health among Latinos (Levkoff and Sanchez, 2003).

Health studies on Asian immigrant groups also typically use non-scale measures to investigate the relationship between health and acculturation. In general, studies on acculturation and Asian groups have yielded inconsistent findings, and associations between such measures as duration in the U.S. and health appear to vary by ethnic subgroup (Salant and Lauderdale, 2003). For instance, increased morbidity was higher for less acculturated Cambodian refugees, but increased acculturation was associated with fewer psychological disturbances for South East Asians (Mehta, 1998). In one study, length of residence predicted smoking behavior among Chinese youth, but in a similar study for Korean students, length of residence only predicted smoking use for females. Language proficiency is another non-scale measure often used in Asian acculturation research to predict health. The findings are more consistent in that English proficiency is found to be correlated with decreased morbidity and stress-related mental health issues. However, these studies measured acculturation for the broad Asian group, not subgroups and did not account for variation in baseline language proficiency across subgroups.

Despite a relatively vast amount of research on acculturation and health, as Abraido-Lanza points out, public health's contribution to this body of work has not "kept pace" with evolving acculturation theory. In addition to the ambiguity of the concept of culture in acculturation research, the structural and societal contexts that might promote or inhibit both

culture change as well as health behaviors is often not taken into consideration. Thus, at a basic level, more expansive models of acculturation would be useful in immigrant health research and would require shifting from using linear measures of acculturation to more multidimensional scales or sets of variables.

There is increasing diversity among immigrants, and most acculturation studies do not address varied immigrant characteristics. One of these characteristics is the broadening age that immigrants migrate. Acculturation theories posit that culture change, the adoption of mainstream cultural values, and moving away from traditional "home" society values towards "host" society values are all a function of one's exposure to mainstream society. Therefore, it is important to incorporate immigrants' diversity in acculturation models as such diverse characteristics, like age at migration, can influence people's exposure and level of change. Within the context of age, there are two important issues to consider. The first is the notion of culturally based attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and values and that age can potential influence cultural affinity for change. The other relates to the types of exposure or contact one has with the mainstream society and how age may also influence this. If acculturation is in fact the result of contact with a new culture and adopting certain ways of life, basic questions regarding differences in cultural values, how amendable people are to cultural change, and the role that different types of exposure to the mainstream society has on these changes become particularly relevant. The use of more multifaceted models of acculturation that incorporate age or life course could prove useful and potentially more applicable in exploring cultural experiences of people of various ages. The final section of this chapter will provide background on late-life migration and a potential theoretical framework for exploring cultural transitions for older aged immigrants.

III.   A Trend in Migration: Late Life Immigration

Since most migration occurs when people are under the age of 35, studies about immigration typically focus on younger age groups (Jefferys and Monger, 2008). However, there has been an increase in the number of persons that migrate later in life – at aged 60 or older – and this move occurs at a significantly different time in their lives. Further, while small in comparison to the overall number of immigrants per year, there is an increase in the number of late life migrants, and they are an important segment of people relocating to the U.S.

In 2006, roughly 1.1 million persons obtained legal permanent residence (i.e. became green card holders) in the U.S. Approximately 75,000 of them were Filipinos, including 44,000 new arrivals from the Philippines (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2007). Almost half of the total number of Filipino immigrants—new arrivals and those changing their status—were between the ages of 25 and 54. Roughly 15% were aged 55 and over, and approximately 6% or 6000 persons were over age 65 in 2006. Among those aged 65 and over, 62% were female and 38% were male. These proportions are similar to the total population of people obtaining legal permanent status. Interestingly, total number of green card recipients has seen slight increases but mostly decreases since 2006, and the numbers of people from the Philippines is congruent with the trend. While the number of older immigrants is comparatively smaller than those migrating at young adulthood, there is a definite wave of adults migrating to the U.S later in life. Thus, research on both immigrant health and gerontology needs be expanded to include immigration at later life stages.

The total number of foreign-born persons also reveals why research on later life migration is important. A report on the older foreign-born population found that of the 28.4

million foreign-born[3] in the U.S. in 2000, persons aged 65 and over accounted for 11%[4] (He 2002). Among this older foreign-born group, 39% were born in Europe, 31% in Latin America, and 22% in Asia. It is projected that future foreign-born persons aged 65 and over will be predominantly from Latin America and Asia (He, 2002).

A. Research on Late Life Immigration

There is some research on theories, patterns, and reasons for migration among older adults in the U.S., but most of this work focuses on migratory patterns within the U.S., like movement from one region of the country to another and from living independently at home to living with children or in institutions (Wiseman, 1980; Walters, 2002; Choi, 2003). Most of the very few studies that have explored late life immigration have been qualitative and specific to an ethnic group (Gelfand, 1989; Angel et al., 1999; Becker et al., 2000; Gee and Kobayashi, 2004; Emami and Torres, 2005; Kalavar and Van Willigen, 2005). However, very little of the research on late-life migration includes topics of cultural transitions or change which would shed light on the acculturative processes of older immigrants.

There was one study that examined the experiences of older Asian Indian immigrants to the U.S. that had findings on cultural changes. They reported that the primary reason for migration among elderly Asian Indians who have adult immigrant children was family

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[3] The foreign-born, as defined by the Census Bureau, are individuals living in the U.S. who are not U.S. citizens at birth. The foreign-born population is classified by citizenship status: those who have not become U.S. citizens through naturalization and those who are not U.S. citizens. Immigrants, as defined by the Immigration and Nationality Act, are aliens admitted to the U.S. for lawful permanent residence. They may be issued immigrant visas prior to migration by the Department of State or adjusted to permanent resident status once in the U.S. by the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

[4] This estimate is from the 2000 Current Population Survey, which only includes non-institutionalized individuals. The 2000 Census reports that there were 31 million foreign-born, which includes those in the military as well as institutionalized persons.

reunification and to provide assistance with childcare. They also found a complex experience among study participants that involved exposure to new cultural values and norms while maintaining their traditional Indian beliefs. The authors contend that these experiences are partially acculturative in terms of adopting new cultural values. Further, there are other social-structural issues influencing elderly immigrant experiences like new economic circumstances, intergenerational relationships, and importantly, a shift in their once valued role as elder (Kalavar and Van Willigen, 2005).

Another study by Emami and Torres investigated explanatory models of illness among Iranians who immigrated to Sweden late in life. They found that the Iranian elderly in their study believed that the causes of their health conditions were related to both migration experiences as well as the effects of their children's decisions to migrate years prior. They recollected feeling a great sense of sadness and loss when their adult children left their homeland in the 1980's due to political uncertainty in Iran, and they believe that this loss ultimately caused their health problems. Therefore, family disruption was a central theme among participants and reuniting with their children was yet again a driving force for immigrating late in life. Authors also found that late life Iranian immigrants believed that their culture was "obsolete" in the new environment (Emami and Torres, 2005).

Work by Angel et al. on Mexicans-Americans aged 65 and older found that Mexicans that migrated after age 50 were more dependent on their families in terms of income and living arrangements than their U.S.-born Mexican counterparts or those that migrated at younger ages. Specifically, late life Mexican-Americans in this study were less likely to have savings and pensions and more likely to live with and be financially dependent on their adult children (Angel et al., 1999).

Becker et al. found in their study on late life migration among Filipino WWII veterans that the motivator for coming to the U.S. was almost entirely economic. This study focused on a population with unique circumstances—Filipino-Americans who fought with the U.S. in WWII and who decided to migrate to the U.S. late in life to collect the limited benefits that were granted to them. At the time of this study, President Clinton signed into law a provision that granted partial veterans benefits for Filipino-Americans[5]. (Becker et al., 2000).

A majority of the Filipino veteran immigrants migrated alone in their late sixties and early seventies, leaving their families behind because of the relatively high costs of traveling to and settling in the U.S. Despite the fact that the main reason for moving was economic, family influenced their decisions. First, for those veterans who were unsure if the move was worth it, they reported that their adult children in the Philippines often swayed them to collect their pensions in the U.S. Participants described situations in which their children felt that they were entitled to the benefits and that it was a good opportunity. Both veterans and their families believed that coming to the U.S. would bring financial security and prestige to the entire family. However, for those that came alone, the isolation and distance from their loved ones was often difficult to handle. Many felt as if they were living in "limbo" since their intentions were to stay in the U.S. temporarily and to go back if and when benefits were extended to those living in the Philippines (Becker et al., 2000)[6].

In summary, studies have shown that family reunification and economic circumstances influence decisions to immigrate late in life. Findings also show that issues of isolation and

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[5] The Filipino Veterans Social Security Act subsidized retirement income for Filipinos living in the U.S. There were no provisions for Filipino veterans residing in the Philippines, and all subsidies were forfeited if those living in the U.S. were to move back to the Philippines.

[6] As of April 2008, the U.S. Senate approved a pension proposal granting benefits to Filipino WWII veterans residing in both the U.S. and the Philippines. While the amount for those in the Philippines is about a third of the amount for those living in the U.S., it will be interesting to see if and how this legislation will affect future immigration to the U.S. or return-migration "home" among Filipino veterans.

dependency on adult children are common among late life immigrants. Further, late life immigrants experience language and other cultural barriers that include generational issues with children and grandchildren. Many of these findings on late life migration are supported by the current dissertation research and will be further discussed in the findings chapters. However, none of the previous late life migration work examined the exact acculturative pathways that would include contact older immigrants make with the mainstream society. This contact could ultimately affect exposure to American cultural norms that would influence any potential culture changes. Thus, while there has been previous research exploring the experiences of people who migrate at older ages, none have examined acculturation and age specifically.

B. Lack of a Theoretical Framework for Exploring Late Life Immigration and Culture Change

These exploratory studies on late life migration have provided insight into the reasons that older persons immigrate and some of the issues they experience upon arrival. Firsthand accounts tell of social, economic, and cultural challenges. While it is an important contribution to our understanding of older immigrants' reasons for moving and their subsequent experiences, previous research lacks a theoretical lens for investigating how post-migration experiences affect their adaptation, potential culture changes, and other important outcomes like health. Only one study of the handful reported in the previous section introduced the theoretical concept of acculturation with regards to the cultural transitions and intergenerational value conflicts experienced by late life migrants (Kalavar and Van Willigen, 2005). However, if we are to investigate culture change among immigrants while addressing various demographic characteristics, we need to utilize applicable theoretical frameworks for doing so. Accounting for age at migration is a start and is an objective of this dissertation research.

In general, there is much debate surrounding the utility and validity of frameworks and measures of acculturation regardless of the issue of age at migration (Hunt et al., 2004). However, acculturation studies, particularly those that explore the relationship between acculturation and health, continue to flourish. As the numbers of persons in the U.S. with various cultural and ethnic background continues to grow, the interest about if and how culture affects health is warranted and will continue to be salient. Therefore, it is imperative to modify acculturation models and measures to more accurately explore culture change and transitions including but not limited to the study of late life immigrant experiences. Further, research on late life migration needs to move beyond accounts of reasons for migration and personal experiences to also include frameworks for studying the health, social, and societal implications of this trend. In the next section, I will introduce the theoretical framework that was the foundation of this grounded theory, qualitative study for exploring late life migration. It incorporates concepts related to social, structural, and cultural transitions as well as a life course perspective.

IV.   Research Paradigm and Theoretical Approaches to Methodology

A. Inductive Reasoning

Inductive reasoning involves making sound generalized conclusions from a necessarily limited number of observations (Bernard, 2005). At the core of inductive reasoning is the ability to gain a better understanding of a social phenomenon by looking at specific observations and then drawing valid conclusions. While there has been much work on acculturation, most studies focus on younger-aged adult immigrants and children. Thus, the inductive approach to this study

was essential and appropriate largely because of the dearth of data on Filipino immigrant experiences across the lifespan.

B. Grounded Theory

Grounded theory was introduced by Glaser and Strauss in 1967 and further developed by Strauss and Corbin in 1994. This approach develops theory grounded in data that is systematically collected and analyzed. It begins with a research inquiry or series of inquiries that are designed to lead to the development of a social theory. A systematic process, referred to as the Constant Comparative Method, involves iterations of moving back and forth between data collection and analysis (Strauss and Corbin, 1997).

Through the process of analyzing a preliminary set of data, a theory related to the original research question can be developed. Based on this initial theory, decisions on further sampling can then be made. This process is called theoretical sampling, and the outcome is to develop a rich understanding of a particular concept across a range of settings and conditions. This collecting and analyzing of data as well as engaging in theoretical sampling is the hallmark of the constant comparative method and the development of grounded theories. This process continues until a point of saturation or when there are no new themes or insights emerging from the data. The result is a strong repetition in themes (Strauss and Corbin, 1997; Bernard, 2005).

Strauss and Corbin state that theoretical sampling is best used when research "focuses on theory and concept development and the goal is to develop theory and concepts that are connected to, grounded in, or emergent from real life events and circumstances" (Strauss and Corbin, 1997). The research questions, aims, and variables of interest of this project are all situated well within a grounded theory and theoretical sampling framework. As discussed in the

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background and significance, acculturation is often measured using constructs like language preference, nativity, and length of stay in the new country. However, if acculturation, or culture change resulting from contact between two cultures or societies (Abraido-Lanza et al., 2006) is to be adequately studied, then a richer understanding of this process must occur. In order to reach that level of understanding, first-hand accounts from immigrants themselves were key. Further, understanding this process for people at various stages of the life course was interesting and important. As interview data show, there was not one reality or experience of immigrants, but a multitude of processes that were negotiated within a multifaceted social reality and that did differ by age at migration to some extent as well as other factors that will be discussed in the findings chapters. Collecting this detailed data from participants was possible largely because of the qualitative design and grounded theory approach.

C. Conceptual Model

The pre-data collection conceptual model for this research was based on the notion that age at migration or life stage can influence the contact immigrants have with mainstream institutions as well as the networks that immigrants create after migration. These points of contact and networks are determined by immigrants' reasons for migration. Reasons for migration could be determined in part by people's stage of life. It was not assumed which points of contact would be relevant or predominant within each age group (i.e. older adults might have had contact with the school system if they choose to further their education or younger adults might not have worked and thus not in contact with the labor market). However, patterns of contact that were outside of typical or expected gender and age roles were highlighted. This

model introduced several common points of entry and potential networks for immigrants, but the

framework was fluid and amendable in keeping with the grounded theory nature of this project.

Figure 1: Framework of Conceptual Domains

- Age at Migration

To examine the effect of age at migration on the acculturative process of Filipino immigrants, this study compared two age groups: (1) Filipino adults who migrated to the U.S. between the ages of 18 and 49 and (2) Filipino adults who migrated to the U.S. at age 50 and older. These age groups were selected specifically to compare experiences of Filipino immigrants across a wide spectrum of ages. All of the interview participants migrated fifteen years ago or less in order to focus on recent migration.

- Reasons for Migration

Immigrants cite various reasons for migration including but not limited to employment or career opportunities, to reunite with family and/or to assist with familial duties like childcare, and for reasons surrounding political strife in their native countries (Singh and Hiatt, 2006). While other studies have speculated a relationship between reasons for migration and ease of acculturation or assimilation (Mehta, 1998; Frisbie et al., 2001; Gomez et al., 2004), this conceptual model did not attempt to explore this link. It did, however, acknowledge that a reason for migration might be a driving force in both the points of contact and networks post-migration. For instance, if the reason for migration of a younger person is for career opportunities, then a likely point of entry is the workforce. This could result in the development of a network of coworkers and potential friends who share and reinforce a particular cultural orientation. If an older person migrates purely for family reunification and to assist with childcare, their institutional points of entry may not include the labor market and their networks may be limited to family. While this latter scenario seems expected of older immigrants, this was not the case for those in the study.

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- Institutional Points of Contact and Networks

Immigrants' entry points of contact and networks are likely the result of their reasons for and circumstances influencing decisions to migrate. However, these contact points and networks can change over time and some may be more influential than others. As previously stated, the examples of both entry points and networks in this conceptual model are a result of a life course perspective and common institutional systems. However, immigrants in general, and adult Filipino immigrants specifically, may have experiences that include a broader or different set of contacts and networks than is depicted in this model. This was in fact the case for people in the sample. In keeping with the grounded theory approach, exposure to additional or unexpected points of contact were explored and informed the data collection process. The importance of this aspect of the model was to identify any and all entry points and the resulting networks in order to better understand the process of acculturation for each age group.

- Acculturation Markers

The overarching objective of this study was to explore acculturative processes of immigrants in two different age groups in order to develop a multifaceted framework for acculturation that is sensitive to life course differences as they relate to migration. The findings and insight from this research will contribute to currently used acculturation frameworks and to the development of more applicable models for use in health research.

With that in mind, this study did not use proxy measures for acculturation like language preference, nativity, and length of time in the U.S., although these topics were discussed. There were no fixed questionnaires on cultural values and beliefs or any single scale instruments that

measured linear variables. Instead, I conducted an exploratory analysis of changes in cultural

attitudes, beliefs, values, customs and traditions as described by participants within the context of

reasons for migration and immigration experiences. Language use and preference – a commonly

used linear acculturation measure – were explored, but alone was not used as measures of

acculturation.

This conceptual model was based on the premise that culture change is *not*

unidimensional or linear. While this research project did not start with a working definition of

acculturation because the goal was to develop one as data collection and analyses progressed,

there are underlying beliefs associated with culture change experienced by immigrants. They

included the following: (1) the adoption and possession of attitudes, beliefs, values, customs, and

traditions can come from *multiple* cultural orientations; (2) as a result of first-hand contact

between groups of individuals with different cultural orientations, subsequent changes in the

original cultural patterns of *either or both* groups can occur; and (3) specific changes in cultural

orientation can be *chosen* based on the usefulness and need to maintain or abandon certain

norms. While theses assertions stem from contemporary theories and models of acculturation,

they were not be tested or assumed but rather incorporated in discussions with participants

during interviews. The next chapter will describe the qualitative and grounded theory

methodology used to explore this conceptual framework.

Chapter 3

Methods and Data Analysis

This dissertation was a qualitative, grounded theory driven research project. Qualitative research has been defined as "a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live." In general, qualitative methods are used to "explore the behavior, perspectives, and experiences of people," the basis of which lies in the "interpretive approach to social reality" (Holloway 1997). This study explored the acculturative processes of Filipino immigrants, paying particular attention to age at migration. Through the use of grounded theory, the data collected via semi-structured interviews has contributed to the development of new perspectives for identifying and conceptualizing transition processes for new immigrants. I implemented a qualitative approach in theory development, sampling, data collection, and analysis. These methods will be described in this chapter.

I.   Sample and Recruitment

A. Inclusion Criteria

The study objective was to explore the relationship of age at migration on the acculturative processes of Filipino immigrants to influence acculturation models for use in future health studies. To achieve this, there were several inclusion criteria for study participants. First, they were all Philippine-born immigrants to the U.S. who identified as Filipino. Second, because the process of acculturation was a main research interest, recent Filipino immigrants were recruited who had immigrated to the U.S. no more than fifteen years ago. Third, in order to have

some geographic limitation, participants lived in California, but purposeful sampling was done to ensure that not all of the participants resided in the same geographic location within California. Finally, all participants were age 18 years and older.

B. Theoretical Sampling

Purposive sampling was utilized in this study and involved actively selecting the sample that was most productive in addressing the research aims and theoretical inquiries as they arose throughout the data collection and analysis processes. Age at migration was a main research topic and exploring age as a function of the life course, as opposed to chronological age, was the underlying objective. Sampling was conducted to ensure that there were adequate numbers of study participants across all adult age groups. Purposive sampling was also conducted to recruit relatively equal numbers of men and women in each group. To address concepts of acculturation, sampling efforts included recruiting people across the range of having migrated a year prior to the interview until almost 15 years prior.

An appropriate sample size for a qualitative study is one that allows the researcher to adequately answer the research question and in the case of grounded theory, achieves saturation. In general, for simple or detailed studies, the sample size might be in the single digits. For more complex inquiries, large samples and multiple data collection strategies might be utilized (Marshall 1996). Saturation was achieved in this study with a sample size of 24. There were 14 people that migrated under the age of 50, and 10 that migrated at age 50 and over. This mirrors the age distribution of adult Filipino immigrants in California, with Filipino adult immigrants under age 50 comprising 59% of Filipino adult immigrants (CHIS, 2005).

C. Recruitment

There were two main modes of recruitment, word-of mouth or snowball and direct contact. Fliers were created with a brief description of the study, the criteria for involvement, and the researcher's contact information (See Appendix A). Participants were recruited from several California locations. The primary research site was the San Francisco Bay Area, particularly the city of Daly City in San Mateo County. Daly City has a large concentration of Filipinos as well as Filipino-influenced businesses, churches, and social settings. In this sense, Daly City was an optimal place for recruitment. However, this site also introduced the potential for an ethnic enclave effect or bias. An ethnic enclave or neighborhood is defined as an area with some cultural distinction from a larger, outside area. This cultural distinction is often focused around businesses run by members of the ethnic community (Logan, Zhang et al. 2002). Since a major distinction of an ethnic enclave is cultural in nature, only sampling from a potential enclave could have had an effect on the overarching research topic of acculturation or culture change. Therefore to ensure a diverse sample and to avoid potential ethnic enclave biases, participants were recruited from multiple areas in California. In addition to San Mateo County, recruitment took place in the following California counties: Butte, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Riverside.

Fliers were posted in various locations in Daly City, including restaurants and grocery stores. They were also distributed to colleagues, friends, and family for word-of-mouth recruiting. Once a potential interviewee learned of the study through word-of-mouth and was interested in participating, he or she was instructed to make initial contact. This ensured that participation was completely voluntary. Similarly, if I came into contact with someone who fit

the inclusion criteria, efforts were made to provide information about the study and invite the person to participate in a voluntary manner.

In addition to posting and distributing the recruitment flier, participants were recruited at one community event, an annual one-day health fair organized by a church with a predominantly Filipino congregation in Daly City, CA. I made contact with roughly ten interested participants who met the study's inclusion criteria. Ultimately, three people were interviewed from this health fair. Table 1 shows the types and numbers of recruitment methods for the sample.

Type of Recruitment	*Number of Participants Recruited*
Word-of-Mouth (Referred by Colleagues, Friends, or Family)	11
Snowball (Referred by a Study Participant)	8
Face-to-Face (Strangers Recruited by Researcher at Public Event	3
Acquaintance Recruited by Primary Researcher	2

Table 1: Number or Participants in Sample by Recruitment Type (n = 24)

II.   Data Collection

A. Data Sources and Instruments

Prior to data collection, approval to conduct this research was obtained by the Office of the Protection of Human Subjects at the University of California, Los Angeles (Appendix B). The primary source of data for this study was semi-structured interviews. The use of semi-structured interviews is preferred over unstructured when participants will only be interviewed once and/or there is a time limit to the interview (Bernard, 2005). One of the limitations of this study, but also the reality based on resources like funding, is that participants were only

interviewed once, and each interview lasted for roughly an hour. In-depth semi-structured interviews call for the use of an interview guide to direct discussion, but also provide probes when further details are necessary (Bernard, 2005). An interview guide was created prior to the data collection phase and included the questions and topics reflected in the following table (See Appendix C for entire interview guide). Interview data were used primarily to achieve specific aims 1 and 2.

Topics for Interview Guide

Demographic Information
- Age
- Age at migration
- Place of birth (location in the Philippines)
- Marital status
- Family status (children, grandchildren)
- Labor force status
- Career/employment history
- Home ownership (both in the U.S. and the Philippines)

Migration Experiences Pre-Arrival to the U.S.
- Reason(s) for immigration
- Details of migration (when, with whom, ease or difficulty)
- Geographic location(s) of settlement including reasons for location(s)
- Life in the Philippines prior to migration including personal economic, social, and health experiences as well as from a societal and institutional context (i.e. life in the Philippines for the interviewee vs. life in the Philippines for Filipinos in general)
- Perceptions and expectations of life in the U.S.
- Personal thoughts and feelings regarding migration

Migration Experiences Post-Arrival to the U.S.
- Initial experiences, perceptions, and feelings upon arrival
- Changes in experiences, perceptions, and feelings over time
- Initial opportunities (career, social networks)
- Changes in opportunities (career, social networks) over time

Cultural Orientation
- Filipino-influenced behavioral and cognitive factors
- Cultural norms influenced by host society (i.e. American-influenced)
- Negotiation of both cultural contexts
- Ethnic and cultural identity—including changes over time in the U.S.

Table 2: Topics Included in Original Interview Guide

Throughout the course of data collection and analysis, there were many changes to interview topics. The following are questions that evolved from the reiterative process of data collection and data analysis and subsequently had a large impact on the interview discussion and findings.

- o Describe values and traits that are important to you.

- o Describe language preference and proficiency before and after migration.

- o Do you think the age that one migrates is important or matters?

Overall, these discussion points and those who were included in the original interview guide allowed me to address the research objectives, but data collection was very open and informal. People shared their stories with me while both answering these questions and providing more information on their lives, migrations, and experiences. Further, the important inquiry of "what influences people's decisions and behavior" was present throughout the interview process as this notion of motivating factors is key, particularly regarding potential changes in culture (as studied via acculturation models).

The data collection phase was from July 2010 until June 2011. There was a brief pilot testing phase in which two pilot interviews were conducted. The method for the pilot testing was person-centered interviewing. Person-centered interviewing is characterized by the balanced combination of informant and respondent modes of interviewing and the use of probes (Levy and

Hollan 1998). An informant as interviewee is an "expert witness" about some social phenomenon, while a respondent as interviewee is the object of study. An informant may answer a question like "what are some common Filipino cultural traditions" while a respondent will answer the question "what Filipino cultural traditions are important to you." By moving back and forth between the two modes, person-centered interviewing attempts to "illuminate the spaces, conflicts, coherences, and transformations" between the individual being interviewed and "perceptions and understandings of the external context" (Levy and Hollan 1998). Person-centered interviewing is based on the premise that the interviewee's personal world becomes clearer as he or she trusts the interviewer and is more open to sharing. While this technique is best when used iteratively, it was only used with the pilot interviewees on single occasions. However, this person-centered technique was utilized throughout the data collection phase and yielded rich stories.

The pilot interviews covered all aspects of the interview guide. After reviewing the data from the pilot phase, the interview guide and technique were modified and fine-tuned. Post-pilot revisions were made to the interview guide predominantly with topics of ethnicity and culture. Questions were modified to be more specific when asking about participants' ethnicity and cultural values, beliefs, and traditions.

Measures were taken to ensure participants' privacy and convenience during the entire interview process. When scheduling meetings, participants were allowed to decide when and where to do the interview. Interviews took place in various locations including the mall, interviewees' homes, a library study room, place of employment, and a coffee shop. Interviews always began with a review of the consent form, which described the purpose and voluntary nature of the research. People were thanked for their time and also given the opportunity to ask

questions and/or opt out of participating. No one chose to cease participation. All interviews were audio recorded at the approval of the participants.

Interviews lasted approximately 50 to 90 minutes and typically followed the topics of the interview guide. I conducted every interview and did so almost entirely in English. My Pilipino language proficiency is not advanced enough for me to have been able to conduct the entire interview in Tagalog alone. However, interviewees were comfortable with my level of proficiency and were encouraged to speak in Tagalog if they preferred. Three of the respondents spoke Tagalog during the interview. The use of both Tagalog and English by me and/or the interviewees did not interrupt the flow of any conversations. Outside of the interviews, I did solicit language assistance in translating questions and topics from English to Tagalog as well as verifying responses in Tagalog to English. Not having the resources to hire a Tagalog-speaking interviewer was a limitation to this study, but I do not believe it jeopardized the quality of the data. I hope that future work I conduct with Filipino immigrants will utilize a Tagalog-speaking interviewer.

B. Acculturation Scale

At the end of each interview, participants were administered a validated acculturation scale, a Short Acculturation Scale for Filipino Americans (ASASFA). It was a self-administered 12-item instrument with Likert scaled responses. The ASASFA was modified from an acculturation scale for Hispanics and measures language use and preference at work, at home, and with friends (5 questions), media language and preference (3 questions), and ethnic preference of individuals in social relations (4 questions) (Dela Cruz 2000). The ASASFA is available in both English and Tagalog. One participant chose to complete the Tagalog scale.

Findings from the scale were used primarily to address specific aim 3 by questioning if current frameworks for acculturation coincide with the experiences of change and transition described by interviewees.

C. Data Analysis

The data collection and analysis phases are described separately, but took place concurrently throughout the study as the analysis of interviews informed subsequent interviews, themes, and theory-building. Atlas.ti Student Edition 5.2 was the program used for theoretical coding and analysis.

Summary and observational notes were taken immediately following each interview. I made audio notes within ten minutes of completing the interview, which included pertinent observations or thoughts about the interview or the dissertation topic in general. Within one week of the interview, I transcribed the interview verbatim while keeping notes and writing memos about specific topics and findings. Tagalog sections of interview text were transcribed from Tagalog straight to English. The accuracy of information was confirmed with an outside Tagalog speaker. After transcription was complete, I listened to the entire interview with a copy of the interview while making notes in the margin of the text but not coding. This step had two purposes. First, it gave me an opportunity to check the accuracy of the transcribing. Second, it allowed me to connect with the stories and information that the interviewees provided while also labeling substantive but general themes before more in-depth coding began.

The next step included a line-by-line coding system, which entailed reading each line of the text and assigning a code to any pertinent data. A line or phrase of text was divided and assigned a code using interviewee's own words as code. This method, referred to as in vivo

coding, is an important initial phase as it encourages the researcher to stay grounded in the data without imposing his or her feelings or impressions on the data (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). This process yielded over 3,600 codes for all twenty-four interviews.

As the data collection phase progressed, I initiated a higher level of coding which allowed me to begin grouping line-by-line codes into broad categories. Through this level of categorization and the constant comparative method of analysis, reoccurring topics and responses, similarities and differences between interviews, and instances where there were theoretical holes or questions that needed to be answered were revealed. The following is a list of questions that helped guide the analysis, as asking questions of the data was an integral part of analyzing it:

- What are the entry points of contact of the new or host culture for Filipino immigrants in the two age groups and how do these entry points influence patterns of adaptation over time?

- Do the points of contact differ by age group?

- Do the ways in which the points of contact influence adaptation differ by age group?

- What factors contributed to decisions to migrate for each age group? Do the reasons differ by group? Did the reasons influence contact with mainstream institutions?

- What types of family, social, and financial/employment opportunities exist for Filipino immigrants and do they differ by age group? How have these opportunities changed over time since moving to the U.S.?

- What were their career and work opportunities in the Philippines prior to migration?

- What are the healthcare experiences, health perceptions, and health practices of Filipino immigrants and do they differ by age group?

- Do points of contact with the host culture and patterns of adaptation influence healthcare experiences, heath perceptions, and health practices of Filipino immigrants in the two age groups?

The categories that resulted from grouping codes resulted in several themes about Filipino immigrants' experiences. The themes that arose include: reasons for migration, including the process of being petitioned; age at migration; the importance of being employed and the effect of migrating during a recession; formation of social circles; cultural characteristics and values; and health-related behaviors, beliefs, and access. Within each of these themes, several key findings and points were found that describe the multidimensional migration and transition experiences of this sample of Filipino immigrants. I began thematic analysis by writing summaries of the interviews and resulting themes. I wrote one summary for every two interviews, which also helped me compare findings. These themes will be further discussed in the findings chapters, but resulted in the formation of four main topics – the level of ease and difficulty in transition experiences of recent immigrants; cultural norms and potential acculturative processes; institutional points of contact; health experiences.

After each phase of transcribing and coding interviews, the interview guide was revisited, and modifications to the interviews were made. The data collection and analysis phase followed the described methodology except for interviews conducted in Butte County. This location is roughly 3.5 hours from my home base and required multiple overnight stays to complete the interviews. To accommodate my schedule and that of the people I interviewed, full analysis was not possible prior to the next interview. However, extra time was spent analyzing this set of interviews before proceeding to subsequent interviews to ensure the integrity of the process.

D. Confidentiality and Privacy of Data

Several databases were created to manage interview data. First, a database was created to include emails, phone numbers, and/or addresses. Participants' names were removed from this database, and the file was password-protected. Second, all interview data was stripped of identifiers. Audio files were downloaded to a personal password protected laptop and deleted from the recorder. Transcripts were also stripped of identifying information and kept in password-protected files. Each participant was assigned a code at the start of the data collection process. The list of codes was also saved in a separate password-protected document on my personal computer. Personal information was replaced by codes in all notes and transcriptions.

E. Building Rapport With Interviewees

As a U.S.-born Filipino woman, I am aware of key Filipino values and practices. One important value is respect, and the practice of speaking to Filipinos with respect and in a non-abrasive manner is important. Another value is education. Therefore, an approach that I took with regards to recruitment was to speak with potential interviewees in a respectful way and also to emphasize that their participation would help me with my research study and enable me to achieve my educational goals. An observation that I made particularly with the older adults in the sample was that using the word *po* made respondents warm up to me more. The phrase *po* is used when talking with people that are older. While I was not able to fully speak in Tagalog during interviews, using this simple word appeared to connect me (an American-born Filipino) with the older Filipino participants in the study.

III.   Sample Characteristics

I will conclude this chapter by presenting data on basic demographic characteristics of the interview participants before presenting findings on their transition experiences in the next chapter. There were thirteen women and eleven men in the sample. The age of migration ranged from 19 to 65. The time since migration ranged from less than a year to 14 years. In terms of educational attainment, the highest level for two people was high school, and the rest of the sample had some college or more. The following table depicts basic demographics for the sample and compares it to data for California immigrants in the same age range as the sample.

	Sample (18+)	*CA Filipinos (18+)*
Age at Migration	19-65	–
Gender	13 = Female	59% Female
	11 = Male	41% Male
Years in U.S.	<1 – 14	31% ≤14
Highest Level Education	2 = high school	19% high school
	2 = some college	13% some college
	1 = vocation	4% vocational
	14 = bachelors	55% AA/AS;BA/BS
	5 = masters	9% post-graduate

Table 3: Sample Characteristics Compared to California Demographic Data for Filipino Immigrants

IV.   Chapter Conclusion

The main objective of this research was to explore the processes of acculturation for Filipino immigrants and determine if there were differences based on their age of migration using a life course perspective. While age was used for sampling purposes, age is a singular marker of the life course and alone did not account for variations in the migration experiences of this sample per se. Particularly for interviewees who were in their 50's for instance, there was a

blurring of age-related roles and experiences in relation to those younger and those older. However, age did have an impact on people's job opportunities, which was influential considering that most of the sample reported migrating for a better life, which often included the prospect of making a good living. Further discussion on the secondary effect of age on the migration process will be discussed in the findings. Thus as I report and discuss the interview findings, age within the broader context of the life course will be incorporated. People's perspectives on age and age at migration will also be shared. However, a strong relationship between age at migration and patterns or themes of Filipino immigrants' transitions was not found and will not be emphasized.

Chapter 4

Arriving on New Shores

Immigrants can face many challenges when they move to a new country. A different set of cultural norms, language barriers, and homesickness are just a few of the obstacles they may encounter. As described in the background chapter, as a whole, Filipino immigrants to the U.S. have a unique relationship with their host country resulting from the U.S. colonization of the Philippines. The most noteworthy American influence in the Philippines is that the English language is commonly spoken and is the mode of instruction in schools. Thus, when Filipinos immigrate to the U.S., it is safe to assume that they have been exposed to some American culture – at the very least formal English in schools. However, despite exposure to American influences while in the Philippines, Filipino immigrants are still newcomers who have to transition to a new culture and society.

This chapter will focus on the transition processes of the Filipinos in this study by both comparing their adjustment periods within the context of voluntary relocation and also discussing emergent patterns and themes. Settlement stories are important for exploring how people transitioned to living in a new country and maneuvered through an unfamiliar culture. In general, two broad categories for transitioning to life in America surfaced and include those who described a relatively "easy" transition and those who had a more "difficult" time. Within each category, people were situated across the life course, and ease of transition was not necessarily a direct result of age or life course stage. Age did influence certain factors like ability to find work, and this played a role in achieving aspirations and expectations post-arrival. Categorizations were based on a many factors, particularly the responses to each of the following

questions: (1) Explain what it was like for you after you immigrated to the U.S. (2) How would you describe your transition? (3) Do you think you had an easy or difficult transition?

An important consideration when discussing immigrant experiences is that one's personality and perspective can, to an extent, influence behavior and events. What one person considers difficult may be different for another. Someone who is an extrovert, for example, may have a different outcome from someone who is not. One limitation of this research project is that each person was only interviewed once. The roughly one hour interview enabled me to make observations and assumptions about participants' personalities and how that might influence transition experiences, but not enough to make any sound connections. Future research on this topic should include ways to account for personality.

Lastly, the categorizations were made after data collection and preliminary data analysis were complete. These distinctions emerged from the data and were not preconceived. Therefore, many of the participants and their experiences were analyzed in relation to each other.

I.   Initial Settlement Process: Patterns Among Those With "Easy" Transitions

I have categorized less than half of the sample, ten interviewees, as having had a relatively easy transition from the Philippines to the U.S. The patterns of transition emerged from using both the criteria for categorizing participants and thematic data analysis.

The first six interviewees described challenges and difficulties upon arrival. However, the seventh person interviewed – a 54 year-old woman who migrated ten years prior – described a very different experience. She stated multiple times that her transition to life in the U.S. was not a shock at all. She credits her ease of transition, in part, to previous visits to the U.S. where she gradually became familiar with the American way of life. She was also comfortable and

fluent in conversational English, not only the formal English used as the mode of instruction in Philippine schools. She stated, "the reason why I was able to adjust is because I already was able to speak English. It's the reason why I didn't have any difficulty." Another important factor in this woman's transition experience is that she moved to the U.S. when the time was right for her. She described how she had options and no pressure to stay. "I didn't leave (the Philippines) because I'm not happy anymore. It's just the right time for me to try America. I had my nursing license already, and it was all set up. I have a lot of options. I don't have family to deal with that I have to think of relocating."

These factors – visiting the U.S. prior to migrating and being exposed to American culture firsthand; possessing strong conversational English proficiency skills; and being able to make choices regarding migration – are examples of broader concepts associated with immigrant transitions. These concepts include knowledge of the U.S., language skills, and options. Patterns of these concepts emerged specifically for the Filipinos in the sample that described relatively easy transition processes to life in the U.S. Details and examples of each will be discussed as they pertain to this sample, and relevant connections to frameworks of cultural changes and adaptation will be made.

A. Knowledge of the U.S.

Every person in the subset that had an easy time adjusting had firsthand knowledge of the U.S. from traveling here prior to migrating except for one 33-year old male who migrated at age 21. Reasons for prior travel were primarily to visit family and friends, and many described staying for weeks or months at a time. The prolonged, albeit temporary, exposure to American

culture during vacations at the very least gave people some knowledge of the American way of life before settling here.

The various circumstances for pre-migration travel to the U.S. did not largely differ by age, but there were cases reflective of life course stages like young fiancées visiting their high school sweethearts/future husbands or grandparents providing childcare assistance during visits. It was not uncommon for older persons to visit prior to migrating, and four of the ten persons who settled in the U.S. at later ages (50+) had been here previously. Two older immigrants had multiple entry tourist visas that allowed them to stay in the U.S. for three to six months at a time. They would typically be here for several months to assist family and then travel back to the Philippines when their visa stipulated them to, all while waiting for petitions for permanent residence status from U.S.-based family members to be approved. One woman described the process:

> "I was travelling to the U.S. since 1992. But I stayed put in 2000 when the petition was approved. After six months and the petition was approved, I was an immigrant. I got my green card. I started to work." 74-year old female who immigrated at age 65

Others stated that visiting the U.S. before migrating prepared them for what to expect and even influenced decisions on where to settle.

> "I'd been here a couple of times because my dad had business trips, and we go here on vacation. So the U.S., especially the Bay Area is very familiar with me. It's more like (I was) excited to come." 29-year old female who immigrated at age 25

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"We chose to settle in this area because I'd been here before for vacation, and I liked it here." 37-year old female who immigrated at age 24

Some people described difficulty upon arrival with regards to finding work, but stated that the American way of life itself was not a hindrance because of previous travel and exposure to the U.S. One man emphasized the difference between vacationing in the U.S. and actually working and living here:

"As a tourist, we would see the way of life, yes. But not as working people here. Really living here in the U.S. For me, the adjustment was not that difficult. But what was difficult was being in and out of jobs for the first two years. If I hadn't gotten the job that I have now, we were ready to go back (to the Philippines)." 46-year old male who immigrated at age 43

People from the Philippines who have the financial means and are able to travel leisurely to the U.S. likely have relatives or friends here that they can visit. This was the case for those in this sample. Nine of the ten people who had a relatively easy transition and had made trips to the U.S. prior to moving, visited family or friends. Seven of them had very close family members like a sibling or child. Prior travel particularly to visit family can play a role in immigrants' adaptation to mainstream culture. It is possible that visiting close family or friends may have provided people with opportunities to participate in everyday activities, exposing them to mainstream culture and potentially easing their transitions after their immigration. This is one potential pathway of exposure to American ways of life, but there are still many other factors that could simultaneously affect it. Unfortunately, this was not specifically asked during the

interviews, but would be important to include in follow-up research as it would provide a better understanding of the extent to which immigrants were exposed to social and structural facets of America during their pre-migration travel. It would also shed light on the role of family and other social networks on ease of transitions. However, it is clear from this study's findings that having the opportunity to visit prior to migrating did provide people with knowledge and familiarity that eased their transitions.

> "It (moving to the U.S.) was easy. I know others would have a problem of where to stay or how they would go about. I had my family so it wasn't really that big of a move. It did help that we came here before (on visits). It wasn't that big of a transition for me." 56-year old female who migrated at age 50

There was one person in this subsample who, despite never having visited the U.S. before immigrating, did not have a difficult time transitioning. He stated that migrating was not hard for him and that he did not "see any barriers." He was 21 years old when he moved thirteen years ago and with his entire immediate family after waiting nearly twenty years for their petition to be approved. He was both excited and scared; excited because he would be able to "see a new place, see America" but scared because he didn't "know what America is."

During the interview and data analysis, he stood out. In terms of demographics and circumstances, he was very similar to another male interviewee who migrated at the same age and who shared roughly the same number of years since immigrating, yet who described his transition as very challenging and difficult. First, both had parents who made abrupt decisions to move once their long awaited petitions were approved. They were both at life stages that revolved around school and friends. They described similar socio-economic backgrounds in the

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Philippines. They each had extended family in the U.S. that consisted of cousins their age whom they stayed with for about a year. Not long after their arrival, both attended school and entered the workforce. Yet one described shock and loneliness while the other was not surprised or challenged by anything when he came here despite having never been to the U.S. before. Explanations as to why they had such different transition experiences while sharing many characteristics are important in understanding the change and processes that immigrants go through and the broader concept of acculturation. One potential explanation based on data from this study relates to English language proficiency. The ways in which these two males described their conversational skills and if language was a barrier was the characteristic that they differed on. Collectively, the Filipinos in this study that had strong self-perceived conversational English language skills did not report barriers to language. On the other hand, persons who did not feel that their conversational English was good, despite having formal instruction in English, reported language barriers upon migrating.

B. Skills

For those who live in a place where their first language is not that of the mainstream society, communication barriers may abound. However, most native Filipinos are exposed to English even if they never set foot in the U.S. While there is currently an ongoing political debate about having English as the mode of instruction in Philippine schools and universities, each of the interviewees attended schools in the Philippines at a time when classes were taught almost entirely in English. Thus, every person in this study has learned some level of basic, formal English. All of the ten people categorized as having an easy transition stated that

language was not a barrier at all for them upon arrival. They all possessed the confidence and skill needed to be able to speak English once they moved to America.

Many people emphasized a distinction between learning formal English in school and being able to speak it conversationally. The two were not mutually exclusive, and many people who learned English and thought they knew how to speak it well were surprised at how challenging language was for them after migration. To illustrate how language skills can affect transitions, here are examples of interviewees who had both difficult transitions and stated that language was a barrier upon their arrival:

> "Although we learned English in school (in the Philippines), it's just different. We learn grammar, basic instruction, all that stuff. But came here, and the English is different. Conversational. It was a lot of adjustment." 29-year old male who migrated at age 25

> "Back home you learn formal English. You learn it in the grammatical way. I was telling my daughter and son I had already studied English there (in the Philippines). But I came here, people were talking to me, and I couldn't understand what they were telling me." 44-year old male who migrated at age 41

> "When I came here I would try to speak English. I was speaking English, but I don't know what I was talking about. I was forcing myself to speak, but it doesn't seem like I know what I'm saying. It was a barrier for me. It seems like I only wanted to meet someone who can speak Tagalog." 33-year old male who migrated at age 19

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For the people in the easy transition group, there was a self-perceived higher comfort and skill level regarding the English language. This was true across age groups, but the following examples are from interviewees that migrated at later ages:

"Language was not a barrier. I speak English. I understand. I can even write better English than most people that are here. I can attest to that." 74-year old female who migrated at age 65

"There are times they (people) speak fast. But it was not a barrier. I'm not boosting, but I sometimes correct their English… and it's their first language." 68-year old female who migrated at age 64

A number of people offered opinions or explanations for how English proficiency was associated with both education level and type of school. One woman, who was fluent in English and Tagalog since childhood, went to a school where some people "hardly spoke Tagalog" even though they were Filipino.

"They do understand and they could speak it, but they just didn't. I think it was specific to certain schools because I did go to a very exclusive school in a nice area. There were some kids who just did not speak Tagalog." 37-year old female who migrated at age 24

Another person also discussed language proficiency within the context of Philippine school exclusivity.

"Growing up, we spoke English and of course Tagalog. And the reason for that was I was kind of privileged, so I was sent to a good school. As you know, private schools in the Philippines, the medium of instruction is English. All subjects. So that is the reason why my co-workers when I tell them I just transferred here, they cannot believe that I just migrated. My English is very good. So, no, language was not a barrier. Not at all." 46-year old male who migrated at age 43

In "prestigious" or "exclusive" private schools in the Philippines, speaking English both conversationally and formally in the classroom was enforced. This may be the reason that among interviewees who attended such schools, they had relatively high self-rated English proficiency and reported no language barriers. Interesting, two women who had difficult transitions and had lower levels of English language skill relative to the rest of the sample, verbalized connections between their English language skill and their education level. The highest level of education for both women was high school. When asked if language was a barrier, they responded:

"Yes… because I'm just a high school graduate." 60-year old woman who migrated at age 50

"It's difficult. They speak so fast. At times I don't understand. It's maybe because I only have high school degree." 55-year old woman who migrated at age 54

More data and a better understanding of the connection between type of school or socio-economic class and English instruction is needed to strengthen these conclusions, but overall, the

sample participants that had an easy transition and did not report language barriers went to private schools where English is enforced. People described a culture of speaking English or "Tag-lish" (a common term for the use of a mix of English and Tagalog) in exclusive Philippine schools. This underscores the heterogeneity of Filipinos that migrate to the U.S. and their English language skills despite exposure to English in the Philippines. In the following chapter, findings will be presented to address if language skill is relevant to acculturation.

C. Options

There can be lot at stake for people who make the decision to immigrate to a new country. In terms of family and friends, they may either find themselves leaving those close to them behind or making arrangements to relocate their entire families to a new country. In terms of work, some may either be leaving a job in the Philippines or coming to America in search of work opportunities. In terms of a way of life, they may either be equipped with previous knowledge of what life in the U.S. will be like or they are faced with uncertainty and unawareness of what is to come. Relocating from the Philippines to the U.S. takes preparation (where to stay, how to make a living, making arrangements for people and/or property left in the Philippines) and money (the cost of travel and settling in). These are descriptions of some of the physical issues immigrants face; they do even not touch upon the psychological aspect of migrating.

For many who have the opportunity to immigrate and make the necessary arrangements to do so, the move is a very big deal. With so much potentially riding on one's decision to migrate, having the desire or need to "make it" can add stress to an already stressful situation. However, most of the people that had a relatively easy transition in this sample described having

options regarding their migrations, mostly in terms of being able to move back to the Philippines if they needed to. It was still a significant life change and decision to migrate to America, but having migration options provided them with the perspective that "if things do not work out here, I can always move back home."

On the contrary, there is a common Filipino cultural term that describes a feeling or sense of embarrassment or shame called *hiya*. The people with easy transitions that described having options regarding their migration did not express *hiya* about potentially moving back to the Philippines. However, those who moved to the U.S. for a better life and portrayed the need to stay and make it did in fact describe feelings of *hiya* if things were not to have worked out. These feelings of shame or embarrassment were typically in relation to family and peers left behind in the Philippines as was the case for a 36-year old woman who migrated when she was 28. Tearing up, she described how despite the challenges of moving alone to a new country, she felt the need to stay.

"It was terrible. I wanted to go home so bad. But they (parents) gave me so much

to come here that I couldn't leave without really trying, you know? So I had to stay."

The Filipinos in this sample who appeared to have migration options were eager and excited about moving to the U.S. for school and work, and they did not give an impression that their move was a huge sacrifice. In a sense, there was less pressure on them to stay if things were not to have worked out the way they had expected. There was also the notion among this subset that living in the U.S. might be short-term as opposed to leaving everything in the Philippines behind for good. For the most part, reasons for migrating (graduate school, a nursing

job, to spend time with family) and having the means to be able to move back to the Philippines at any time gave people choices that potentially eased their transitions.

> "We weren't sure if we were going to stay (after finishing school), but the job market was good. The timing was right. So we did." 37-year old female who migrated at age 24

The options described by those who had a relatively easy transition were largely self-perceived. In actuality, all of the people that I interviewed could have migrated back to the Philippines at any point with enough planning and resources. However, the options illustrated in this section are not merely based on financial or legal abilities to move back. The sense of having a lack of options or choices was rooted in a deeper apprehension about other people's reactions and one's own disappointment in self. Further, a sense of embarrassment or shame could have potentially motivated people with the desire to overcome the challenges of moving to a new country.

Overall, the interviewees who had relatively easy transitions post-migration also had a number of "advantages" pre-migration. Having previous knowledge of the U.S. customs and the American way of life, possessing more than just basic English language skills but strong conversational abilities, and being afforded with options on whether to stay or go back home influenced their experiences. The following section will highlight the experiences of people in this sample who described challenges and barriers upon migrating and the emergent patterns associated with their more difficult transitions to life in the U.S.

II.   Initial Settlement Process: Patterns Among Those With "Difficult" Transitions

The remaining fourteen people in the sample are categorized as having a difficult transition based, similar to the subset of people with an easy transition, on the patterns that emerged from using both the criteria for categorizing participants and thematic data analysis of their experiences. Among this subset, there was more variation in reasons for migrating, their previous knowledge of American culture, language skills, the reasons for difficulty upon arrival, and mechanisms for coping. Like the easy transition group, there was a range in ages at migration. However, the unifying pattern that was seen among all of the people that had a difficult transition was a very candid and open account of the challenges they faced upon arrival. For some it was a straightforward description about the difficulty of leaving the Philippines, moving to the U.S. and getting accustomed to the American way of life. For many, it also included a detailed account of the emotional aspects of the move. However, all of them described challenging initial experiences, a relative timeframe for how long this period of difficulty lasted, and then turning points or events that made living in the U.S. better than when they first arrived. Despite differences in many demographic and experiential factors within this subset, there are key concepts shared among the people with difficult transitions, and they are culture shock and turning points.

A. Culture Shock

Every person in this study had a migration story, and those stories included reasons for moving to America, descriptions of life in the Philippines before coming, thoughts and feelings about the move, their expectations, their experiences, how and if those initial experiences have changed since migrating, if their expectations were met, and the impact of their immigration on

life now. Migration stories told by those with relatively easy transitions are fundamentally different than the stories of those who described difficult transitions. The people in the latter group told poignant and candid tales of struggles with language and maneuvering through mainstream society, feelings of loneliness or homesickness, and unrealized expectations. They described shock in the face of a new life, country and culture. Further, while many people could not retrospectively pinpoint exactly what they expected life in the U.S. to be like, some did acknowledge that their expectations were not met particularly in relation to employment opportunities.

The Oxford American dictionary defines culture shock as "the feeling of disorientation experienced by someone who is suddenly subjected to an unfamiliar culture, way of life, or set of attitudes." Interviewees' statements of shock and their stories of uncertainty were reflective of this definition and included challenges on many levels:

"It was a shock. The first year was hard. I feel like I don't belong in the U.S." 33-year old male who migrated at age 19

"It was a shocking experience. Shocking and lonely experience. It's not easy." 39-year old male who immigrated at age 29

"When I first came here, I was shocked. I wanted to go back." 44-year old male who immigrated at age 41

"It's (a) really big change. One thing, I don't know how to drive at that time. I don't know how to even go to the bank, apply to credit, all this stuff. Go to shopping. It was a

big adjustment for me. The culture. The language. It was a lot of adjustment I had to go through my first 3 years." 29-year old male who immigrated at age 25

This 29-year old male describes challenges with activities that are common to those accustomed to the mainstream society yet necessary for anyone – newcomer and native – subsisting within it. Mastering these tasks consists of learning normative practices and is a step towards acclimating to a new society. In many cases, possessing such knowledge and skills is necessary for societal integration. In addition, these circumstances provide opportunities for interacting with people, which can affect the creation of social circles as well as familiarity with standards of social interaction. For people who had prior knowledge of the activities mentioned like shopping, for example, as a result of pre-migration visits to the U.S., there may be fewer barriers to integration upon arrival compared to those who are experiencing such things in the U.S. for the first time. Challenges with standard cultural practices can be daunting, but perhaps less so if one has prior exposure and knowledge of these practices. In addition, lacking strong conversational skills and viewing language as a barrier could intensify these challenges, posing further obstacles to immigrants upon migration.

The sources of the interview participants' culture shock and subsequent challenges were rooted in difficulties with expectations, socio-cultural characteristics and practices, and homesickness or loneliness. Most people with difficult transitions experienced a combination of these issues. They had their ideas and expectations of what life in the U.S. would be like; there were people who expected the difficulty, but still described it as being harder than they thought it would be. Others saw glimpses of America through the media like movies and TV shows or had ideas based on people's stories. One male who migrated while he was a college student was

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influenced by his peers that he left in the Philippines and their ideas of what America would be like. His response to the question of what he expected before migrating here was:

"Everybody thought that money is hanging on that <points up> and that it's easy. That's what I thought. It would be easy. I didn't expect to be like lonesome, depressed for a little bit, that I'm so alone. So I didn't expect that because before I left all my friends were like 'wow, you're going to the U.S. It's gonna be a different life. You're gonna have a lot of money.' It was good. Then I came here, and it was different."

This male had expectations that were largely associated with ideas of "money growing on trees" but what he described as most surprising upon his arrival were the loneliness and depression that he experienced. He was eventually able to find a part-time job that provided some financial assistance, but the main source of his initial difficulty was dealing with the psychological aspect of moving to a new country. For those who do not experience these types of emotional barriers, it is possible that they are better situated to face less emotional issues related to being new immigrants like finding work and creating social networks.

This is an example of the complexity involved in parsing out the causal order of factors that influenced people's ease of transition and their subsequent integration to society. It was the case with my sample that those who had visited the U.S. prior to migrating, who possessed strong conversational English skills, and who had self-perceived migration options did not experience the same shock and challenges as those who described difficulty transitioning. However, among those who did describe difficulty, the underlying factors related to their transitions were not as uniform. There were noteworthy variations in their pre-migration characteristics and experiences. Some people had visited the U.S. prior to migrating. Many

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rated their English proficiency and conversational skills as high and similar to those with easy transitions. Others had moved and settled here specifically for a job in which U.S.-based employers petitioned them and provided temporary housing. Thus, many in this subgroup had prior exposure, skills, and/or established contacts with structural institutions for integration. However, having to learn the normative practices of a new country and the shock of being alone and depressed were overwhelming. Based on the findings of this study, it appears that this latter issue (i.e. being alone and depressed) was highly significant to people's ease of transition. Even for those who made pre-migration travel to the U.S. and did not consider language a barrier at all, it was the homesickness and depression that characterized their transitions as difficult. As will be discussed in the following section, the period of shock was temporary and followed by definitive turning points. However, future work on the psychological issues and stress related to migration with Filipinos is imperative and likely overlooked because of their unique relationship to the U.S.

A majority of this subset (9/14) had never been to the U.S. before migrating, but among those who had visited, even a single visit influenced people's desires to migrate. Upon migration, however, they faced obstacles and realities that were different from what they expected:

"I came a year earlier with my friend to check it out. We came for a month, going to theme parks and shopping. So I'm like 'oh, I like it here.' We came back after a year. We were on a tourist visa, so we were taking our chances. Looking for greener pastures. I got a job at an elder care facility. So I gave it a try. I didn't last for one week. I'm homesick. I called home crying. I want to go back home. I was like that for a year." 36-year old female who migrated at age 28

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"When I came here before (on vacation), the working environment is still good. There was still a lot of work. But now, it's very scarce. I didn't expect this condition. I expected to come here for a better life. It's not a better life. I'm still struggling." 66-year old male who migrated at age 64

Many people that I interviewed shared the sentiment of this 66-year old male and acknowledged that their abilities to find work were hindered by the U.S. economic recession. My data collection was at the height of the recession that occurred primarily between 2008-2010. This is a significant historical context to consider particularly because many people in this study migrated for a "better life" that often included seeking job opportunities. Previous research also shows that Filipinos migrate to the U.S. primarily for upward economic mobility and family reunification (Chen et al, 2009). Within my sample, there were roughly four people who stated that because of the recession, they had either not been able to find work or their work was temporary and intermittent. All of them migrated at later stages of life and were over age 50 when they came.

In talking about the effect of the recession on their transition processes, people who had high levels of education and work described how they considered moving back to the Philippines if work opportunities did not surface for them. In particular, people spoke of how they left good jobs, property, family and friends, as well as a sense of comfort and stability in the Philippines. Discussions of what people literally left behind in the Philippines arose mostly within the context of their inability to achieve the same here. A 54-year old male who migrated at age 52 spoke of how despite having a master's degree, he had to get certifications through adult day school in a

new field because he could not find a job in his field with his qualifications. This process was difficult for him psychologically, and he questioned moving to the U.S for a better life when he had a good one in the Philippines:

> "Midway through being here and going through all these struggles, I wondered 'why are we here?' Our life was good in the Philippines. In fact, my two daughters are still there. They are well provided for with a house, cars, and help. Their life is even better than ours is here."

While entering the workforce provided people with direct contact and exposure to mainstream structures (which will be further discussed in Chapter 6), not all people who worked immediately upon or soon after arrival had seamless transitions. Interestingly among the four people that migrated on work visas and had jobs lined up even before they got here, all but one described culture shock, feelings of homesickness and loneliness, and obstacles to learning socio-cultural norms like shopping, driving, and interacting with people. Thus, having sources of income upon migration as well as an established route to integration did not prevent people from experiencing shock. One man in his early 40's expressed his excitement at being offered a good job opportunity, but was overwhelmed by the homesickness and loneliness. These feelings were confounded by the cultural norm of community that he was accustomed to in the Philippines:

> "When this opportunity came, we were all excited. I was excited. I wanted to start another life. But then when I came here, I wanted to go back. Right away I thought that if I didn't resign from my job in the Philippines, I would have gone back. I was in a good career. I was working for the largest corporation in the Philippines. I had a stable job,

handling people. But when I came here, it was a shock. I missed my family. I missed

my children, my friends. Oh, I missed everything. Back home, I would come home from

work and go around the house. Talk with neighbors. When I got here, I was just in the

staff housing watching TV. You can go out, but if you go out, there is nobody in the

streets. I'm thinking I was in purgatory." 44-year old male who immigrated at age 41

His excitement and enthusiasm for starting a new life in the U.S. was quickly replaced by

culture shock and loneliness. Similar to those who were frustrated with the lack of job

opportunities as a result of the recession, many people in this sample discussed how they

considered moving back home to the Philippines upon experiencing culture shock and loneliness.

Yet, they stayed and persevered. As mentioned in the previous section, personality traits,

sources of motivation, and even pride can be associated with the reasons that people persisted

through the challenges and eventually reached a point of settling into life in the U.S.

The following section will shed light on the points at which people in the sample

described circumstances changing for the better. These turning points typically included a time

dimension, the creation of social networks, and becoming further integrated in mainstream

institutions like the labor force. However, to fully understand this process, we would also need

to learn about the experiences of people who did not stay and compare them to those that did.

There is a cohort of newly arrived immigrants that have relatively quick return migration, and

understanding their migration stories (from expectations pre-migration, experiences upon arrival,

and decisions driving the return to their homelands) is pertinent to addressing the challenges that

immigrants face when arriving to our shores. I learned months after data collection ended that

one person in this sample (who migrated in her early 50's, had been here less than a year, and

described very little contact with American society) did return back to the Philippines. This news was not surprising to me, but it is recent immigrants like her that we would need to conduct further qualitative studies with to better understand overall migrant experiences.

B. Turning Points

The interviewees' immigration stories often began with their reasons for relocating and the circumstances surrounding their move like when they came, whom they came with, and where they settled. Among the people that I interviewed, those who described difficulty transitioning to life in the U.S. subsequently spoke about culture shock and homesickness. These psychological factors were sometimes a result of literally moving to a new country alone, but often times they were a result of unrealized expectations or experiencing difficult situations that they had not anticipated. Migrating for career opportunities or for a better life brings with it an expectation that life in America will be good. Thus, experiencing shock and loneliness instead of "a good life" upon arrival can be disappointing. Yet this was the experience and sentiment that those with difficult transitions described.

Almost uniformly across this sub-group, tales of shock and loneliness were followed by stories of overcoming difficulty. In sharing their migration stories, it was a natural progression for the interviewees to describe the hard times, but then to portray if and how life improved. These turning points were characterized by three main factors: a time dimension, the creation of social networks, and further integration to society typically through labor force participation. Most people described the initial phase of culture shock and homesickness lasting one to two years, but one person stated that it was challenging for three years and another for five years. It was common for people to state the length of difficulty via statements like "for the first two

years" or "after being in the U.S. for a year." As is common with retrospective data collection, there may have been issues with people recalling how long the difficulty persisted. While the actual length of time is interesting and important particularly for understanding return migration patterns, for this sample, the time coupled with turning point events are significant.

One major factor related to people reaching turning points within their migration experiences was the creation of social networks. One example of this is the story of a 44-year old male who had been here for roughly three years after being petitioned by his employer. He migrated alone and experienced loneliness and homesickness that he describes as nearly causing him to quit his job and return home. However, through work, he was able to meet people, particularly one other Filipino employee in the company that was integral to him reaching a turning point.

> "The Filipino guy – he was my first contact here. I saw him at orientation day. He looked like a Filipino so I went to his table and started a conversation. He was telling me that the house he was staying in had three rooms and an extra for rent. So he brought me to their house. It all got started. The ones that own the house were Filipinos also. So they have TFC[7] and eat Filipino food. I became friends with them. He introduced me to some other Filipinos."

This was a key event for the interviewee because it was the start of him creating a social network. Through this network, he began to socialize, became less homesick and lonely, and built a community that made life in America better.

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[7] TFC is The Filipino Channel, which is a satellite cable network of television shows from the Philippines and includes news, talk shows, game shows, movies, and sitcoms.

"We have more of a community now. It's more like what I left back home. Having more of a social life is much, much better. But it took awhile. If I didn't hang on, I wouldn't be enjoying this."

It is a plausible explanation that interviewees became less homesick when they began interacting with people who became part of their social support network. Typically the most shocking experiences were described among those who moved here alone and knew no one or very few people. However, others who had some social support upon arrival still described difficulties that were sometimes even associated with family that was here. For instance, one woman was 25 years old when she migrated on a fiancé visa and lived with her future husband and in-laws upon arrival. She spoke of having mixed feelings and expectations prior to moving. She also emphasized how her new role as wife and daughter-in-law, while getting accustomed to life in a new country, was stressful for her.

"I was scared and excited. This is gonna be spending my life with my husband and creating a new family. So, I'm wondering, how's it going to be? Will I be able to find work? Plus, all of my family was back home. I was here alone for five years until my sister came, but in between was very hard. We're living with my in-laws, and it was hard. There's a lot of complications. I felt so alone. I don't know if I would have done that again."

She became emotional at this point during her interview as she spoke of these challenges after her arrival. She had been in the U.S. for roughly eleven years, and over the course of those years she continuously worked, gave birth to two sons in U.S. hospitals, and became accustomed to

life in the U.S. While there was a lengthy time dimension to her turning point (five years), it primarily occurred when her sister came to the U.S. and she had a close source of companionship and support. She was too emotional to expand on the dynamics of her relationship with her in-laws during the interview, but it is an example of how the mere presence of people (i.e. family) does not always counter the loneliness that immigrants face. There will be further discussion on the dynamic between some of the recent Filipino immigrants in this study and the U.S.-based family that they stayed with and relied on early after their migration in upcoming chapters on the cultural value of family.

Another factor involved with people's turning points included further integration into society through their institutional contacts, particularly the work force. As previously mentioned, findings on employment and migration experiences revealed that entering the workforce immediately upon arrival and/or having work lined up prior to migration did not necessarily ensure an easy transition. In the case of a 33-year old male who migrated at age 19, interacting with the mainstream U.S. society via contact with the institutions of both work and school helped him to slowly adjust. He had moved to the U.S. with his father who ended up migrating back to the Philippines six months later. He described experiencing "shock" and "loneliness" soon after his arrival, and these feelings lasted for "about two years" before he started to feel settled. He found work at a local store roughly shortly after moving, and he also enrolled in courses at a local community college. After a couple of years of working and going to school, he saved up enough money to move out of his relatives' home and be on his own.

"From then on (after working and taking classes), it seems like everything's settling down. I'm getting comfortable. This is my life now. I have people to hang out with. I have work, money that I can spend. The feeling of being independent."

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He emphasized that working and going to school were important factors for his adjustment to and acceptance of life in America. For him and many others that I interviewed, the turning point events within migration stories followed a similar pattern of after a period of time and through the creation of social networks and becoming accustomed to American ways through work and school, life in the U.S. got better. This finding is integral to not only understanding immigrants' experiences but also for addressing obstacles that could hinder their success, acclimation, and overall well-being.

A noteworthy theme described by many of the interviewees who had difficult transitions was reaching a point of being independent. It is interesting how there is a strong emphasis on the value of family and togetherness that is observed in part by immigrants' reactions of loneliness and homesickness upon arrival. Yet, many have described satisfaction with being independent, particularly in relation to being less reliant on U.S.-based family. Within the context of culture change and while analyzing people's transition stories, one might question if "home" cultural values are possibly being replaced by "host" ideals. The next chapter will focus on this argument while illustrating how people expressed a multifaceted cultural identity and approach that is not taken into account particularly within culture and public health studies.

III.   Chapter Conclusion

The recent Filipino immigrants in this sample largely described two different trajectories in terms of the ease of their transitions to life in the U.S. Among those who had a relatively easy adjustment, they had previous knowledge of and firsthand exposure to American culture through visits prior to migrating and thus were not surprised when they arrived. Further, they possessed

strong self-perceived English language skills that made conversing easy for them. Finally, many

in this subgroup conveyed that they had options and did not feel pressure to stay in the U.S. On

the contrary, people that described difficult transitions spoke of culture shock, which included

homesickness and depression that were significant barriers upon migration. This shock also

entailed unexpected language barriers and loneliness. However, after a certain amount of time,

people described reaching turning points that were facilitated in part by the creation of social

networks and by continued workforce participation. The migration experiences have been

presented in this chapter within the context of ease of transition, which sheds light on the

physical and psychological aspects of moving to a new country. The following chapter will

build upon this and incorporate the cultural facet of this sample's migration stories while

analyzing the concept of culture commonly used in acculturation and health studies.

Chapter 5

What Comes Next: Navigating Through a Sea of Cultural Norms

In the previous chapter "On New Shores" I compared the transition experiences of immigrants in this study by the level of ease or difficulty they described regarding their adjustment processes. The observed patterns were largely based on experiential factors like previous exposure to America and conversational English skills that subsequently influenced people's ability to cope and face migration challenges. In this chapter, the impact of culture will be the main focus of transition experiences because culture is central to theories and models of acculturation. However, the concept of culture is multifaceted, and depending on a specific group or context, culture can be embodied and enacted differently. This is largely why the concept of acculturation is problematic and remains debatable across disciplines (and abandoned within the field of Anthropology). While both culture and acculturation are typically undefined in health research, for the purposes of this study culture will be broadly understood as the customs, behavior, attitudes, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or social group within varying contexts. Acculturation is generally the culture change resulting from contact between two cultures (Hunt et al., 2004).

I will present findings on the cultural values and influences described by the study sample in the form of case studies, paying particular attention to how cultural propensity could be situational. I will also critique the theories of and the current measures for acculturation commonly used in public health studies using findings from the interviews. I will begin by discussing the core cultural characteristics of the Filipinos in this study and analyze the extent to

which culture changes have occurred. Based on this analysis, an argument will be made

regarding the use of cultural domains for acculturation and health research with Filipinos.

I.   On Being Filipino

In the background and significance chapter, I reviewed some of the most recognized

Filipino cultural traits and values, and that review will serve as a reference for the cultural

attributes described by the people in this study. Often, they openly described known Filipino

qualities. Other times, through their stories, it was evident that specific Filipino cultural values

influenced their decisions and actions. Thus, through the qualities they reported as well as those

that they described, I was able to create a profile of the highest regarded Filipino values and traits

for this group. In general, the Filipino values and traits described among interviewees reflect

those described by scholars who have studied and documented Filipino cultural attributes.

A. Family

The single most important thing that Filipinos in this study valued was family. Their

reasons for migrating, their motivation to continue through the struggles of loneliness, their

desires to remain healthy, their need to make it in America so they could provide financially,

their ability to adjust, their sacrifices – all of these factors were either for or influenced by the

value that people placed on family. When asked about Filipino values and culture, every single

person stated that "Filipinos are family-oriented" or statements to that effect. The people that

interviewees considered to be "family" were parents, spouses, kids, siblings, cousins, aunts,

uncles, grandparents, and close friends; all of these groups of people were mentioned during

interviews as a part of the family unit.

Most of the time, people talked about the value of family more than any other Filipino attribute as well as before referencing other traits and values. For many, the notions of family and family values were woven throughout the interview, and people reinforced this by the actions and decisions they conveyed through their stories. In particular, for those who experienced difficult transitions, missing their families was one of the hardest parts of migrating. However, their families often became a driving force for them to stay and adjust, often so they could remain here with and/or for their families. For example, family is what drove the 33-year old male who migrated with his dad at age 19 to stay despite his loneliness. When he found himself living in America alone after his dad returned to the Philippines six months after their arrival, he wanted to go back too. However, he also wanted to make his parents proud and knew how much his being in the U.S. meant to them, so he stayed. Family also influenced the then 41-year old male who relocated for a job, but experienced so much culture shock that he wanted to go home immediately. Instead, he stayed so that he could establish himself both financially and eventually be able to file an immigration petition his wife and kids to join him. Petitioning them was important to him because of his belief that despite his difficulties with the change in culture, the U.S. still had more opportunities for his family than the Philippines.

The importance of family is related to Filipinos' strong affinity towards a sense of community and togetherness. Family influences people's decisions and is absolutely necessary in understanding how cultural values and traits shape the lives of Filipinos. Being family-oriented was a trait that did not need to be compromised or replaced even when immigrants became accustomed to life in the U.S. Instead, it was a part of people's core cultural identity. Further, people in the sample did not imply that American values were devoid of the importance

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of family, but some people did associate certain activities like not spending every weekend with family or not making sacrifices for them as American.   For instance, one woman stated that her Philippine-born husband who had been living in the U.S. for almost twenty years was "Americanized because we don't see his family that much."

B. Education

The second most emphasized Filipino value described by this sample was education. There is a high level of education among Filipino immigrants to the U.S., with roughly 70% of foreign-born Filipinos having more than a high school degree (U.S. Census, 2010). The section on Filipino culture in Chapter 2 does not mention education specifically as highly valued within Filipino culture, but it does emphasize how Filipinos are hardworking and industrious. When people in this study described the importance of education, they typically did so within the context of education being key to economic or employment-related success and not associated with intelligence per se. This is reinforced by this sample's reasons for migration (i.e. better life that was often related to a better financial situation) as well as previous research on Filipinos' reasons for migration (i.e. upward mobility as cited in Chen et al, 2009). There could be a selective migration bias in that people with higher education levels are more likely to migrate to the U.S. and thus describe education as a core value. It was indeed the case with the Filipino immigrants in this study that education was viewed as highly important:

> "First and foremost is education. No matter how poor you are, they're (parents or relatives) still gonna try to send you to college. The thought is that it is the first step so you can succeed and really have a good life." 54-year old female who migrated at age 44

"Education is what defines Filipinos. One trait of the Filipinos is they try to finish their education. In the Philippines, even if they come from poor families or have to sell their house and their property, it's one of the things they want – they want their children to finish college. Even if they don't have jobs, they finished college. And most of the Filipinos here, even if they are doing odd jobs, they're usually college graduates." 44-year old male who migrated at age 41

Another woman described the success that all of her children have had because of their education levels. She emphasized the value of education by comparing her kids to U.S.-based family members who did not go to college. Thus, her emphasis on the importance of education as a strong Filipino value is described in contrast to how she views education as less of a priority for Filipinos raised in America:

"I'm glad we raised our kids in the Philippines because if not, then perhaps we would not have been able to send them to school or guide them in the right way. I'm afraid of what would happen to them if we didn't give them that foundation of education. We see our nephews and nieces who grew up here. Some of them are not even successful. They did not even take any (college or trade school) courses. If you are not a college graduate or do not finish anything now, then you have lesser chance for a good job. That's what I think." 68-year old woman who migrated at age 64

C. Respect

Most of the people in the sample either stated directly or described through stories that

being respectful, particularly to elders and those in positions of authority, was an important aspect of Filipino culture. Interestingly, people typically depicted how important respect was to them by sharing stories of how they experienced or witnessed a lack of respect in American culture. This was most common among the Filipinos who migrated at older ages, but not exclusive to them. For example, one male who migrated thirteen years ago at the age of 21 had difficulty witnessing and adjusting to the ways in which his U.S.-born and raised cousins did not show respect to the elders in the family and subsequently how his Philippine-born sisters began to adopt the same behavior.

> "I have cousins who were born here. They're always out of the house, doing things that the parents do not approve, or just being disrespectful. They might be the extreme case, but still, they are so Americanized. What is it? I mean, you (the interviewer) were born here, but you're not like that. Yet, my sisters who came here in high school and got too Americanized, they are like that. Always out. Disrespectful." 34-year old male who migrated at age 21

He spoke at length about how he did not understand what it was about the culture or a person's upbringing that would make them have or not have the propensity to be respectful. It was evident by both his dialogue and concern regarding this topic that respect was very important to him.

One woman who had been in the U.S. for eleven years after migrating at age 25 spoke about the lack of respect "American kids" have and referenced her school-aged children. She emphasized that she teaches them "how it is done in the Philippines" while criticizing the manners of her kids' friends, who are mostly Asian and Caucasian.

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Several of the immigrants in this study worked as teachers and described how they were shocked by the ways that children spoke to them. They described how they did not find it appropriate for students to call them by their first names or to speak back to them. Again, they often compared what they experienced in the U.S. to the cultural norms in the Philippines. In these instances, the lack of respect was an issue not only because of their age, but because of their authority positions as teachers.

The manners in which Filipinos interact, especially younger people to their elders, is hallmark to Filipino culture. When I spoke with everyone that I was interviewing, I made sure to do so with respect, making sure not to be too forward or abrupt. I found that using certain tones and, particularly with the older immigrants, using the word *po*[8] was impactful. For instance, there were times when I could sense that some of the older interviewees were apprehensive, timid, or reserved. I noticed a pattern that by softening my tone and frequently using the word *po*, even when probing for more information, people tended to warm up. I also noticed that using *po* was really only reserved for elders. If I was interviewing someone older than myself but not considered an elder, I would use the words *kuya*, *ate*, *tito*, and *tita*, which are older brother or male, older sister or female, uncle and aunt, respectively. There was a familiar or friendly feel to the interviews by my use of these terms, but there was also a sense of boundary or respect that I needed to recognize. I truly believe that using these terms and being respectful while interviewing Filipinos is key to building rapport and honoring the strong value of respect and *pakikisama* or getting along with others.

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[8] "Po" is a word used to show respect. It is usually added at the end of a sentence but may also be placed in the middle.

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D. Religion

Catholicism is the predominant religion in the Philippines with an estimated 80% of the people in the country identifying as Catholic (Republic of the Philippines National Statistics Office, 2012). Many of the people in this study referenced the importance of religion. For a few people, they spoke of Catholicism from a more intellectual perspective by describing the Spanish influence on religion:

> "We're very spiritual or religious because of Spanish influence." 29-year old female who migrated at age 25

> "The Spaniards colonized us for 300 years. Some of our words are Spanish. And our religion is Catholic." 67-year old male who migrated at age 63

For others, religion was an influential part of their lives and affected the ways in which they dealt with changes upon migration:

> "I hope you don't mind me bringing religion into this. But if you have a strong faith, if you're grounded, and prayer is in you then you will get by. I knew I would be alone here, but that is what got me by. My religion and faith." 41-year old female who migrated at age 38

> "Filipinos are very religious. And for me, as long as you have God, the Lord is in your heart. You feel contented. And then life here is not so bad." 74-year old woman who migrated at age 65

In terms of choosing or belonging to a church based on whether or not it was predominantly Filipino, only one woman specifically stated that attending a Filipino church was important to her. However, two other people did mention that they attended churches that are known to be mostly Filipino, and one male stated that he liked his church because the pastor was Filipino. Thus, while people were not insistent that they attend a Filipino church, several people did belong to churches that were either predominantly Filipino or had a recognizable Filipino congregation.

Interestingly, in talking about values and factors that influence their lives and their decisions, the people that I interviewed did not describe religion as prominently as I had anticipated. This is in contrast to recent qualitative work on Filipinos and health that revealed that Filipinos are somewhat to deeply religious and that religion influences health behaviors (Culture and Health Among Filipinos and Filipino-Americans in Central Los Angeles, 2007). Their work specifically asked questions about religion and religious practices while mine urged people to speak about cultural values, which included religion. Thus, further work on the importance of religion to Filipinos in the U.S. is needed particularly because related cultural values of *bahala na*[9] and *pampalakas ng loob*[10] can influence health attitudes and behaviors.

Overall, people in this study spoke of Filipino cultural traits and attributes, but they specifically described the importance of family, education, respect, and religion. These four Filipino values contributed to the ways in which people made decisions about migrating to the U.S. and to the ways in which they coped with or adapted to mainstream culture. If we are to explore culture within the context of amendable cultural orientation that acculturation theories suggest, then we might assume that changes to these four core values for this sample would

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[9] Leave it up to God
[10] Becoming strong in the face of adversity

result in some level of acculturation. In the next section, I will analyze the extent to which current theories and measures used in public health acculturation research are applicable in determining culture change based on adaptation and changes to the core values this sample.

II.   Use of Acculturation Models in Public Health Research

As described in Chapter 1, an acculturation model argues the existence of two different cultural orientations—traditional versus mainstream—and places immigrants on a continuum between the two cultures (Hunt, Schneider et al. 2004). Public health research has continued to use linear frameworks of acculturation, like the unidirectional and unidimensional model, even though more expansive theories exist. These models are based on the traditional view that acculturation is the "shedding off of an old culture and the taking on of a new culture" (Flannery, Reise et al. 2001). Two cultures exist within this model, but what is distinctive is the movement from one (the home or original culture) towards another (the host or new culture). Also of importance in this framework is the adoption of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of the new culture and *replacing* home cultural attributes with them.

While immigrants to the U.S. literally experience the process of leaving their home country and moving here, their cultural "movement" may not be as straightforward or linear as these models might imply. While studies that explore the relationship between culture change and health may acknowledge that acculturation is a dynamic process, the methods used for conceptualizing it typically do not. (Abraido-Lanza, Armbrister et al. 2006). Thus, despite the availability of more multidimensional acculturation theories, they are often not used in public health because they involve complex conceptualization and measurement.

Despite the limitations, unidimensional models of acculturation are straightforward, and in general, researchers use these linear theories and measurements in an attempt to contribute knowledge to the field of culture and health. Immigrants may undergo socio-cultural changes, and studies are designed to understand potential relationships between those changes and health to improve programs and services for immigrants and address health disparities. Findings from my research emphasize that regardless of the integrity of our research paradigms, if we use inaccurate models or measures of culture change, we may not yield accurate results and may instead draw erroneous conclusions about culture and health. Further, as evidenced by the migration and transition stories of the immigrants in this sample, culture is multidimensional and a single number or quantification of "culture change" is not be possible for use in public health studies. However, regardless of the specific variables used to measure acculturation, it remains that quantitative public health studies do in fact find health differences between and within their study populations using those measures. These findings have important implications for identifying differences based on factors like time since migration or language preference for certain ethnic groups. However, these variables as measures of changes to culture or the extent to which immigrants are "American" may not be valid. As I present findings on culture and discuss the implications in the discussion section, arguments on the extent to which we need to deconstruct culture for use in public health studies will also be shared.

III.   Linear Models of Acculturation and Interview Data

The following critiques focus primarily on unidimensional acculturation models because they are most commonly used in public health studies even when authors described a broader

definition of acculturation or used more than a single construct to measure it (i.e. time since migration AND language preference). I will present six different cases to help illustrate the utility of these frameworks. The cases that I chose are based on time since migration mainly because length of stay is a common acculturation measure. My analysis of the length of time since migration for the Filipino immigrants in this sample is not meant to support or refute a relationship between acculturation and their time since migration. Instead, presenting data on different cases with similar times since arrival emphasizes the heterogeneity of migration experiences and also recognizes the extent to which people kept their core cultural values intact while simultaneously adapting and shifting their outward cultural expressions. Further, whether people had easy or difficult transitions is included within their case studies to provide a context for their overall migration experiences. Finally, age at migration is presented to demonstrate how life course stages alone did not determine people's cultural and transitional processes.

A. More Than Ten Years Since Migration

The first case is that of a 37-year old woman who migrated at the age of 25. She had never been to the U.S. prior to moving and has been living here for almost twelve years. In this study, she was categorized as having a difficult transition primarily because of language difficulties, homesickness, and not having a strong social network upon arrival. She entered the workforce within months of migrating and until now, has always had a job. In addition to work, she has had continuous contact with societal institutions like schools and extracurricular activities because of her children. She has also had regular contact with the health care system; both of her children were born here, she has insurance through her employer, and she seeks

medical care for herself and her family. While she described having language issues upon arrival, she is now comfortable speaking English.

She talked at great length about Filipino customs and the cultural values of respect, family, and the importance of education. She spoke of how she teaches her kids to approach schoolwork the way it was in the Philippines – "strict" and with "a lot of repetition and discipline unlike here." She compared American and Filipino traits, particularly how "Americans are less respectful of their elders," and "Filipinos are communal and can rely on each other more than Americans." She not only spoke of these values and traits, but also emphasized how she is proud to still possess them. On adapting to the American way of life:

> "No matter how I try to be traditional, I feel that you should change to survive, but not totally be Americanized. I do things the Filipino way. I tell this to my kids – that back home, this is how it's done… with respect. For me, I kept my culture. I kept my values. For me, they are sacred. My values and integrity are intact. But you have to learn how to deal with people, how to adapt to the society, how to take advantage of opportunities."

This woman has had continuous contact with mainstream institutions since her migration, leading to opportunities for acclimating to U.S. society. However, in examining her cultural values and beliefs along a spectrum of Filipino and American cultures, it is not clear where this woman falls. Her strong values of family, respect, and education do not appear to have changed, and she definitely has not experienced the "shedding off of an old culture and the taking on of a new culture" with regards to these Filipino cultural attributes. Based on this account and a traditional framework for culture change, her acculturation level and "how American she is" remains unclear.

Even if we examine certain constructs like ethnic identity or language preference, this woman's acculturation level is still not evident. She identified as Filipino Chinese, which is an ethnic subset in the Philippines of people who settled there (sometimes for generations), but whose roots and ancestry are from China. Although she spoke Tagalog, Cantonese, and English in the Philippines, she speaks mostly English and Cantonese now because her kids speak English and the elders in her home speak Cantonese. However, she stated that she prefers to speak Tagalog when she can. In this case, language-based measures would not necessarily capture the process of change regarding her language preferences since she still has a preference for Tagalog in some instances, but a need to speak other languages in certain areas of her life.

Based on the acculturation model of moving from the home culture towards the host culture and adopting new attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that replace those of one's home country, this woman's acculturation level is multifaceted and not easy to categorize or quantify. She has retained Filipino values that are important to her, but she also acknowledges the need to adapt to American ways of life to thrive. One can argue that she has selective or situational culture because of her cultural "negotiation" - she talks about retaining core cultural values while simultaneously acknowledging when and how to exhibit more "American" behavior. This is just one example of how a unidimensional model or latent measures of acculturation are challenged. It is important to note, however, that aspects of culture that were discussed and explored for this immigrant are also not completely exhaustive. For instance, she did not mention other behaviors commonly associated with culture change like adherence to traditions, food preferences, or inclinations towards friends of certain ethnicities. However, my initial and continued impression of this woman is that she is positioned along a spectrum in which she still has strong Filipino traits and values but has been able to adapt to American ways of life.

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Another case is that of a 74-year old woman who migrated at the age of 65 after traveling to the U.S. multiple times on a tourist visa prior to settling here. She was categorized as having an easy transition primarily because of her prior knowledge of the U.S., her strong English language skills, and her residence options (she has children in both the U.S. and Philippines that she could stay with depending on where she decided to live). Within months of relocating here, she found a job at a museum and had worked there for almost ten years. She described having a large social circle and admitted that it was easy for her to make friends because of her outgoing personality. She described herself as a successful working woman in the Philippines and only decided to leave her career and move to the U.S. permanently to be reunited with her family that had migrated years prior. She grew up speaking both Tagalog and English and continued to speak both after moving here.

She gives an account of her perceptions of the U.S. prior to migrating and then the reality of her experiences after living here for some time, mostly in regards to family values.

"Well, at first I was so excited. Oh, America is really great when I visited. But then when I decided to stay here and left my job, there were so many things that I found out were not really what I think about the United States. Like the way people do things. A lot of things like the culture in the Philippines is very different than here. Filipinos are very sentimental, isn't it? We value a lot of things like family ties. Here it's different. Like breaking up for any reason that they cannot take. In the Philippines, no matter how hard it is we try to put the family together. No matter what the reason. I really value the family so much and am really disgusted with the United States and all this break-ups and divorces. That's one reason."

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Despite having a negative view on a specific American trait, this woman stated that she is accustomed to the American way of life:

> "Yes, I'm accustomed. For me, it's like living in the Philippines, although the situation is different. But I still feel the same. The only difference is that I can't go out and walk the streets. You can call a taxi, but there's no *jeepney*[11]."

This woman seemed to always feel comfortable living in the U.S., and it could be a result of her previous knowledge of American ways of life from her frequent travel prior to migrating. It could also be from her prolonged contact with mainstream institutions. She participated in the workforce for over a decade, had regular contact with the U.S. healthcare system, interacted with government entities like Social Security, and belonged to a predominantly Filipino church. Yet, the change is not as easy to decipher in terms of actual cultural attributes (which is what acculturation measures, not exposure to American entities). First, she learned English from a young age, spoke both English and Tagalog in the Philippines, and was comfortable speaking English upon arrival. Thus, her primary language has not changed since migrating. Second, she described Filipino and U.S. family values and her negative view of the latter. The Filipinos values that she emphasized, like the importance of education and maintaining her health for her family, do not seem to have changed since migrating. She was strong in her assertion that she does not like "American culture," but also spoke of how she is accustomed to the way of life here and feels the same as when she was in the Philippines. Further, she spoke of other factors that can be used for a broader understanding of acculturation like ethnic loyalty and ethnic identity.

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[11] Jeepney is a popular mode of transportation in the Philippines, originally made from U.S. military jeeps from WWII. They are considered a symbol of Philippine culture.

"Sometimes I'm not happy thinking about if I should have stayed put in the

Philippines. Well maybe because it's my country, the place where I was born. So

I have to be loyal with it. I'm not happy staying here forever. I'm planning on going

home sometime."

"I'm still a Filipino. I only became a citizen because I got the benefit of becoming one.

Just to be able to benefit by staying here and working here."

This woman also appears to have had contact with mainstream institutions like the workforce

and health care, which have provided her with opportunities to integrate, but it does not appear

that her experiences have done much to alter her Filipino cultural attributes. With regards to a

linear model of acculturation, she has not adopted the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of

American culture and replaced her Filipino cultural values with them. Therefore, based on the

data for this case, it is also not conclusive that a unidimensional framework for acculturation is

applicable to understanding her transition process. Similar to the first case, this woman has more

of a bidimensional cultural orientation or situational cultural experiences. Further, she had a

baseline knowledge of and comfort level with American ways of life that other immigrants may

not have. Through her transition experiences and stories, she may appear to be located closer to

the "American" side of the cultural spectrum. However, in actuality, because her baseline

cultural orientation was already heavily influenced by American attributes, she may not have

actually moved towards American culture; she may have initially started off there. Thus if

acculturation is about movement and adopting new attitudes and behaviors, it is questionable

whether this woman has acculturated. Even in the most basic ways, the cultural orientations for both women in the cases presented cannot be understood using linear models of acculturation.

One common characteristic of these two women is that they had similar times since migration. While all of the people in this sample are relatively recent immigrants (migrated fifteen years ago or less), both women had been in the U.S. for over ten years. Thus, they have had years of transition experiences and retrospection. Like the use of the latent variable of time since migration suggests, perhaps the process of cultural change includes a time factor in which changes are observed with increasing time since immigrating. Ten years may not be long enough to observe cultural changes. On the contrary, it is also possible that the length of time since migration has buffered cultural changes and made people immune to them and less likely to report. Thus, additional cases will be explored to address this factor of time: the first set of comparisons will include two people that have very short durations of time since their migration, and the second includes two women with similar demographic characteristics, but considerably different times since migration.

Again, it is important to emphasize that none of these cases are being presented to determine if there is a relationship between time since migration and acculturation. Rather, the case studies depict that there are no set patterns of transition as a result of this commonly used variable and instead numerous factors influenced transitions for the Filipino immigrants that I interviewed. People in this study sample who had similar times since migration but very different reasons for migrating had subsequently different contact and experiences with mainstream institutions. Further, people that I interviewed who had similar backgrounds, ease of transition, and post-migration experiences but different times since migration had similar contact and experiences, but those that were here longer tended to have more opportunities for contact as

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a function of time.

B. Less Than a Year Since Migration

Two people in the sample had only been here roughly less than a year before I interviewed them. They were unlike each other demographically and also had considerably different initial experiences upon arrival. One was a 23-year old male who had visited the U.S. multiple times prior to migrating. He moved for career opportunities and started working roughly five months after his arrival. He is categorized as having an easy transition because of his exposure to and knowledge of U.S. culture prior to moving and his strong perceived English language skills. Since migrating, his language preference and proficiency have not changed much; he spoke both English and Tagalog in the Philippines and continued to speak both languages with ease in the U.S. He stated that he was very comfortable speaking English because he went to an international school in the Philippines where he had classmates from all over the world. He also stated that he was "used to the diversity." He recognized many differences between life in America versus the Philippines, but stated that he did not have any challenges adjusting. Initially, he had typical feelings of loneliness despite having close family here. However, his desire to take advantage of American career opportunities motivated him during times of homesickness.

> "When you visit, you are excited and want to do everything you can before you leave.
> But when you actually move here, you're not going back to the Philippines any time
> soon. It's a different feeling. I missed it back home."

"But there (in the Philippines), you can have all the training and education, but there aren't really any jobs. If there were jobs, it would be fine to stay. But if you have the opportunity to leave and go abroad, it's important to do so. So for me, that's what I stayed focused on."

When asked about Filipino and American cultural values and traits, he spoke of the importance of family, education, and food for Filipinos and work for Americans. He described how here "people just go to work and then go home" as opposed to what he was accustomed to in the Philippines where people go to work but then "go out and hang out after." He strongly identified as Filipino and possessed the cultural traits and values he listed for Filipinos, but he never spoke about whether he had adopted any American traits. However, he did state that while he observed many differences between living in the Philippines and the U.S., he was not surprised by the American way of life and has had a relatively "smooth" transition thus far.

The other person who has been here less than a year is a 56-year old woman. She is characteristically different than the male above. She migrated to live with her daughter and her family; when asked specifically why she moved to the U.S., she stated that it was because "my daughter petitioned me." She had never visited the U.S. prior to migrating, and stated that she "was sad and lonely" when she first came. She had very little contact with mainstream society or institutions. She did not work, but she had also not intended to work here. She stayed home to help her daughter with a home daycare business, and her only accounts of interacting with others involved going to the mall or the grocery stores. When asked if she interacts with anybody, she stated "no, not really." Interestingly, she is the only person that I am aware of in my sample that moved back to the Philippines.

This woman had minimal interaction with the mainstream society, and when she did, language was a barrier. She stated that, "It's very difficult. Most times, I don't understand. They speak so fast." While she feels that her English comprehension had improved slightly since migrating, she stated that she really "only speaks Tagalog." In the Philippines she predominantly spoke Tagalog and learned a little English in schools. Her highest level of education is a high school degree, and she referred to that as a reason why she did not have strong English skills. This was one of the interviews that was conducted more in Tagalog than English.

When discussing Filipino values and traits, she talked about the importance of traditions, family, and community.

"The attitude is different. I observe here when they eat in a restaurant, everyone pays individually. But we Filipinos, only one person will pay. We're very *galante*[12]. We don't care about money. Just friendship and *pakisama*[13]."

"Here, you don't see much people. Like in the Philippines, you talk with your neighbor. You see each other. And you are always together with your family. Traditions are important. Like the month of Christmas and All Souls Day and New Years, we are all together. We eat together."

She described impressions of American culture and traits that are similar to what the 23-year old male stated about how Americans value work:

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[12] "Galante" is a Tagalog word that means giving
[13] "Pakisama" is a Taglog term for togetherness; being together

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"People in America work too much. *Lahat la halos busy. Di na kita*[14]. They're all

workaholics because they have to. In the Philippines, even if you don't work, you can

still eat. You can eat *kang kong*[15] from your backyard or ask the neighbors for rice.

That's a big difference."

While the 23-year old man and 56-year old woman were both relatively new immigrants

to the U.S., their exposure and interaction with mainstream society were considerably different.

First, they migrated for very different reasons. He knew that he would be actively seeking work

and entering the workforce; she migrated because her husband passed away and her daughter

petitioned for her. Merely based on the reasons for moving to the U.S., they have had dissimilar

opportunities for contact with mainstream society and institutions. However, taking into

consideration the unidimensional models of acculturation that distinguish culture change by the

replacement of home cultural values and traits with that of the host culture, they actually report

similar directions of culture change (or lack thereof). Although different from each other, neither

interviewee experienced a change in their language preferences upon arrival. A language-based

measure that looks at primary language would rate their acculturation levels similarly because

both respondents stated that Tagalog is their primary language. Also, both described

characteristics of Filipino and American culture, and expressed the extent to which Filipino

values and traits are still strong influences in their lives. They both described the American trait

of being more focused on work and less so on community or family, but neither could directly

relate to that. Entering the workforce was an anticipated step for the male, but he was still

getting accustomed to ways of interacting with people at work and definitely had not become

[14] "Lahat la halos busy. Di na kita" is Tagalog and translates to "Everyone is always busy. They don't
see each other."
[15] Kang kong is a vegetable grown in the Philippines; it is a variation of water spinach

more centered on work than on family. Further, one of the aspects of life in the Philippines that the woman missed most was being able to interact with people like her neighbors. Thus, it is safe to assume that both of these new immigrants had not experienced changes to the core Filipino cultural values they described.

Of these two very recent immigrants, the male interviewee appears to have further acclimated to life in America than the older female, and he has had more opportunities to do so primarily because of his workforce participation. However, the commonly used linear or traditional theories and measures of acculturation do not take societal contexts into account like exposure to or interaction with mainstream institutions. Their cases exemplify the importance of including contextual information or factors in models and measures of culture change if we are going to continue to use them.

Despite experiencing similarly "small levels" of cultural transitions, it is important to note that they had very different baseline levels for language and exposure to American ways of life. These initial starting points for primary language preference/skill and knowledge of U.S. customs are not incorporated in measures and models of acculturation. It is possible that the rather short durations of time since their migrations have not yielded any shifts in cultural orientations. Yet, my initial and overall impression is that these two recent immigrants were not similarly located on the cultural spectrum between "Filipino" and "American" less than a year from the time of their migration or *from the start*. Thus, if we are going to attempt to measure culture change, differences in baseline attributes need to be considered. These two immigrants have noticeably different experiences and trajectories that would not be accounted for with a linear acculturation model or latent variables.

C. Different Times Since Migration With Similar Demographic Factors

To further explore the factor of time since migration, I will present two cases of sample participants with similar demographic factors, reasons for migration, and migration experiences, but different times since arrival. Again, these cases share experiences that are typical among others in the sample and are presented here to illustrate heterogeneity among recent immigrants, not a relationship between time since migration and acculturation. One woman was 37 years old and migrated at the age of 24; she had been here for thirteen years. The other woman was 30, migrated at age 25, and had been here for five years. Both women immigrated on student visas with no initial plans to remain in the U.S. after graduate school. They had relatively easy transitions, in large part because of their knowledge of life in America from their frequent previous travel to the U.S. They were very comfortable speaking English and had gone to private schools in the Philippines. Since they had migrated for school, they interacted with at least one mainstream institution immediately upon arrival. They each had supportive extended family in the U.S., but also interacted with classmates and were able to make friends through school relatively easily. They discussed Filipino and American cultural traits emphasizing the importance of family or *pakikisama*:

> "We are nurturing. We're also very spiritual or religious because of Spanish influence. Family is very important to us. We're very communal and get along well with other people." 30-year old female who migrated at age 25

> "Filipinos are very hospitable and generous. Family is important. We laugh a lot. We eat a lot! We're very hardworking, good people and are not harsh in comparison to others." 37-year old who migrated at age 24

They both shared opinions of the various ways that Filipinos and Americans approach life and how the norms are different. This was conveyed mostly by describing – and to some extent embodying – the American characteristic of being independent:

"My friends in the Philippines wonder how we do it, how we live so independently. Here, we started renting and then eventually we bought a house. You can see your process. And there's more divide from your parents here. Family in the Philippines is very collective. It's we or our, but here it's mine or I'm borrowing from my dad or mom. Even if it's not theirs but their parents', my friends will say our house or our car, etc." 37-year old who migrated at age 24

The 30-year old woman spoke of American customs that she both observed and was getting accustomed to like more tight-knit relationships, a stronger sense of community, and family as an influential part of life in the Philippines compared to in the U.S.:

"It's something I had to get used to here. Like working in the Philippines, we develop friendships, deep friendships. Here, you go to work and then go home right after. Make dinner and all that stuff. In the Philippines, you have cooks who cook for you so you have more time to hang out. But here, everyone just goes home. Not as friendly, I guess… In the Philippines, your family guides you more. Here, your parents or friends don't really have a say in what you do. It's good and bad. Of course we appreciate having family around and to influence you. I'm not quite used to it yet without them. But here you make your own decisions."

Both women interacted with mainstream society through school upon their arrival, but their trajectories after were different. The older of the two women did not work in the U.S., but her responsibilities as a stay-at-home mom and wife exposed her to networks through her children's schools and extracurricular activities as well as through her husband's job. Her husband worked in an industry that exposed her to mainstream customs but also Americans in general since his work was "mostly a white man's profession." They lived in a heavily Asian-populated area, which provided her with opportunities for interaction with other Asian subgroups. Compared to other Asians, she felt that her family was Americanized and acclimated.

> "We're really Americanized. One time my daughter brought pasta to school for lunch, and her Taiwanese friend asked her where she bought that. My daughter told her that I made it, and she was surprised because their moms only make Chinese food. There are many people who live here and have lived here for years. Most of their kids were born here. But their culture at home is still very much what it was in Asia. Compared to them, we are more acclimated. We're more Americanized." 37-year old who migrated at age 24

She described how growing up and for most of her life she spoke both English and Tagalog equally, and she appeared to have always had a strong propensity towards speaking English. When asked about her primary language, she stated that it was English.

> "Schools always ask this question, and I always say English. It's the language that the 4 of us (her, husband, and two kids) can understand and speak, read and write with. The girls can't do the last three with Tagalog."

The 30-year old woman, on the other hand, stated that her primary language was Tagalog even though she had similar language preferences as the other woman. She also went to private schools where English was both formally and casually spoken. She grew up and continues speaking both English and Tagalog with family, close friends, and her husband. She stated that language was never a barrier for her post-migration. However, she did describe how she was a little taken aback by people's reactions to her strong English skills.

"It's interesting that a lot of people will say to me 'wow, you speak English so well. How long have you been here? Did you grow up here?' They're surprised that we speak English. Maybe they want us to… I don't know. Not be Americanized?" 30-year old female who migrated at age 25

These two women each had exposure to and interaction with mainstream institutions and had similar socio-demographic backgrounds and reasons for migration. In comparing them, there are various arguments for what their acculturation levels could be. On the one hand, the woman that has been here longer stated that she is Americanized particularly in relation to other Asians, while the more recent immigrant was still getting accustomed to American culture and customs. They both spoke a mix of English and Tagalog, but reported different primary languages. Further, both women described core Filipino values (like the importance of family and working hard) that did not change despite the different times since migration.

Within the context of current acculturation frameworks, the 37-year old appears to be "more acculturated" than most of the other interviewees in this sample primarily because of her stated primary language and her adoption of the American trait of being independent. Further,

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while it is subjective, her statements of being Americanized and assimilated have some merit with regards to self perceptions of her cultural orientation. It is possible that the longer period of time since her migration may have provided her more opportunities to "move towards American culture" as is suggested by linear acculturation models. However, as evidenced by other interviewees who have a similar time since migration and common language patterns and preferences (i.e. 75-year old woman described earlier in this chapter), changes to cultural orientations are not uniform by length of time in the U.S. I posit that time may be a factor in transitioning to life in America and the adoption of American cultural traits in some instances. However, it does not determine the type of experiences and extent or manners by which people will respond to those experiences. Further, it is vital to take other factors into account, particularly contact with the mainstream society, which provide experiences and influence the adoption of new behaviors. Incorporating multiple cultural orientations is also key. Based on these case studies that are reflective of the experiences of the Filipino immigrants in this study, culture is dynamic. There was a set of core cultural values that people possessed and that influenced their lives, but they were able to adopt cultural traits of the society they transitioned to. There was a balancing, negotiating, or switching of cultures after reaching a certain level of familiarity with the new culture and customs. The process or transition from predominantly possessing Filipino cultural traits, to then interacting with and being exposed to American culture, and subsequently gaining knowledge and adopting behavior needed to maneuver through the mainstream society, all while holding onto (self-determined) desired core values is potentially a more accurate route of cultural adaptation than the underlying theory of acculturation.

D. Considerations Based on Presented Cases

In general, the actual number of years used to decipher acculturated versus non-acculturated is still debatable, but it is an important issue because many studies use a variable of time since migration in acculturation and health research. Among the people that I interviewed, there was a notable difference between those who have been here less than about ten years and more than ten years regarding the attribute of autonomy. People described American ideals of independence and autonomy in the context of their transition experiences, but this was only observed in interviewees that had been here for over ten years. Retaining Filipino cultural traits and values while also possessing the American principle of "independence" can be considered an indicator of culture change or a bicultural orientation. Some quotes on independence are:

"I became more independent. I feel more secure. All in all, I'm pretty happy that I moved forward and stayed here." 33-year old male who migrated at age 19

"I had to become independent and strong for my kids. I had no choice. So I do think I am more – what do you call it – Americanized because I have this strong attitude. But, I am still Filipino. No matter what, I don't look like any other culture." 50-year old female who migrated at age 37

"I learned to be more independent, to open yourself up and do the best you can because it's different here. I did not totally become Americanized, but I can manage and succeed in America because I can take advantage of the opportunities." 37-year old female who migrated at age 25

Interestingly, this last quote is from the same woman who I presented as the first case in this chapter. When I explored the Filipino and American cultural values and traits that she described within the context of a unidimensional framework, it did not appear that she had moved from one end of the culture spectrum to the other. She was very strong in her conviction that despite living and working here for over ten years, she still preferred her Filipino values over American ideals. Further, language measures were dubious to her case because she spoke English and Chinese mostly out of necessity, but she actually preferred to speak Tagalog. For this one case, two separate realms of culture have been explored (the retention and adoption of Filipino versus American attributes and language preference), but these two separate factors for this one woman's migration experiences yields conclusions that are incongruent. Based on her discussion of culture, she definitely did not replace her Filipino traits with American ones, but she described situations in which she benefited from gaining the American trait of independence. Her language preference has not changed per se, but the reality of the languages she has to speak has differed from what she spoke in the Philippines. At the very least, these inconsistencies reinforce the notion that culture change is dynamic and multifaceted and thus, cannot easily be conceptualized in linear, unidimensional ways. Different ways of conceptualizing and measuring acculturation for this one woman would likely result in classifying her acculturation level differently. This is merely one case, but it supports research like that of Dao et al. (2011) who found that using different methods for measuring acculturation within a single sample can produce dissimilar results.

The cases presented in this section are fairly typical of the sample in terms of expressing Filipino and American cultural attributes. Based on statements of Filipino values and beliefs, depictions of American attitudes and traits, and then the retention of Filipino characteristics

while living in the U.S., acculturation status for most people in this sample would be difficult to assign according to traditional models of acculturation. The data that refers to the American ideal of independence among many interviewees who migrated over ten years ago is notable as this was one finding that differed primarily by time since migration. However, even with these cases, there was more of a sense of preserving their strong Filipino cultural values and beliefs while simultaneously adapting to American culture. This description of embodying situational cultural traits is interesting if identifying culture is the focus of study. However, as will be further reasoned in the discussion, the importance of the extent to which culture is identified, deconstructed, and used for public health purposes, remains to be determined. If acculturation is going to continue to be explored within health research, a framework contending that immigrants are on a continuum between the two cultures (Hunt et al., 2004) seems to be more applicable as was observed with participants in this sample. The next section will further explore a language-based measure of acculturation typically (as language is often used as a proxy for acculturation in health studies) and analyze the results of the administered acculturation scale in relation to interviewees' transition experiences.

IV.   Measurement

Acculturation theories are limited in their underlying arguments of how culture change occurs. Problems exist in both the definitions and conceptualization of important concepts as well as the methods of measurement. Most current frameworks usually assume that the outcome of acculturation is a distinct result rather than a multifaceted, multidirectional process. This is often the case because latent variables are commonly used as proxies of acculturation and thus outcome measures in public health studies. More recent acculturation and health studies have

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used a combination of variables, like nativity and language preference or nativity and time since migration to determine acculturation (Peterson et al., 2012). However, even using multiple variables as a single acculturation measure may not yield consistent results. In this section, I will critique measures of acculturation using interview data. Specifically, I will review commonly used latent measurement variables and then compare interviewees' stories about their cultural values and traits with their scores for a Filipino acculturation scale administered at the end of each interview. Further analysis of the utility of the scale will be discussed.

A. Latent Variables in Public Health Acculturation Studies

I believe that one issue with latent variables as measures of acculturation is that regardless of what the variable is an argument can be made against its use. The reason being that culture change does not occur without circumstance, and latent variables do not provide a context for the circumstances that immigrants face. A temporal measure like duration of residence in the U.S., for instance, measures just that—how much time someone has lived in the U.S. One does not acquire ways of life merely because of time alone. Exposure to, interactions in, and adoption of traits characteristic of a new society, all within a context of time, would provide a better measure of culture change. Nativity is another factor that is important for categorizing, but has little utility in measuring culture change. Alone, nativity merely tells us whether one is foreign or native born. Nativity could instead help to create a historical, political, economic, and social profile of immigrants from a specified country. This would be particularly useful for Filipino immigrants because of the unique relationship that the Philippines has with the U.S. as a result of the U.S. occupation and the American influence that people in the

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Philippines have been exposed to. This history influences the familiarity with American customs that might not be afforded to other immigrant groups. Language is a prime example of this.

The experiences and characteristics of a woman in this sample exemplified the complexity of language as a measure of acculturation. She migrated roughly three years ago and had a relatively difficult time transitioning because she was homesick and did not have a strong support network upon arrival. Further, she had very limited contact with mainstream society and institutions because she did not work and stated that she spent most of her time in her house. Further, despite having strong conversational English language skills from learning English in private Philippine schools, she was initially intimidated to speak English after her migration ("The first year I would have my husband do the talking for me, like in stores and restaurants"). She described commonly referenced Filipino values and traits (family, respect, religion), but American cultural attributes were less apparent to her:

> "Honestly, I still cannot pinpoint what Americans value. What does the typical American family value? I still cannot see it. Maybe it's because I've only been here less than four years. And maybe because I'm not so exposed 100% to Americans… Maybe I will acquire some American traits like being on time or knowing how to run the whole household with no help. Maybe one day. But I know I will always be more Filipino."
> 41-year old female who migrated at age 38

This woman was a more recent immigrant compared to others in the sample; thus, she had a relatively short time since migration. She had very little contact with mainstream society; it can be argued that she had almost no opportunities for acclimating. She did not describe adopting any American traits, nor could she really describe what American values were. Therefore,

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unidimensional frameworks of acculturation and latent measurement variables would likely rank

her on the low end of the culture spectrum with seemingly no movement. Based on this data and

in comparison to other interviewees, I would speculate that she has had little culture change since

immigrating. However, she is comfortable speaking English in large part because she went to an

exclusive school in the Philippines, which was the case for at least a quarter of the sample.

Because of her strong language skills but despite her seemingly low level of culture change

based on her Filipino and American cultural attributes, this woman interestingly scored the

highest on the Filipino acculturation scale by Dela Cruz (2000) that I administered to every

person in this sample. This is a noteworthy discrepancy in measurement. Her personal stories

and statements about her experiences migrating and transitioning to life in America counter how

she ranked on a validated scale comprised mostly of questions about her language preference that

was intended to measure acculturation. As has been previously demonstrated, various measures

of culture change can lead to a range of results. With such inconsistencies, it would be very

difficult to accurately conduct acculturation and health research. In the following section, I will

describe in detail the language-based acculturation scale for use with Filipinos.

B. A Short Acculturation Scale for Filipino Americans and Interview Data

The validated acculturation scale, a Short Acculturation Scale for Filipino Americans

(ASASFA), was modified from a scale for Hispanics and included Likert-type questions on the

following: language use and preference at work, at home, and with friends; media language and

preference; and ethnic preference of individuals in social relations (Dela Cruz 2000). As

described in the article on this instrument, the authors were systematic in translations to Tagalog

as well as ensuring that the instrument was psychometrically sound and that it measured what

the authors intended it to (i.e. language preference). Thus, the scale is considered to be

validated. However, as I will show with the findings from my research, the scale is not

applicable for understanding culture change among Filipinos because language use and

preference among Filipino immigrants is highly contextual. Context is not incorporated in this

scale. Further data from this study illustrate that there is no linear relationship between

language and Filipino culture. While the instrument is valid in measuring language preference,

language preference is not a valid measure of acculturation. However, because of the steps

taken to achieve the level of validation, people interested in acculturation among Filipinos may

be inclined to use the scale. As a result, their subsequent findings on a relationship between

acculturation and health would be inherently flawed.

The following chart lists the questions included in the ASASFA and the scores by

transition group category (i.e. whether people had an easy versus a difficult transition). Scores

are presented by ease of transition since strong language skills were typical of those who

reported an easy transition. The possible scores ranged from 1 to 5, with 5 being the most

acculturated:

Question	Average Score for Easy Transition Group	Average Score for Difficult Transition Group
1. In general, what language(s) do you read and speak?	3.4	3.4
2. What language(s) did you use as a child?	2.6	2.0
3. What language(s) do you speak at home?	2.1	2.1
4. In which language(s) do you usually think?	2.7	2.3
5. What language(s) do you	3.1	3.1

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usually speak with your friends?		
6. In what language(s) are the TV programs you usually watch?	3.9	3.4
7. In what language(s) are the radio programs you usually listen to?	4.7	4.3
8. In general, in what languages(s) are the movies, TV, and radio programs you *prefer* to watch and listen to?	4.4	4.3
9. Your close friends are:	1.9	1.9
10. You prefer going to social gatherings/parties at which the people are:	2.6	2.4
11. The persons you visit or who visit you are:	1.6	1.4
12. If you could choose your children's friends, you would want them to be:	3.0	2.9

Table 4: Average Scores for A Short Acculturation Scale for Filipino Americans (ASASFA), Respondents by Ease of Transition

The response scores to questions #1-7 are as follows: Only Philippine language(s) – 1; More Philippine language(s) than English – 2; Both equally – 3; More English than Philippine language(s) – 4; and Philippine language(s) – 5. The response scores to questions #8-12 are as follows: All Filipinos – 1; More Filipinos than Americans – 2; About half and half – 3; More Americans than Filipinos – 4; and All Americans – 5.

Of the people that I categorized as having an easy transition, scores ranged between 30 and 41 out of a possible 60. There were two people that scored 30 and 31 respectively, while the rest of this group scored between 36 and 41. The two persons that scored the lowest in this

group were both women who migrated at older ages roughly three years ago. In particular, they scored outside of the average for the questions about language spoken at home, language used for thinking, and language for watching television or listening to the radio.

The questions regarding language for television and radio programs are not necessarily indicative of cultural affinity or changes. Cable television providers commonly offer Philippine-based channels for a fee, and these channels are very common in Filipino households in California. Among the people I spoke to, everyone knew about the channels and about half of the interviewees had it in their homes, regardless of if they stated that they watched it frequently or not. I would argue that watching Philippine-based programs can be a matter of preference that is not necessarily associated with culture change. For instance, I have U.S.-born Filipino relatives that would describe themselves as "addicted" to Filipino channels. With the popularity and availability of this type of programming, I would not consider it a strong indicator of culture change. Further, I am not aware of any Philippine-language radio stations (available in the Bay Area). There are, however, Philippine radio stations that can be streamed online.

The language spoken at home is often times based on the entire household and not just the cultural attributes of the person answering these questions. For instance, the female interviewee who stated that she spoke English and Cantonese at home did so because she had to – her kids mostly spoke English, and the elders in the house spoke Cantonese. She however, actually preferred speaking Tagalog. Also, the woman who stated that her primary language was English because it was the common language among her, her husband, and two daughters stated that when she was with her close friends (who she stated are all Filipino), she preferred to speak in Tagalog. In fact, she commented on how her close friends are Filipino because they

share language in common. Thus, while language spoken at home is interesting as a gauge of the frequency and type of languages used, alone it can be misleading when used to measure a concept like acculturation or attempt to understand culture change with Filipinos.

Of the people I categorized as having a difficult transition, there was a larger variation in scores with the lowest being 24 and the highest 43. However, most persons clustered right around the middle of this range. People stated that they spoke a mix of English and Philippine languages now, but spoke mostly a Philippine language as a child. Except for the person who scored the highest on this scale, everyone else in this subgroup stated that they think in either mostly Philippine languages or a combination with English. People in this group also stated that they had more Filipino than American friends and that they spoke a combination of both English and Philippine languages with their friends.

Based on overall averages, the scale scores for people in the easy and difficult transition groups were fairly similar. When comparing the scores by age of migration (i.e. those who migrated at younger versus older ages), the scores differed more. In general, those who migrated at older ages scored lower on every language measure, which equates to having more of tendency towards Philippine languages as opposed to English. They scored fairly similarly, but just slightly higher than the younger immigrants on questions regarding social networks. The following table depicts the scores by age group. However, as has been previously stated, age alone is not a determining factor in transition experiences. Yet in order to capture a broad picture of age in relation to the language-based acculturation scores, I will present differences by the age groups used for sampling. Score ranged from 1-5 with 5 being most acculturated:

Question	Average Score for Younger Immigrant Group	Average Score for Older Immigrant Group
1. In general, what language(s) do you read and speak?	3.6	3
2. What language(s) did you use as a child?	2.4	2
3. What language(s) do you speak at home?	2.9	1.5
4. In which language(s) do you usually think?	3	2
5. What language(s) do you usually speak with your friends?	3.1	2.5
6. In what language(s) are the TV programs you usually watch?	4.1	3.5
7. In what language(s) are the radio programs you usually listen to?	4.7	3.8
8. In general, in what languages(s) are the movies, TV, and radio programs you *prefer* to watch and listen to?	4.7	3.8
9. Your close friends are:	1.7	2
10. You prefer going to social gatherings/parties at which the people are:	2.4	2.8
11. The persons you visit or who visit you are:	1.6	1.8
12. If you could choose your children's friends, you would want them to be:	2.9	3

Table 5: Average Scores for A Short Acculturation Scale for Filipino Americans (ASASFA), Respondents by Age Group

It is interesting to view the scale scores compared by different groups. However, most of the

scores tended to cluster making it difficult to reveal the slight nuances. Therefore, I will briefly

discuss the overall scores for both the highest and the lowest scoring persons.

The person who scored the lowest on this scale was the 56-year old woman who migrated

less than a year ago. For all of the language-based questions, she stated that she spoke almost

all or mostly a Philippine language. The media questions were similarly either mostly Philippine language or equal Philippine and English. The questions on friends were congruent with her responses to the language questions. She was rated as the "least acculturated" person in this sample based on this scale. She was also portrayed as one of the people with the least amount of culture change and definitely with the fewest opportunities for contact with mainstream institutions. In this sense, the data from the interview supports the findings from the acculturation scale, and this finding is not entirely surprising given that she was not exposed to external factors that would foster changes to her cultural attributes. Yet questions still remain regarding the underlying reasons for change (or a lack thereof) in this woman's case and for others in this sample. Does her language preference and skill contribute most to her lack of acculturation? Is it due to her short time since migration? Or does her lack of exposure and contact with mainstream society inhibit culture change? What role does her education (high school degree) have? While all of these factors are important in determining one's level of acculturation for research purposes, it is not entirely surprising that this woman ranked where she did. What is more unexpected was the person who ranked as the "most acculturated" in this sample.

The 41-year old female who migrated at age 38 scored the highest on the ASASFA. Her responses to the questions on media and social contacts/friends were quite similar to the rest of the people in the sample. However, for all of the language questions, she responded as "only or mostly Philippine language." She is the only person that responded as thinking entirely in English (Question #4). Yet interestingly, she spoke early in the interview about how she was intimidated to speak English and would ask her husband to speak for her because she had to think about how to say certain things in English. Thus, her responses to the language-specific

questions do not entirely corroborate the stories she told about language as a source of insecurity for her upon arrival. One of the drawbacks of this scale is that there are no ways to follow-up with questions or to get further clarification, but this is the nature of survey research. It emphasizes the importance of instrument design or merely using measurement tools that more accurately address the issues at hand. The current issue is that of culture change, and while this instrument has gone through rigorous methods of ensuring validity (Dela Cruz, 2000), I do not believe it accurately measures culture change in Filipino immigrants. It measures language preference in various situations, but language preference alone tells us very little about the cultural orientation of Filipinos particularly since most Filipinos arrive having been exposed to English. It is not to say that factors associated with language are not salient. This is evident by the many people I interviewed who were shocked that conversational English was a barrier for them upon their arrival because of their exposure to English in Philippine schools. If we are to use language measures with Filipinos, we must establish baseline levels first as there is quite a variation in skills and proficiency among Filipino immigrants. Overall, a language-based acculturation scale is not applicable for Filipinos primarily because intricacies of the relationship between Filipinos and language can lead to misinterpretation and error. Further, any acculturation scale or measure that does not use a baseline for comparison will not accurately measure change. In the next section, I will discuss important cultural domains to include when exploring culture change among Filipinos.

   V.   Chapter Conclusion

       There is a plethora of public health studies that examine a relationship between acculturation and health, with findings generally describing how being more Americanized has

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adverse effects on health. While the findings on migration experiences and processes of transition for the sample of Filipino immigrants in this study were not analyzed to find an acculturation and health link, they were used to better understand Filipino cultural values for future public health use. The Filipinos in this study emphasized the strong values of family, education, respect, and religion, and how these values continued to influence their lives even as they became familiar with and accustomed to American standards and norms. There were no linear cultural processes among this sample that are characteristic of unidimensional acculturation frameworks typically used in public health studies. Further, adherence to strong Filipino values did not depend on time since migration or life stage at migration. Rather, as people became more integrated and exposed to mainstream culture, they often described being able to maneuver through it while remaining true to their Filipino values. Finally, interviewees' transition experiences within a cultural context were compared to their responses to a language-based acculturation scale designed for use with Filipinos. The result of this analysis showed that this scale (or any language-based instrument) is not applicable to Filipinos in large part because of the multidimensional nature of language use and preference for this ethnic group. The next chapter will take the overall analysis one step further exploring the interplay of ease of migration, cultural influences, and how interactions with mainstream institutions influence Filipino immigrants' transition processes.

Chapter 6

Staying Afloat: Transitioning to Life in America Through Contact with Mainstream Institutions

In the first chapter on the findings from this research, I explored the ease and difficulty that people experienced while transitioning to life in the U.S., highlighting factors that influenced their processes like knowledge of the U.S., skills, and options as well as experiencing culture shock and reaching turning points. In the second findings chapter, I analyzed acculturation frameworks and measures commonly used in public health research using interview data and reinforced the notion through interviewees' stories and experiences that acculturation is a dynamic process not easily understood or measured with linear models or variables. In this chapter, I will build upon both of the previous chapters by examining the effect that contact with societal institutions have on transition experiences, while keeping in mind that people migrate at various stages of the life course and this can influence their post-migration trajectories.

I.   A Life Course Perspective

The conceptual model that drove this research was based on the premise that age of migration influences people's decisions and reasons for moving, and those reasons then in turn determine the interaction between immigrants and institutional points of contact. These interactions provide people with opportunities to connect with society and could ultimately affect the ways in which they adapt and experience culture change. However, age is only one marker of the life course, and for the purposes of this study, age in and of itself was not the most important factor in analyzing people's migration experiences. A broader perspective of life

course stage and the socio-cultural circumstances surrounding people's migration was more informative.

There are several key concepts to the life course perspective. They include *trajectories* or stable patterns of behavior over time; *transitions* or changes in social roles or responsibilities; *turning points* that are major life changes in ongoing social role trajectories in which life takes a new direction; and *cultural/contextual influences* or events that shape and constrain the process of change and adaptation (Wethington 2005). Transitions include events like marriage, the birth of a child, a change in career or retirement, while turning points place people on specific trajectories and include events like going back to school to further one's career or emigrating from the Philippines. People that migrate at both younger and older ages can be in transitional and turning point phases, but the specific events of each phase differ by age group. According to American norms, younger migrants are likely to be in family and/or career formation phases. Older migrants are expected to be at retirement or near-retirement age. Both age groups may have social environments and relationships that are reflective of their life stages. Thus, people's ages and their life stages are important in revealing their migration experiences.

There are two factors that were embedded within the life course perspective that provided an overall framework for exploring the transition experiences of the Filipinos in this sample, and the first of these factors was reason for immigration. Life course stage can influence reasons or motivation for migrating. Studies of Latin American migrants have found that younger immigrants typically migrate for career or labor opportunities, while older immigrants relocate for familial purposes like reuniting with their children and helping with childcare (Wallace 1992). Differences in reasons for migrating, which may be a result of being in certain life stages, can then lead to varied patterns of exposure and integration for immigrants upon arrival.

The second factor, which is influenced by reasons for migrating, includes institutional

entry points of contact for immigrants. Examples of entry points to the mainstream society are

school systems, labor markets, and the health care system. In general, if a person migrates for

mainstream career opportunities, then contact with the labor market is expected. On the other

hand, if one migrates to help take care of their grandchildren for example, contact with the labor

market may be less likely. Overall, reasons for migration can differ as a function of life course

events, and these reasons influence the contact that immigrants may have with societal

institutions or points of entry to the host society. Mainstream institutions are important to

consider when exploring immigrant transitions because in general, institutions are built upon

cultural norms and standards of practice. Thus, contact with the new society via institutional

entry points can influence culture change or the transition experiences of immigrants. The

analysis and descriptions of the transition processes will begin with a discussion of the reasons

for migration and the institutional points of contact for the Filipinos in this sample while noting

pertinent differences by immigrant age group.

A. Reasons for Migration

The Filipinos in this study reported a number of reasons for migrating which included

career opportunities, school, family reunification and/or to assist family, and for a "better life" or

a "new start." While people often described more than one factor affecting their decision to

move, each person did state a primary purpose. For example, one male interviewee stated that he

migrated on a work visa for a specific job, but he also described his desire for a fresh start. He

was categorized in the "career opportunities" category since this was the impetus for his move,

but his desire for a fresh start is considered an important part of his migration story and was incorporated into the analysis.

The frequency of the various reasons for migration differed between people that migrated at younger ages versus those who came at later ages. While life course stage was more relevant to this research than age, per se, data will still be presented by age since sampling was conducted that way. Tables 4 and 5 list the reasons for migration by frequency and gender for younger and older aged immigrants respectively. Overall, most of the younger-aged immigrants (11/14) reported reasons associated with career-formation transitions or turning points – a better life or a new start, career opportunities, or school. Among those in the later-aged group, half listed reasons for migrating that involved their families (reunification, assistance with childcare) and the other half stated that they migrated for a better life or new start. Of the older-aged immigrant group that moved for a better life or new start, most of them also described situations in which they wanted a better life for their children and believed that moving to the U.S. would provide opportunities for their families. Thus, almost the entire later immigrant group made decisions to migrate to the U.S. that were influenced by family. None of the older immigrants specifically reported moving for career or school opportunities.

Reason for Migrating	# Interviewees Reporting	Gender of Interviewees Reporting
Better Life/New Start	5	Female = 2 Male = 3
Career Opportunity	4	Female = 1 Male = 3
Family Reunification/Family Assistance	3	Female = 2 Male = 1
School	2	Female = 2 Male = 0
Total	14	

Table 6: Reasons for Migrating by Frequency and Gender for Younger Immigrant Group

Reason for Migrating	# Interviewees Reporting	Gender of Interviewees Reporting
Better Life/New Start	5	Female = 2 Male = 3
Career Opportunity	0	Female = 0 Male = 0
Family Reunification/Family Assistance	5	Female = 4 Male = 1
School	0	Female = 0 Male = 0
Total	10	

Table 7: Reasons for Migrating by Frequency and Gender for Older Immigrant Group

Findings from this study support research on late life migration by Becker (2000), Emami (2005), Kalavar (2005), and Wallace (1992) showing that people who migrate later in life do so primarily for family reunification or assistance. While an overwhelming majority of the older immigrants in this study moved to be reunited with family members or for reasons that were influenced by their families, nine of the ten in this subset did actively search for employment outside of the home after they migrated – a finding that was unexpected prior to data collection. The average age of the interviewees in this later aged subset was 58, and most of them were still in the Philippine labor force prior to their migration. Unlike the age-related work force patterns in the U.S., which include an average retirement age of 64 for men and 62 for women (U.S. News and World Report, 2011), more than half of men and nearly 30% of women aged 65 and over in the Philippines were still in the labor market (Republic of the Philippines National Statistics Office, 2012). This data suggest that the Filipino norms of when people exit the work force likely differ from the common retirement ages in the U.S. Thus, the people in this study

who migrated at later ages likely planned to find work upon arrival even if their stated primarily reasons for migration were not employment-focused.

B. Institutional Points of Contact

As mentioned earlier in this chapter and also on the figure depicting conceptual domains for this research, common institutional points of contact include the labor force, schools, health care systems, places of worship, and clubs or organizations. It is noted that many of these points of contact can be ethnic-specific and interaction with or entrance to them may not necessarily result in exposure to mainstream American culture. For instance, being active in a church that is not ethnic-specific might provide opportunities for interaction with people of various ethnicities and immigration backgrounds. These interactions could potentially require the use of conversational English and the understanding of outside customs. On the other hand, participation in a Filipino-specific church, while providing opportunities for social interaction, would not necessarily expose one to American or mainstream culture the way contact with a non-Filipino church would. Similar experiences could result with ethnic-specific labor markets and organizations. However, as mentioned in the methods chapter, purposive sampling resulted in selective geographic recruitment ensuring that the interviewees did not all reside and/or engage in activities in densely populated Filipino communities like that of Daly City, California. Analysis of interviewees' points of contact took into account whether institutions were Filipino-specific.

The assumption that I had prior to data collection that older adults who migrated for familial purposes would move here and primarily stay home with their kids or grandkids, was not an accurate one. I anticipated that they would have very little contact with mainstream

institutions and any contact would only include places of worship, not places of employment. However, all but one person among the later-life immigrants looked for work. For those who migrated post-recession, finding employment was difficult and resulted in either not working or taking jobs that differed from the work they did in the Philippines. However, overall, those who did participate in the mainstream work force had smoother transition experiences. Thus, encounters with the U.S. labor market as an institutional point of contact were not reserved for those who migrated at younger ages or during life course stages centered on work. The influence of contact with mainstream institutions will be described in subsequent sections for both younger and older aged immigrants (i.e. school and career-centered life course stages versus stages that do not typically include starting new careers).

C. Petitions

Before describing the institutional points of contact for the immigrants in this study, it is helpful to note the trends on how they were petitioned, as petitions often influenced people's decisions to migrate and their early post-migration activities. The importance of the petition came to light through data collection and was not a theme that I had anticipated prior to the interviews. The petition is particularly salient for the older immigrants petitioned by siblings who migrated after waiting over twenty years; they told stories of feeling like they *had* to move to America even at older ages because they had been waiting many years for the opportunity.

A brief overview of current immigration law provides the following information regarding petitions and preferences:

The preference system mandated by the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act has had an impact on global migration to the U.S. The system is primarily for people wanting to migrate for employment or family reunification purposes. Once an initial visa petition is approved, they must await an immigrant visa number. A limited number of visas are allowed in each category annually. There is an exception to the system, and it is for immediate relatives of U.S. citizens (their parents, spouses, and unmarried children under the age of 21). People that fall into this group do not have to wait for an immigrant visa number once a filed visa petition for them has been approved. The preference categories for family and work are:

Family
Preference 1: unmarried children over age 21 of U.S. citizens
Preference 2: spouses and children of permanent residents
Preference 3: married children of U.S. citizens
Preference 4: brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens

Employee
Preference 1: professionals, scientists, and artists of exceptional ability
Preference 2: professionals holding advanced degrees
Preference 3: skilled and unskilled workers in occupations for which labor is in short supply in the U.S.
Preference 4: certain immigrants including those in religious vocations
Preference 5: immigrant investors creating employment

Source: American Immigration Council, 2012

Table 8: Petition Preferences, U.S. Immigration System

In this sample, seven of the twenty-four immigrant migrated after being petitioned by immediate family members (i.e. no preference category or visa number required), and five of those seven people came at older ages. There were seven people who migrated on work or school visas, and all of them were in the younger immigrant group. Three women migrated on visitors' visas and eventually got married in the U.S. Two of these women intended to get married here as their fiancés were already living in the U.S.; the third person met her husband here. Another person was here on a visitor's visa and remained in the U.S. "without papers" for a period of time, but ultimately obtained legal status. The remaining six people in the sample migrated via sibling sponsored visas; four of them were older immigrants.

Overall, the interviewees who migrated at younger ages (and were petitioned by employers, schools, fiancés, and other family members) came during career and family formation life stages. They entered the institutions of work and school and ultimately remained on this stable path. There were transitions that included career changes, marriages, and the birth of children, but overall they were on life course trajectories that coincided with American cultural norms and expectations for people of the same age. For interviewees that migrated at older ages, they typically experienced life course events that were not necessarily characteristic of the norms that the American older adult population experiences, like retirement. Instead they were entering the work force, working in a sometimes completely new type of job than they were accustomed to or trained in, and creating a new social network.

For those who migrated at later ages, a typical transition process began with being reunited with family upon arrival to the U.S. after migrating on one of two types of petitions: petitioned by their children (priority status) or petitioned by their siblings (third tier preference). If their children petitioned them, interviewees stated that they waited between six to twelve months for approval and then moved immediately after. If petitioned by a sibling, interviewees waited between twenty to twenty-five years to migrate to America. The older interviewees that moved here to be reunited with children and grandchildren often described helping with childcare and home-based activities initially, but eventually looked for work. However, those who migrated on sibling-to-sibling petitions made finding a job their top priority and sought employment immediately upon arrival. Typically their own adult children (and thus, their immediate families) were still in the Philippines. This latter petition group often stated that they intended to live and work here long enough to be able to petition their children.

The petition trends and transition processes were slightly different for those in the sample who migrated at younger ages. They migrated on one of four types of petitions: petitioned by a spouse or parent (priority status); petitioned by a sibling of one of their parents, which was essentially a sibling-to-sibling petition that they were included in as minors (third tier preference); petitioned by an employer (work visa); and petitioned by a school (student visa). Those who came on work and student visas had clear reasons for migration, which provided pre-established institutional points of contact. However, as was discussed in Chapter 4 on transition experiences, migrating on a work visa and having employment lined up did not necessarily result in an easy transition. What it did provide was a direct point of contact with society and the opportunity to be immersed within a mainstream institution. Within time, these opportunities helped with transitioning and acclimating to life in the U.S.

Overall, the petition process was a recurring theme as people shared their migration stories. For many it included a brief description of how they were petitioned and the length of time that they waited for both the petition to be approved and before they were able to come to the U.S. However, for many, talking about the petition had a deeper meaning that was tied to their reasons for moving.

For the 50-year old man who waited twenty years for his sister's petition to be approved, leaving the Philippines was full of mixed emotions. He stated unequivocally that he migrated so that his family could have a better life and more opportunities for success but that moving at an older age was difficult because the employment prospects for older people were not as abundant. Similarly, the couple that waited twenty-five years for a sibling-to-sibling petition to be approved emphasized that migrating in their 60's was not easy, particularly since they were very stable in the Philippines with a house, jobs, friends, and family. Yet, they had waited a long time and did

not want to lose the opportunity, for both themselves but primarily for their adult children still in the Philippines. Thus, for these later-life immigrants, their desires to move to the U.S. for a better life dated back decades before they were able to realize their dreams. When the possibilities of moving were first introduced, they were in their 30's and 40's – life course phases that typically include family and work. By the time their petitions were approved and they migrated, these interviewees were older, rooted in the Philippines, and at late-career or near-retirement phases with adult children and grandchildren. Therefore, for some people, their reasons for migration and decisions to move to the U.S. were strongly influenced by their petitions. For these older immigrants who migrated on sibling-to-sibling petitions after waiting 20-25 years for approval, they did not want to pass up the potential opportunities for their children. Their stories depicted how they likely would not have uprooted their lives and moved otherwise.

In the following sections, I will describe the extent and types of exposure that the Filipino immigrants in this study had with American institutions. Common processes that resulted in a higher level of exposure and contact will be compared to those with lower levels of contact. Reasons for migration and petition processes were analyzed along with the factors used to decipher if people had high or low levels of contact with mainstream institutions, which include (1) the number of institutions they were in contact with and (2) the degree and/or length of exposure.

II.   Common Trajectories for Those With Higher Levels of Institutional Contacts

Seventeen of the twenty-four people in this sample were categorized as having high levels of institutional contact. The common institutions that people encountered were the labor

market, schools (either for themselves and/or for their children) the health care system, places of worship, and clubs or organizations. Over time, most interviewees had sustained interactions with multiple institutions, and often contact with one led to subsequent contact with others. The larger the number of institutional contact points and the longer and more in depth the interactions, the more embedded people appeared to be within the mainstream society. This was observed through their stated comfort levels and adoption of behaviors that enabled them to maneuver through their new surroundings. The most common behavior that people were comfortable with after being in the workforce was the use of conversational English. People also spoke of increased knowledge of systems like that of health care and government entities like social security.

Entrance into the U.S. labor market was not only the most prevalent point of contact for the immigrants in this study, but it was also one that provided people with the most opportunities for gaining knowledge on American customs, beliefs, and behaviors. Work opportunities were also crucial to creating social networks, building confidence, and obviously addressing financial needs. Entering the mainstream workforce was a major event in people's transition processes and for those fortunate enough to find work, it typically occurred relatively soon after their arrival. All but one person in this subset of seventeen people had been employed at some point since their migration, and four were part of the older aged immigrant subgroup. They all have remained employed except for a 74-year old woman who stopped working after nine years when her husband passed away.

A. Younger Aged Immigrants and High Levels of Institutional Points of Contact

Nearly all of Filipino immigrants in this study who migrated at younger ages had high levels of institutional contact. Soon after their arrival, they entered the work force or attended school. Subsequently, entrance to both of these institutions led to learning about the American way of life, gaining important knowledge on other mainstream institutions like the health care system, financial institutions, and businesses, and also formation of social networks.

The person who migrated at the youngest age in this sample was 19 when he came to the U.S. He migrated while he was in the college and had a core group of friends, thus disrupting his stable social and education-related trajectory. His migration was a major turning point in his life, and it caused him to re-establish his own goals and purpose while he was adjusting to life in a new country. Although the institutions of school and work in the Philippines and the U.S. are very different, situating himself early after his arrival on the same type of trajectory he was on prior to moving was helpful. When he migrated here, he was at a life stage where work and school were common and relatively accessible. Thus, once he was able to gain entrance to these two main institutions, he was able to learn firsthand about the American way of life and begin to adopt the necessary skills for adapting.

A 44-year old male who migrated at age 41 experienced a similar trajectory. He migrated on a work visa and had a job as an engineer for a large corporation in a relatively small California town. He also had temporary living arrangements set for him upon his arrival. Like the younger male interviewee, he experienced a great deal of shock and homesickness after migrating and had contemplated moving back to the Philippines even though he had a stable, well-paying job in the U.S. For him, entering the workforce was both beneficial and challenging. The actual work was the same as what he had been doing in the Philippines, but he

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had difficulty interacting with people particularly because of his lack of strong conversational English skills. His primary reason for migrating gave him an established entry point to the mainstream society and an opportunity to acquire skills needed to adjust to life in America. He was exposed to American customs, structure, and people almost daily. However, that alone did not help him with feelings of loneliness and homesickness. He stated that he would "just sit alone in my room in staff housing and watch TV. Eating alone. No one to talk to. Just surfing the web."

Similar to the previous case, this interviewee was on a stable trajectory that consisted of a good job, a social network that was very important to him, and his roles as husband and father. When he migrated, he too experienced a major turning point, but his social network and responsibilities as husband and father changed because he migrated alone. Over time and through interactions within the work force, his conversational language skills improved. Further, a defining moment for him was when he met someone at work who was also Filipino, which provided an opportunity for him to create a network of friends. Things got better with time and exposure, and he stated that he noticed times when he "preferred the system here" to the way things are done in the Philippines. For this interviewee, his petition by a U.S.-base employer influenced his decision to migrate. His decisions and reasons for coming to the U.S. directly linked him to an institutional point of contact to American culture. While work exposed him to language and other American customs, it was the creation of a social network of predominantly Filipinos that really helped him adjust to life as an immigrant in the U.S. He eventually petitioned for his wife and kids and bought a house, which is arguably one event that deeply embeds a person within U.S. culture.

A support system that is knowledgeable of and provides assistance with mainstream customs is key to transitioning to life in America. For a 29-year old male who migrated at age 25, he stated that it was definitely his social support network that helped him acclimate. He, like the 44-year old male, migrated for a job and had living arrangements set for him. He had a difficult transition because he stated that the culture and language were major barriers for him, and he was very homesick. Despite having the structure of a job, he stated that he was "clueless" about seemingly simple yet necessary practices like "going to the bank, applying to credit, and going to shopping." He quickly created a circle of other Filipino immigrant friends that he sought advice and assistance from immediately upon his arrival.

"One thing that really help me was my fellow Filipinos who had the same struggles and difficulties. It was a big hassle and an adjustment, but for sure I managed because of my friends."

Similar to the previous cases, establishing a circle of friends was key to easing homesickness and loneliness. As was described in Chapter 4, for those who had difficult transitions primarily because of language issues and homesickness, turning points in their transition processes usually included the formation of local support systems. The support systems were mainly established as a result of encounters within institutions, typically the workforce or school system. As will be discussed in the section on people with lower levels of institutional points of contact, persons with little institutional exposure also had fewer social networks outside of immediate family. Thus, engagement with institutions provided immigrants in this study with opportunities to learn customs and acquire necessary skills to adjust to living in the U.S. It also often became the route for people to build social networks.

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As immigrants transition to the American way of life and adopt mainstream cultural traits, they may retain some of their original core (or "home") cultural attributes. For instance, a 37-year old woman who migrated at age 25 acclimated to the mainstream American society over time. Over eleven years, she continuously worked, had health care encounters because of her own as well as her children's health needs, and was active in her kid's school. She was integrated in U.S. institutions while still having behaviors and beliefs that are "very Filipino." However, over time, she has learned that change is good.

> "I feel that you should change. Not change totally like be Americanized. For me, I kept my culture. I kept my values. I believe that they are right. For me, they are sacred. But you have to learn how to deal with people, how to adapt to the society, how to take advantage of things like opportunities."

Integrating into a new society through contact with mainstream institutions can happen at any age, as was the case with the Filipino immigrants in this sample. However, adopting cultural behaviors and also creating social networks did not happen as readily among the later life immigrants. One potential explanation is that both of the aforementioned activities (adopting behaviors and creating networks) were facilitated by work force participation. However, age affected job opportunities with almost the entire sample stating that they believed migrating at older ages meant fewer chances to succeed financially. Yet there were no sentiments among the later life immigrants that they should not have come because of their ages or even that migrating was unsuitable at their ages. They recognized retrospectively that there are better career opportunities for younger migrants and that not being able to find steady work was challenging. However, the older Filipinos that I interviewed, and in general those who make the decision to

come at later ages, are likely a selective segment of the population who are relatively

comfortable, healthy, and psychologically ready to make the move. In the following section, I

will describe those who migrated at later life stages and had opportunities to have high levels of

institutional contact.

B. Older Aged Immigrants and High Levels of Institutional Points of Contact

Age at migration did not prevent people from entering the U.S. labor market. Of the four

older aged interviewees with high levels of institutional points of contact, all of them entered and

remained in the workforce upon arrival. This is in contrast to the six late-life immigrants with

low levels of institutional points of contact in which three of them had short-term jobs after

migrating, and the remaining three never worked despite attempts at finding jobs. However,

labor market interactions did not result in the formation of social networks like it did for younger

aged immigrants, except in one case. It did provide exposure to American customs and ideals,

encounters with the mainstream society, and an overall better understanding of the American

way of life. Further, through work, people stated that they had health benefits and thus had

health care system encounters. In contrast, the older immigrants who did not work reported

having few, if any, health care visits.

Three older female interviewees who became familiar with mainstream culture and

customs did so through their workforce participation. Each of them had visited the U.S. prior to

migration, but described how working made them feel embedded in American society. A 68-

year old woman who migrated at age 64 stated that she had "visited (the U.S.) many times. But

when I found work, earned money, went out… then I began to feel more permanent. I felt more

of a sense of belonging." Similarly, a 74-year old woman who migrated at age 65 was aware of

the benefits she could receive if she worked. She stated, "I wanted to work. Then I felt okay. Even though Philippines is my homeland, working in America was nice for the benefits. Health, pensions… you know."

Two of the three older women worked as preschool teachers and discussed how they became familiar with American customs and traits through interactions with the schools, parents, and students. They already had strong English language skills, but had to adapt to cultural differences particularly regarding respect for elders/authority figures and the nuances of the early education system. Further, merely having contact with people outside of their homes and inner circles provided firsthand learning opportunities regarding social interactions and norms in America. The older interviewees who did not enter the workforce did not experience this type of social dynamic within a structured environment.

The oldest of the three women worked at her first and only job in America for almost ten years. She described herself as a successful career woman in the Philippines who loved to work, so it was not unusual for her to come here and work even at a later age. Working provided her with opportunities to meet people and gain financial independence. She stated that she and her husband did not want to live with their daughter, and because they worked, they were able to rent a small apartment. Another notable factor related to this woman's entrance in the U.S. labor market was the knowledge she gained about government programs like social security and social insurance. For instance, she spoke of how she had good medical benefits when she worked, but then had to rely on Medicare once she stopped working. She also had contact with local social security offices regarding benefits she might be eligible for. Compared to other later life immigrants in this study, she was extremely knowledgeable regarding these government institutions, and integration within the labor market contributed to this knowledge. However, she

is set apart from the other later life immigrants who entered the workforce in one key way – she was the only older immigrant who worked that stated that working led to the formation of a social network outside of family. She credited her large social circle to both working at the museum and being friendly. Others in this older age subset described how their social circles mostly consisted of family, and they did not create strong bonds with or through people at work. This could be a function of the life course, and at older ages (regardless of work status) people may be less inclined to form new social bonds.

This finding that most of the later life immigrants in this sample did not seek out or form close-knit social networks beyond the family system has implications regarding the influence that family has on behaviors. Older Filipino immigrants may be most influenced and supported by family as opposed to friends, co-workers, or acquaintances from church or the community. If older Filipino immigrants are largely surrounded and influenced by their familial network, then exploring that cultural environment could shed light on if and how they adapt to life in the U.S. Language, customs, traditions, ideals, and perceptions held by the family unit may influence the attitude and behaviors of new immigrants and their transition processes, including health-related attitudes and behaviors. Obviously this is only relevant for those who migrate and have a family support system. Yet, just like the institutional points of contact that may have an effect on how immigrants acclimate, the family structure can influence the cultural changes particularly for older immigrants that might not have high levels of outside contact.

III.   Common Trajectories for Those With Lower Levels of Institutional Contacts

The remaining seven people in the sample had relatively few encounters with mainstream institutions and thus were categorized as having lower levels of institutional contacts. Four of

the seven people had not entered the workforce at all, despite efforts at finding employment by two of them. The three remaining people who did work in the mainstream labor market did so for short periods of time and did not the experience the prolonged exposure like those in the higher level subset. All but one person in this subset migrated at older ages.

A. Younger Aged Immigrants and Low Levels of Institutional Points of Contact

There was only one person among the younger aged immigrants in this study that had virtually no contact with mainstream institutions upon arrival. The 41-year old woman who migrated alone at age 39 came to be reunited with her fiancé whom she had met in the Philippines but who had been in the U.S. for over twenty years. Her transition experiences were difficult – she described being very homesick and lonely. Further, despite having strong English skills, she admitted to lacking confidence when speaking English to strangers and relied on her husband to do the talking when they were at stores or restaurants. She did not drive and stated that she was dependent on her husband for transportation as well as for making friends. She did not have any children.

This interviewee had no intentions of working outside of her home upon migration to the U.S. She stated that she wanted to start a business but had not done so at the time of the interview. She experienced two major life course turning points within a short period of time – emigrating from the Philippines and getting married. She was a housewife, which was a new social role for her particularly because she had housekeepers in the Philippines. For her, learning to manage the household "without any help is an American trait" that she hoped "to master one day." She talked about spending most of her time at home, alone while her husband worked. Being socially isolated was very difficult for her on a personal level because in the Philippines

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she was accustomed to constantly being surrounded by her close-knit family. In America, her primary contacts and interactions included people that she met through her husband. Her friends were the wives of her husband's friends, and they were all Filipino. She did have health care encounters that she described as positive, but because of her inability to drive and her reliance on her husband's availability, she stated that she was not as diligent about seeing the doctor. In contrast, she was very conscientious of her health in the Philippines largely because health care was accessible and effortless for her. Overall, she had very little contact with mainstream society and to a degree, the host culture was inaccessible to her because of the dynamic at home and her new social role and responsibilities as a housewife.

In relation to the other immigrants in the sample who migrated at younger ages, this woman had very different experiences with regards to institutional encounters. Within time, she was not as isolated because she had a circle of friends and experienced leisurely activities "like going out to dinner or to the movies." However, in terms of adapting to the American way of life and being exposed to mainstream structures, people, and customs, she had few opportunities to do so. While examining exposure to institutional points of contact alone does not comprehensively measure one's level of integration into a host society, it does give a broader picture of the process of transition and the potential for adopting cultural values and customs.

B. Older Aged Immigrants and Low Levels of Institutional Points of Contact

While age at migration alone does not appear to predict post-migration processes, people who come at later ages and do not have encounters with mainstream institutions do appear to be more isolated. For instance, one female interviewee decided to migrate at age 55 because she was recently widowed, and her daughter who lives in California wanted her to come. She had

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never been to the U.S. prior to migrating. She owned a home and ran a business in the Philippines, but when she migrated here, she did not work. Aside from helping with her daughter's home-based business, her interactions with mainstream society were limited. She went to church every Sunday, but did not make friends there. She went to the mall and grocery store on the weekends, but was too timid to talk with anyone that she may have met. Other than her daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter, she had no other social network. She did not plan to work or go to school. She never went to a doctor in the U.S., although she was relatively healthy. She reported that for the most part, she had "no contact" with anyone outside of her family. In terms of language, this woman spoke almost exclusively Tagalog in the Philippines and continued to speak mostly Tagalog here. She did not adopt any American values, traits, attitude, or behaviors since migrating. This could also be due to her relatively short time since migration and not merely from her lack of contact with mainstream culture.

Her experiences are in line with what I had assumed the migration experiences of older adults to be prior to starting my data collection – based on her reason for migrating (to be reunited with her daughter), she would have very few opportunities for contact with mainstream society unless she actively sought out clubs or organizations. Since she had almost no institutional points of contact, her cultural attitudes and behavior were not highly influenced by American culture and changed very little. Yet her experiences are important because she is part of a growing trend of people migrating from the Philippines to the U.S. later in life. More research is needed on late life Filipino immigrants, particularly those that might not be engaged with mainstream institutions like many of the older immigrants in this sample.

While this woman was considered more of an extreme case due to the strong social isolation she experienced, other interviewees had similar experiences. One 67-year old male

who migrated at age 63 was never able to find work despite actively searching. His social contacts included his wife whom he migrated with but who worked full-time and his in-laws. He participated in everyday activities like taking the bus to the mall and going to church, but he had no opportunities or reasons to immerse himself in the American culture because everyone in his social network and the societal encounters he experienced were almost all Filipino in nature. He lived and interacted in a highly populated Filipino area. Similarly, a 60-year old woman who migrated at age 50 was very close with her familial network of her husband, kids, and grandkids that all relocated to the U.S. Tagalog was the main language in which they all communicated, and her English language skills were very basic as they had been prior to her migration. She did not have many contacts outside of her familial circle. The one job she held for a short time was in a Filipino bakery. These last two cases present an important aspect of transitioning to life in a new country and that is the notion of acclimating within ethnic-specific structures. For the older man, his normal places of business and activity outside of his home were heavily Filipino-influenced. The people he encountered on the bus and at restaurants or stores spoke the same non-English language as him and likely had similar cultural beliefs and behaviors. In terms of transition experiences and adopting knowledge and skills needed to navigate the new American society, new immigrants that settle in culturally familiar contexts or locations can also face challenges, but the familiarity and comfort might offset some of the obstacles. In addition to settling in ethnic enclaves, if most institutional contact is predominantly in Filipino settings, it is likely that new Filipino immigrants will not be exposed to American culture or interact with mainstream institutions

In general, the older Filipino immigrants that I spoke with typically migrated for familial reasons, but largely were not socially isolated. For those who entered the workforce, there were

interactions on social and structural levels. For the interviewees that did not work, the main

network consisted of family, but there were also every day activities performed in the larger

community. Thus, while reasons for migration did influence post-migration experiences to some

extent (i.e. if they came to be reunited with family, they often lived them and provided some

assistance to family), the reasons for migration did not necessarily determine how integrated the

late life migrants would be. However, the institutional contacts that the older immigrants had

with the mainstream society did indicate how embedded and immersed within the American

culture they seemed. Overall, those with less contact were less exposed to American ideals and

had less of a chance for culture change.

IV.   Chapter Conclusion

Frameworks of acculturation attempt to understand culture change of immigrants but

typically do so by using linear proxy variables like language preference or time since migration

that tell us very little in terms of how cultural values and orientation might change. The

dynamics of culture are multifaceted and complex for immigrants that possess a core set of

cultural values and then are introduced to the practices and norms of a new society. As the

findings from this study show, despite ease of transition, immigrants may adopt knowledge and

skills needed to acclimate to a new society, and their core set of cultural values can largely

remain unchanged. Further, acculturation models do not take into consideration the institutional

contacts immigrants engage with.

There is no argument that immigrants undergo some level of adaptation as they adjust to

a new culture. However, what is often debated are the underlying causes and manifestations of

this change as well as the extent to which we must deconstruct culture, as researchers who plan

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to use the concept of culture change in our research and practices. In this chapter, I explored another construct for understanding immigrants' transitions to a new way of life, which involved the process of making contact and interacting with mainstream institutions and potentially becoming further embedded in society. This does not necessarily alter one's cultural values, but it could place immigrants in more desirable positions for acclimating. Interestingly, there is also a multidimensional relationship between this sample's ease of transition and their level of institutional points of contact. For people with a relatively easy transition, they often possessed knowledge and skill needed for uncomplicated contact and interaction with institutions. This contact appeared to reinforce the ease of transition. For those who had difficult initial experiences upon arrival, sometimes the actual interaction with mainstream institutions without having any prior knowledge or skill was stressful, but the formation of social networks helped ease the difficulty of the transition. Overall, examining points of contact within a life course perspective revealed that age or life course alone do not determine the processes of transition for the Filipino immigrants in this sample. However, taking on a more institutional analysis instead of a purely cultural one shed light on Filipino immigrant transitions and the pathways their potential pathways to integration.

Chapter 7

Discussion

The primary research question driving this dissertation was "does age at migration affect the acculturative processes of Filipino immigrants." The topic of acculturation has been a salient one for the field of public health as evidenced by the vast body of research that has investigated a relationship between acculturation and health. Whether to address health disparities, to provide more culturally-specific health services, or in general to identify health areas in need of attention for immigrants, the concept of acculturation has provoked public health discourse and action. However, many have debated the utility of these efforts and the use of acculturation models largely because current frameworks of acculturation do not adequately encompass the experiences of immigrants. The notion of acculturation assumes movement from one culture to another, typically in the direction of the new or host society and often in terms of indicators like language use and preference or latent measures like time since migration. Thus, legitimate arguments have been made to re-think the ways that acculturation is conceptualized, measured, and used because of these limitations (Hirano, 2012; Matsudaira, 2006; Hunt et al., 2004; Salant and Lauderdale, 2003). Thus, I conducted this research to gain a better understanding of the transition processes of recent Filipino immigrants and to identify if and how the underlying notions of culture change can provide us with useful information for immigrant health initiatives across the life course. All of the interview participants migrated fifteen years ago or less, and this distinction was made because this research aimed to focus on immigrants' transitions relatively early in their migration experience.

One major conclusion of this study is that age alone did not dictate the transition processes of Filipino immigrants. Particularly for this sample, age did not appear to hinder people's desires to integrate into American society, and those desires did not necessarily coincide with the widely held age-related norms in this country. As has been discussed, age is only one of many life course markers, and the interviewees were at various stages across the life course. These stages, such as early adulthood or grandparenthood, often influenced reasons for migration and job opportunities (as perceived by the interview subjects). However, there were no distinct patterns of integration or culture change based on age or life course stage. Context of settlement was a major factor, and repeatedly throughout the data there were shared experiences between younger and older aged immigrants. Therefore, throughout this discussion, themes will be discussed for the sample as a whole except in sections where an age-specific dialogue is thought conceptually useful.

Three main themes from the findings of this research have been presented and provide a framework for understanding the transition experiences of Filipino immigrants. The themes are the migrants' ease of the initial transition and how it affected the challenges they faced and overcame; the Filipino cultural values that influenced their lives pre and post migration; and their contact with societal institutions that played a role in their integration and familiarity with mainstream norms. I will comment and reflect on each of these findings as they pertain to the larger concept of acculturation. Then I will discuss the anthropological view and contributions on culture, thoughts on more expansive ways of conceptualizing immigrant transition experiences, and ideas about how we can incorporate these findings into strategies for public health initiatives with Filipino immigrants.

I.	Ease of Transition

Filipino immigrants in this study often defined their transition experiences as relatively easy and without significant barriers, or as difficult and challenging. The importance of whether new immigrants have an easy or difficult time upon arrival is related to how it might influence their subsequent pathways or trajectories as they adjust to life in a new country. For the Filipinos in this sample, it appeared that acclimating and being able to navigate through American society generally led to higher levels of overall well-being– financial, social, and emotional. It was less about how "American" the interviewees became or how "acculturated" they were. Instead it was more about being able to navigate through life in the U.S, something that acculturation models do not take into consideration.

To those studying immigrant experiences and/or working to improve conditions for them, understanding these issues is key. The more we know about our communities, the better we are equipped at assisting them. In general, immigrants aim to be active participants of American society, yet there are often obstacles upon migration standing in their way. These barriers can be social, cultural, and psychological in nature. Specific to this research, if we know the types of experiences that might lead Filipino immigrants to be lonely and depressed, choose to leave the U.S., or on the contrary strive and succeed, then perhaps we can foster healthy environments for them early in their transition processes. For instance, the importance of social networks on ease of transition and overcoming homesickness found in this study are supported by findings from other studies on the role of social support on stress and depressive symptoms experienced by immigrants after their arrival (Lee and Holm, 2012; Salgado et al., Revollo et al, 2011; 2012; Diwan, 2008). In line with the ways family as a social network was described by this sample, other studies reinforce my findings that family is dynamic and can have conflicting effects on

migration experiences. A greater reliance on family has been found to contribute to post-migration stress for immigrants (Diwan, 2008); yet a strong social support network has been shown to counter acculturative stress (Lee and Holm; Salgado et al.; Revollo et al.). Because of the value Filipinos in this sample placed on family and social networks, and findings on the role of family on ease of transition, this is an important concept to include in frameworks for studying Filipino immigrant experiences, including the effect on health.

An interesting and significant pattern that emerged from the data on immigrants' ease of transition is the notion of turning points. Among those that I interviewed who described more difficult experiences upon arrival, each one identified points in which the period of difficulty began to subside. For example, many people described a process that generally included extreme loneliness and homesickness coupled with a lack of knowledge or skill regarding necessary activities like going to the store or accessing a bank. Sometimes people encountered language barriers, despite having some English language proficiency. However, within time, interviewees became further integrated to American institutions like work and school, and importantly, often described building a supportive social circle. Most acculturation models used in public health assume a linear process of change, but the experiences of the immigrants I spoke with was more punctuated with moments of increasing and decreasing difficulty and then ultimately reaching a turning point. After reaching these defining moments immigrants appeared to be more comfortable and better situated for success in the U.S., particularly in terms of social dynamics. This is key considering that Filipinos, in general, place an emphasis on community. Further, efforts at fostering a sense of community among new Filipino immigrants my help counter some of the shock and loneliness experienced by many in this sample. At the very least, future

exploration on the ease of Filipino immigrants' transition experiences will provide us with a context for addressing issues they may face early in their adjustment processes.

That said, it is important to recognize the potential role of immigrants' pre-migration expectations on their ease of transition and how these expectations may have been skewed. People in this study who had never visited the U.S. often described their expectations in relation to money (i.e. "money grows on trees in the U.S." and "America is the land of milk and honey"). Even those who had been here prior to the recession were not expecting the difficulty they faced in finding work as a result of the poor economy. Thus, many people described their expectations relative to financial opportunities. However, others described their expectations retrospectively based on what they experienced, like "I did not expect it to be so lonely" or "I was not expecting all of the challenges." The concept of expectations is important in terms of ease of transition. It is possible that disappointment from unrealistic expectations influence people's transition experiences and the potential psychological issues that may arise. Other studies have also found that discrepancies in pre-migration expectations and post-migration experiences can be stress-inducing (Bhattacharya and Schoppelrey, 2004; Kalavar and Van Willigen, 2005). However, to fully capture what Filipino immigrants expected prior to migration, we need to ask them prior to migration. If and when we are able to do this, then initiatives to ease difficulty upon arrival can be implemented, perhaps even starting in the Philippines prior to emigration.

II.   The Influence of Filipino Cultural Values on Migration Experiences

The Filipino immigrants that I interviewed described, in no uncertain terms, core values of family, education, respect, and religion. They also talked about the importance of food, music, and humor to Filipino culture. They portrayed how they did not perceive their innermost

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Filipino qualities and passions as diminishing with prolonged time and exposure to American ways of life. Yet they spoke of an adjustment process in which they became familiar with and sometimes adopted aspects of the norms, customs, and traits considered to be American. These themes and patterns emerged through stories and probing; I did not come to conclusions on participants' cultural attributes and how or if they changed through a scale or an instrument used for measuring acculturation. What people valued, how those values influenced their decisions, and the glimpses I got into the circumstances in which values and behaviors would shift from being "the Filipino way" to "the American way" came directly from the respondents stories as informants.

Thus, after hearing and analyzing their stories within the context of acclimating to life in America and while focusing on resulting changes to both their innermost cultural values and their exterior behaviors, the idea of acculturation (from the concepts to the measures) seems less profound, particularly the manner in which it is utilized in public health studies. Specifically for Filipinos, current frameworks of culture change are not very relevant because of the history of U.S. colonization and cultural influence in the Philippines. This is particularly true due to the heterogeneity among the Filipino immigrant population in terms of the very constructs used to measure acculturation, like language. Filipinos are exposed to English in the Philippines as a result of it being the language of instruction in schools. However, exposure to formal English and proficiency in conversational English translates to various language skill levels for Filipinos when they migrate to the U.S., with the best English skills being prevalent among those who went to private schools. Thus, baseline differences in language use and preference makes language-based measures for this group futile. Acculturation is usually treated as a latent variable and indicators like time since migration or percent lifetime in the U.S. have been shown to be

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associated with health outcomes and behaviors, but they do not determine changes to the key cultural attributes identified in this study, contrary to what frameworks of acculturation suggest.

The knowledge we gain from public health studies that investigate relationships between health and acculturation measures is important in identifying between and within group differences. However, it is not the same knowledge that we gain from in-depth explorations of immigrant transitions and subsequent changes to their cultural characteristics that can be achieved through qualitative methods. I believe that research that reports acculturative differences in health (i.e. between immigrants with varying times since migration or language skills for certain ethnic groups) provide us with relevant data for public health purposes. For instance, knowing that Filipinos who have a higher percent lifetime in the U.S. (i.e. "more acculturated") undergo more colorectal screening than those with lower percent lifetimes (i.e. "less acculturated) is interesting and an important disparity to address with a group that is seeing increased incidence of colorectal cancer (Maxwell, et al., 2008). However, I do not think that we should categorize these differences as being a result of acculturation since that is not what is being measured. Instead, a deeper understanding and further explorations of immigrants' socio-cultural context and transition processes might shed light on why differences exist. Thus, research that investigates relationships between acculturation and health generate important information on differences. However, I believe that these differences and the latent measures used to investigate them should not be attributed to acculturation or as "proxies for acculturation," but instead considered as migration-related factors that require further research to understand.

III.   Contact With U.S. Societal Institutions

The theoretical underpinnings of this research were based on the notion that age would influence reasons for migration, which would in turn dictate people's actions and their contact and interaction with mainstream societal institutions. The exposure to American culture via institutions would then potentially shape people's cultural orientation or perspective. I thought that people who migrated to reunite with and provide assistance to their families (i.e. older immigrants helping take care of grandkids) would have relatively little exposure to mainstream society through institutions. I certainly was not expecting that Filipinos would migrate at older ages and enter the U.S. work force. These pre-conceived ideas were based largely on normative age practices in the U.S. as well as typical familial roles of older family members; people generally tend to be closer to retirement in their 60's than starting new careers, and in some cultures, the elders are more likely to stay home to care for the younger family members. I had not taken a multitude of situational factors into account like the immigration petition process, the strong influence of family on people's reasons for migration (particularly those who migrated on sibling-to-sibling petitions at later ages who stated it was to provide opportunities for their adult children), that age-related work norms in the Philippines are different than in the U.S., and the simple fact that across age groups, people essentially had to enter the labor force because they needed the money to survive.

I would be remiss, however, not to discuss the potential of immigrant selection bias, predominantly with regards to the later life immigrants who almost all appeared to have strong desires and intentions to enter the labor force and interact with many different mainstream institutions. It is the case that nearly everyone who I interviewed made concerted efforts to find work regardless of age or life stage. This fits well within the cultural value framework for

Filipinos that emphasizes the importance of education and financial/career success. However, it is possible that particularly among those who migrated at older ages, there was the perception that age would not be a barrier upon arrival – a barrier to finding work or to other challenges common to acclimating to a new culture. This perception may have then created enough drive and motivation to immigrate and ignore or overcome age-based discrimination in the US. Their counterparts in the Philippines who possibly believed that they were too old to move and resettle in a new country may have passed up the same opportunity and are absent from this pool of respondents. People may have also considered emigrating in relation to what they would be leaving behind. Even among those that described leaving stability and "good lives" in the Philippines, they felt compelled to "try life in the U.S." because it of the potential rewards. This type of selection bias operates in a similar fashion to the healthy migrant bias. Based on people's self-rated health and their overall descriptions of their health issues and behaviors, it is likely that my respondents consisted of Filipino immigrants who were both healthy enough to endure the physical and psychological consequences of migration as well as possessed the mindset to not be deterred by potential challenges, age-related or not. Therefore, while the data from the people I spoke with is interesting, sound, and valuable, it is important to recognize that I likely spoke with a relatively healthy and resilient subset of Filipino immigrants. This could have been a result of Filipino immigrants overall possessing these characteristics and/or those that I spoke with in particular.

While this does not necessarily have adverse implications for my findings on contact with mainstream institutions, it does pinpoint a potential limitation and future area of research. It would be important to identify and include Filipino immigrants who may not have the same autonomy and perceptions as those in this sample. In particular, it would be useful to speak with

more people like the older woman I interviewed who had been here less than a year before deciding to return back to the Philippines. Her stated reason for migration to the U.S. was "because my daughter petitioned me" and she described leaving a business and close family behind. Her interaction with mainstream institutions was minimal at best, and her integration to the new American society was virtually nonexistent. Thus, while those in this sample who migrated at later ages were proverbially outside of the box in terms of how I thought their roles and interactions with mainstream society would be, it is possible that there are in fact Filipinos who migrate at older ages who do have this type of trajectory.

IV.   Anthropological Perspectives on Culture

Anthropology is the study of human social life and its processes. It is comprised of four broad sub-disciplines: archeology, linguistics, physical anthropology, and social and cultural anthropology. The latter examines cultural systems within societies and the associated values, beliefs, norms, and patterns of behavior (Hahn, 1999). Perhaps one of the most notable contributions of anthropology to this research project (aside from methodological techniques) is the concept of cultural relativism. The basic premise of cultural relativism is that "cultures or systems of beliefs, values, and norms of behaviors are more or less coherent, systematic, and rational within their own context" (Hahn, 1999). The cultural values that the Filipinos in my sample spoke of emerged to form a seemingly standard set of ideals and beliefs. The most commonly stated values of family, education, respect, and religion were described among nearly all of the interviewees resulting in a sense of collectiveness. However, despite the shared values and beliefs, the ways in which they were embodied and enacted were relative to one's background, circumstance, age, intention, and even personality. For example, the importance of

family was expressed in different ways for different people. For a 74-year old woman, family was the driving force behind her health-promoting behaviors (i.e. so as not to be a "burden" on her family). Yet, for a 50-year old woman, the importance that she placed on family had the opposite effect and was stress-inducing. This was evident by the anxiety she endured when her oldest son was "left behind in the Philippines" and the relief she felt when they were reunited (i.e. "I felt better when we're all together here now"). Though different, both instances depict manifestations of the importance of family for these individuals.

Cultural relativism is also applicable to the process by which newcomers, who have their own set of core cultural values, are introduced to the values and norms of the new or mainstream culture. This may be why the field of anthropology has mostly abandoned the concept of acculturation. As linguistic studies by anthropologist Joel Robbins (2001) suggest, there is a more contemporary kind of cultural change occurring than what is represented in acculturation theories and models. Behaviors and cultural manifestations must have meaning or a sense of purpose to those encountering and potentially adopting them. Based on this notion, current theories of acculturation are overly simplistic in their interpretation of complex situations like immigrant contact with a new culture. There are other theoretical approaches to understanding cultural contact and the subsequent adapting to and potential adopting of values and norms. Segmented-assimilation (Zhou, 1997; Portes and Zhou, 1993) and selective acculturation (Eitle et al., 2009; Clark et al., 1976) are two commonly discussed alternatives to traditional acculturation models. But I would argue that even those frameworks have a tendency to be linear and one-dimensional. So what type of framework can appropriately explain and describe the process by which immigrants are introduced to and interact within a new society, while simultaneously adopting new norms and retaining core values?

Incorporating Robbins' analysis of the importance of cultural norms and behaviors to the innermost sense of self, and then the resulting outward expression of it within certain situations, is important in a theoretical sense. When new immigrants are first immersed within an unfamiliar culture, they keep their core values intact (the ones that are most important to and a part of them). Upon becoming familiar with the new culture, they eventually adopt those behaviors necessary for navigating the new cultural system. Yet the norms and behaviors that are adopted must have significance to them. This theoretical perspective can be used with public health practice largely by acknowledging that there is a set of deep core values immigrants possess and maintain while navigating through a new society, but new health-related attitudes and behaviors can still be adopted. These attitudes and behaviors may be associated with or influenced by the core values and do not necessarily depend on how integrated one is to mainstream society.

While there may be shared traits and values in an ethnic group, there is still vast heterogeneity in the ways that those values are prioritized and performed. For instance, nearly the entire sample described the importance of family, but it was the older immigrants who prioritized their health in relation to their families (i.e. "I take care of myself so that I won't be a burden to my family). In terms of respect, almost everyone spoke of its importance to Filipinos, but some were fixated on experiencing a lack of it while others portrayed how respect influenced their own behavior. Taking into account heterogeneity as well as cultural relativity is key to making culture useful in public health practice. Knowledge about the importance of family and respect to Filipinos, for example, can be effective for interventions and in addressing health-related issues, but it is unlikely to occur uniformly across all characteristics and situations.

V.   Study Strengths and Limitations

A strength of this research is the overall knowledge gained from the in-depth data collection on migration experiences of Filipinos, particularly since there is relatively little research on Filipinos despite the size and diversity of this ethnic group in the United States. Further, due to the sampling scheme, I purposively and actively recruited Filipino immigrants who migrated at later ages, which is a Filipino sub-group that is even more under-studied. Also, the methodological approach of semi-structured interviews and grounded theory allowed me to expand on topics with the interview subjects in ways that surveys or questionnaires cannot.

While the data collection methodology was a strength of this research, it also led to some limitations. First, I was only able to speak with each interview participant once for roughly an hour. With more resources and opportunities to meet, I could have collected even more information and gained further knowledge on their migration experiences. Further, I was the sole interviewer and coder/analyzer for this study. Despite regular conversations on the data and my findings with my dissertation chair, there is in fact the potential that there were other themes present that a second coder may have identified.

Another limitation is that my sample is limited to predominantly English-speaking immigrants because I was not able to hire a Tagalog-speaking interviewer, It would be beneficial for future work in this area to include those less fluent in Tagalog in case there are differences based on language. For example, people who only speak Tagalog might describe even further difficult and different circumstances transitioning.

VI.   Public Health Implications

This research has important public health implications, particularly for Filipino immigrants. It has been repeated throughout this dissertation that the dominant public health frameworks of acculturation have limited use, and the current findings stress this point especially for an immigrant group like Filipinos who have a unique history with the U.S. There is also sufficient data on the heterogeneity of Filipino immigrants and the differences in contextual factors to argue against the incorporation of acculturative models in research and practice with this ethnic group. Yet, there is little argument that immigrants who are interacting with the mainstream society do experience a process of change or adaptation upon arrival to a new country. Based on the findings from my research, I do not believe these changes necessarily occur at the core cultural level for Filipinos resulting in becoming more or less American, but rather in terms of gaining knowledge and skills needed to navigate America on a more structural and institutional level. By conceptualizing immigrant experiences as multifaceted transitions instead of unidimensional processes of culture change as suggested by acculturation frameworks, we may arrive at a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of if and how immigrants experience change and are able to negotiate culturally and then translate this knowledge into public health practice.

A potentially more useful framework for Filipino immigrants would include dimensions of immigrant transitions that include language, skills, and knowledge, with cultural values and behaviors influencing these dimensions. We may find, for instance, that percent lifetime in the U.S. in a study like that of Maxwell et al. (2008) is associated less with the dimensions of language proficiency and more with skills or knowledge of the health care system. Filipino immigrants who have a higher percent of their lifetime in the U.S. potentially have increased

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opportunities for improving conversational language skills if needed, but more likely have gained knowledge about the types of screening available. Therefore, having more advanced screening may have less to do with one's "level of culture" or even length of time in the U.S. in a temporal sense than knowledge and ability to navigate the U.S. medical care system.

Research by Pourat et al. (2010) on the impact of access versus acculturation for breast and cervical cancer screening among Asian American subgroups draws similar conclusions. They found that access indicators like insurance coverage and regular source of care explained more variation in screening than the acculturation measures of language and time since migration. Results of that study are also are more aligned with a framework of multidimensional immigrant transition processes than that of acculturation. It highlights the importance of interventions that incorporate health education for immigrants. For those who have limited knowledge of and interaction with the health care system from a lack of insurance or usual source of care, ensuring accessible health care for all would be the most important public health intervention.

Changing the ways that we think about immigrant transitions from a non-contextual, unidirectional model to one in which we understand if and how core cultural values and beliefs influence behaviors can better inform our health strategies and outreach with immigrants. For Filipinos specifically, family and community are very important. Therefore, effective health promotion efforts for this group might include dimensions of each in order to both motivate and enable Filipinos. Filipinos in general also value respect, and thus respectful interactions with health care providers is essential. This might include using titles with older patients (like Mr. and Mrs.) and avoiding abrasive and dismissive behaviors towards Filipino patients. Filipino patients may also view doctors as authority figures worthy of respect, and because of this might

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be more compliant with doctors' orders if they respect and like their doctors. The provider-patient dynamic for Filipinos has the potential to be integral in health prevention and maintenance because Filipinos value respect as well as education or success.

For immigrant groups more broadly, it is important to take cultural nuances into account while planning and implementing health initiatives. With such profound within and between group differences, it is an enormous task to adequately tailor public health programming for specific racial and ethnic groups. Yet this is what we need to do in order to address the health of the racially and ethnically diverse U.S. population. Hirano (2012) discussed the importance of "creating effective community health approaches for Asian American" that requires a deep knowledge of specific, targeted groups. A recent article on a diabetes prevention program in Hawai'i for Filipinos reinforces the importance of knowing your population. In this study, Leake et al. (2011) designed a program with the knowledge that Filipinos in their community valued their health, but also based their participatory decisions on flexibility. The diabetes education program that they created for Filipinos was highly successful because it was tailored just right for this group in that particular area – flexible scheduling with friendly classes and follow-up, and a university association that reinforced the importance of education and a legitimate authority. Had careful consideration not been made to ensure that essential cultural aspects of this program were included, it is likely that the success rate would have reflected such inattention.

VII.   Future Research

Based on the findings from this research, I have identified areas for future exploration. First, data on the ease of initial transition experiences can be further explored to better

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understand the factors that promote or hinder people's integration to society, particularly if being able to navigate the U.S. is more relevant for immigrants' transition processes than culture change. For instance, do people migrate back to their countries of origin because the challenges are too unbearable? In terms of expectations, if pre-migration expectations were closer to their post-migration experiences, would this prevent the need to overcome barriers upon arrival or lessen the difficulty people may encounter? Answers to these questions could potentially result in faster and more seamless entries to mainstream society. Interviewees also spoke of visiting the U.S. prior to migration and how this eased their transitions. This topic can be further explored to determine the extent of immigrants' contact and exposure to American culture and institutions while visiting. Like language, there may be a baseline level of knowledge that is dependent on exposure to American culture prior to migrating.

Another area of further inquiry based on the findings include exploring the importance of religion to Filipinos in the U.S., particularly because related cultural values of *bahala na*[16] and *pampalakas ng loob*[17] can influence health attitudes and behaviors.

A third topic for future research includes migration-related stress. Aside from the psychological effects of arduous transition processes, it would be interesting to explore if and how immediate and more long-term health behaviors and outcomes are affected by the ease or difficulty Filipino immigrants experience upon migration. More than determining the level of acculturation and then investigating health differences based on a relationship devoid of contextual factors, it would be beneficial to address the health issues of Filipino immigrants that might be based on the level of difficulty they experienced upon migration. Then subsequent efforts can be made at mediating or addressing psychological issues related to migration.

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[16] Leave it up to God
[17] Becoming strong in the face of adversity

Another important area of research is to focus on late life immigrants that may not be interacting with institutional points of contact within the mainstream U.S. society. Will they be able to develop the necessary skills to adapt and transition to life in the U.S.? Will they ever *need* to develop those skills and adapt? In accordance with findings from acculturation and health research, will their low levels of acculturation have protective health benefits? Or will social isolation and feeling disconnected to the new society have negative effects on their health? These are all important questions to address when investigating the health and well being of people who migrate later in life and have few to no interactions with mainstream institutions.

Finally, conducting this research in California was logical and optimal considering that nearly half of U.S. Filipinos live in the state of California. However, it would be informative to conduct this research with Filipinos in other geographic areas to identify potential location-specific contextual factors that might influence migration experiences.

VIII.   Conclusion

This dissertation research aimed to explore age factors in relation to Filipino immigrants' transition experiences. The underlying objective was to critically analyze the utility of acculturation theories and models in providing information on culture for Filipinos across the life course that could then be used in public health initiatives. I sought to translate knowledge on Filipinos' migration experiences and their cultural dynamics into public health practice.

Filipinos are migrating to the U.S. at high rates and are joining an already prominent Filipino population, which is the second-largest Asian group numbering over 2.5 million. In general, Filipinos are migrating and actively participating (or at least attempting to) in American society. Their previous exposure to American culture, which is largely a result of the history of

U.S. occupation, might place them in seemingly more advantageous positions for success in America, but there are in fact struggles and factors that can make their transitions challenging. Findings from this research emphasize the importance of recognizing that their transition experiences are less about changing their inner cultural attributes but more about gaining necessarily knowledge and skills to interact with mainstream society. Focusing on this, as opposed to culture change via acculturation, can help create environments that foster social, financial, and psychological well-being, as well as providing information to better tailor public health initiatives for Filipino immigrants.

Overall, this research contributes to the field of public health by providing a more multidimensional perspective to culture that will hopefully inform future studies on culture and health. Hopefully this research will encourage more work aimed at gaining knowledge on specific racial and ethnic groups as well as immigrant experiences by acknowledging that a group like Filipinos, who from a socio-demographic perspective might seem like "ideal" immigrants, but who in fact experience a wide range of challenges upon migration.

APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT FLYER

Were you born in the Philippines?

Did you move to the U.S. less than 15 years ago?
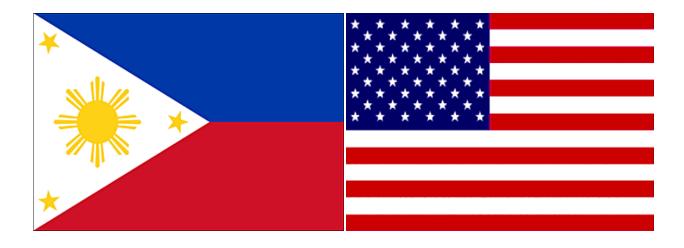
Do you live in California?

If you answered YES to all of these questions and are 18 years and older, then you can participate in a research study about the experiences of Filipinos in the U.S. and health.

Your participation will include one interview that will take approximately 1 – 1 ½ hours and will be conducted by a graduate student in Public Health from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

PLEASE SHARE YOUR STORIES WITH ME!

Contact Cricel at lcmolina@ucla.edu or 630-781-4614 if you have any questions or are interested in participating.

Salamat Po!!!

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Thank you for participating in this research study about the experiences of Filipinos who move to the U.S. I will be recording the interview with this digital recorder. Is this okay with you? Do you have any further questions after going over the study information sheet? If not, then we'll begin.

Introduction/Demographic Info

> **(1) What is your date of birth?**
> **(2) Where were you born?**
> **(3) Are you currently married?** If no, probe to determine marital status (i.e. widowed, divorced).
> **(4) Do you have children?** Can probe about grandchildren.
> **(5) What is your education history/ highest level of education?**

Migration Experiences

We'll begin by talking about your when you first moved here, including your reasons for coming, your initial experiences and also a little about life in the Philippines (PI) -- work, education, family life, and health.

> **(6) When did you immigrate to the U.S.?** If migrated to a region other than California first, then ask **"When did you move to/settle in California?"**

> **(7) Why did you decide to come to the U.S.?** Probe about exact circumstances like what/who influenced decision, was it a long period of time between making the decision and moving, migrated alone or with others, considered temporary or knew it was permanent, etc.

> **(8) Why did you decide to settle in California? In** <insert specific city>**?**

> **(9) What were you expecting or think that you would find once you immigrated? What was it really like?**

> **(10) Now, think back to your life in the PI before you immigrated.**
> Explore the institutions of work/school, family life, social circles and health. Ask basic questions (below in bold) about each of these domains while trying to get subject to share stories around specific events. Probe for further <u>details</u> and <u>meanings</u> of events by asking <u>"what makes this important"</u> or <u>"how did you make those decisions."</u> <u>Attempt to get step-by-step process of important life events.</u>
>
> **- Did you work? Go to school?** Probe for employment and education history. (WORK/SCHOOL)
>
> **- What was your family life like? Who did you live with?** May have some basic knowledge of subject's family because of previous questions on living arrangements and children. Probe from those questions to get good picture of <u>family dynamic</u>, <u>division of labor</u>, and <u>quality of relationships</u>. (FAMILY)
>
> **- Did you have any hobbies? What did you do for fun? Who did you do these things with/hang out with?** Again, probe for quality of relationships and the importance of *barcada*. (SOCIAL)

(11) I'm going to ask you a few questions about your health in the PI.
   - **Describe your health before you immigrated.**
   - **How would you rate your overall health – In general, would you say that your health was (1) excellent (2) very good (3) good (4) fair or (5) poor? Why?**

   - **What did you do to stay healthy?**

   - **Did you have a regular doctor or someone you went to when you were sick?** Probe for info on interactions with doctors/HC practitioners, accessibility, etc (INTERACTIONS WITH HEALTH CARE SYSTEM/PRACTITIONERS)

   - **How would you define or describe health or being healthy?**
   (HEALTH BEHAVIORS/PERCEPTIONS)

   - **What did you think about the medical care or the health care system in the PI?**
   (GENERAL THOUGHTS ON HC SYSTEM)

Ethnic Identity, Nationality and Language: Pre-arrival

   (12) Before you moved here, in terms of ethnicity or cultural identity, did you identify as anything other than Filipino? Has that changed? Did you think it would change once you moved here?

   (13) What language(s) or dialect(s) did you speak as a child – (1) only PI language (2) more PI language than English (3) both equally (4) more English than PI language (5) only English? How would you rate your English proficiency then?

Migration Experiences/Life After Migration
Now we're going to talk about life once you arrived in the U.S.

   (14) Describe your initial experiences once you came here.
   Probes/questions to ask if they do not come up:
   - **Did you have family and friends here already?**
   - **Did you have a job or school lined up?**
   - **What were your first impressions of the people? Of the city?**
   - **Was language a barrier?**
   - **What did you think of the food?**
   - **Were there any American customs that surprised you?**
   - **What was it like meeting new people when you first arrived?**

   Like in the questions about life in the PI/pre-arrival to the U.S., ask basic questions (below in bold) about each of these domains while trying to get subject to share stories round specific events. Probe for further details and meanings of events by asking "what makes this important" or "how did you make those decisions." Attempt to get step-by-step process of important life events. Draw comparisons to life pre-arrival in the PI if possible.

   (15) **What were your initial thoughts or perceptions of this new society? How have they changed over time since living here?**

   (16) Can you describe how your work or school has changed since you first immigrated? Probe for employment and education history including current employment/school. (WORK/SCHOOL)

(17) Has your family life changed since you first immigrated? Please describe. Probe for who subject lives with and division of labor. (FAMILY)

(18) What are your hobbies or what do you like to do for fun now? Probe for info on who the subject does social things with. **How have these things changed since you first immigrated? How has your social circle changed over the years since you first arrived?** (SOCIAL)

(19) Do you remember the first time here in the U.S. that you had to go to the doctor/interact with the health care system? What was that like? (INTERACTIONS WITH HEALTH CARE SYSTEM/PRACTITIONERS)

(20) Do you have any health problems? How would you rate your overall health – In general, would you say that your health was (1) excellent (2) very good (3) good (4) fair or (5) poor? Why?

(21) How has your health changed over time since you've been here? How do you describe or define health or being healthy now? What do you do to stay healthy? (HEALTH BEHAVIORS/PERCEPTIONS)

(22) What are your thoughts about the health care system here in the U.S.? Compared to in the PI? Can probe to for thoughts on accessibility, etc. (GENERAL THOUGHTS ON HC SYSTEM)

Ethnic Identity, Nationality and Language: Post-arrival to the U.S.

(23) How has your language or language preference changed? When you first came here, what language(s) or dialect(s) did you speak at home? Did you prefer? Did you speak with your friends? – (1) only PI language (2) more PI language than English (3) both equally (4) more English than PI language (5) only English? And now?
- Note: Since language is often times used to measure acculturation, it's important to explore. Probe about experiences in which language may have been an issue, changes in language use or thoughts on language.

(24) How would you describe your ethnic identity and/or nationality now (if not answered previously)

Cultural Orientation, Institutional Challenges, Racism

We're going to wrap up the interview with a few questions about culture.

(25) Culture is described as "the customs, behaviors, attitudes, arts, social institutions and achievements of a particular nation, people, or social group." What would you say most defines Filipino culture? What most defines American culture? Probe with media (TFC), prominent figures, etc.

(26) Have you had any challenges with adapting from Filipino culture to American culture? Are there are positives in adapting from Filipino culture to American culture?

(27) Have you ever been treated differently or poorly in the U.S. because you are Filipino? Have you seen any of your family or Filipino friends being treated differently or poorly because they are Filipino? Please describe.

(28) How would you describe your decision to immigrate and your experiences since moving here (i.e. positive, difficult, what you expected, etc)? What is one piece of advice you would give someone your age that is planning on immigrating here from the PI?

(29) Lastly, do you think that the age that one migrates from the PI to the U.S. matters in terms of transitioning to the new way of life?

Thank you very much for your time! Your participation in this interview will help us understand the experiences of Filipino immigrants and work towards providing better health services for them.

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