



CORRELATES OF RETENTION AMONG ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES: THE CASE FOR HAWAIIAN STUDENTS

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This study examined Hawaiian students' persistence at the four community colleges on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. The research covered a five-year period (10 semesters), fall 1991–spring 1996, and focused on factors promoting persistence for students pursuing either liberal arts or vocational–technical degrees. Logistic regression was the statistical method used, and the analyses were performed separately for the two groups of students. The results indicated that four factors—cumulative grade point average, financial aid, average credit hours, and enrollment at Campus 4—were significant for both liberal arts and vocational–technical majors, whereas another two variables—reverse transfer and attending an urban high school—were significant for liberal arts students only. Recommendations for policies, programs, and strategies to promote persistence for Hawaiian students were based on those results.

A recent report of students attending the 50 most selective American universities found that Asian/Pacific Islanders were twice as likely to be enrolled than any other group (Owings, Madigan, & Daniel, 1998). There are many reports that indicate that, as a group, Asians are performing well in academic institutions. However, the term “Asian/Pacific Islander” is misleadingly broad and projects a fallacious picture of unity that masks broad differences in academic achievement. Collectively included under the umbrella term of “Asian” are many different ethnic groups, including Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Koreans, Asian Indians, Vietnamese, Cambodians,

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and Laotians (Endo, 1990; Hune & Chan, 1997; Nakanishi & Nishida, 1995). Although Hawaiians, Samoans, Chamorros, and others are frequently mislabeled as “Asians,” they are more appropriately identified as “Pacific Islanders.” Pacific Islanders are actually similar to Native Americans because they are the indigenous people of their lands who “share a colonial and neo-colonial relationship with the United States” (Hune & Chan, 1997, p. 42).

HAWAIIANS

Two other terms that are frequently misused, confused, and misunderstood are “Hawaiian” and “Native Hawaiian.” As defined by federal legislation, a “Native Hawaiian” is “a descendant of the aboriginal people who, prior to 1778, occupied and exercised sovereignty in the area that now comprises the State of Hawaii” (Augustus F. Hawkins—Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments, 1988, p. 363). The term “Native Hawaiian” is used more specifically for people of 50% or more Hawaiian ancestry (Trask, 1996). The more generic label of “Hawaiian” includes so-called “full-bloods” as well as those with only a relatively small proportion of ancestry tied to the islands’ original inhabitants (Barringer & Liu, 1994).

According to the 1990 census, the Hawaiian population in the United States was 211,014, of which 138,742 resided in the state of Hawaii and 72,272 lived on the mainland, primarily in California (Office of Hawaiian Affairs, 1996). Approximately 12.5% of the total population of Hawaii was Hawaiian (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992).

Socioeconomic Conditions

From a national perspective, Hawaiians are nearly twice as likely to be living in poverty as whites (Barringer & Liu, 1994; National Center for Education Statistics, 1995a, 1995b). The poor economic status of Hawaiians becomes more evident when matched against the three largest ethnic groups in the state of Hawaii: Filipinos, Japanese, and whites (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992). Fourteen percent of Hawaiian families live below the poverty level, compared with 10% of Filipinos, 10% of Japanese, and 8% of whites (Barringer & Liu, 1994). Also, the Hawaiian population consists of a large number of children and adolescents who live in households headed by a single parent (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992, 1993). The number of Hawaiian families with a female head of household is twice that of

white and Japanese families and about one-third higher than that of Filipino families (Barringer & Liu, 1994). As a result of poor economic conditions, many Hawaiian families lack the financial resources to provide their children with educational experiences such as preschool. Thus, even before they begin elementary school, a significant number of Hawaiian children fall in the category of educationally at risk.

Hawaiians in Higher Education

Although the high school graduation rates of Hawaiians compare favorably with national averages, college enrollment and completion rates present a very different picture. Hawaiians comprise 12.5% of Hawaii's total population and nearly 25% of the enrollment in Hawaii's public schools; however, they make up a considerably smaller proportion of the state's postsecondary students. Hawaiian student underrepresentation in higher education is most evident at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UH-Manoa), the state's only research institution (Alu Like, Inc., 1988; Barringer & Liu, 1994; Kamehameha Schools Bishop Estate [KSBE], 1983, 1993; Takeuchi, Agbayani, & Kuniyoshi, 1990). Although the 13.6% enrollment figures for fall 1997 are encouraging (up from 9.0% in 1988), 16.4% of Hawaiian students are enrolled in community colleges, and only 8.7% are at UH-Manoa (University of Hawaii Institutional Research Office, 1997).

Likewise, college completion rates for Hawaiians in the state of Hawaii are lower than national or state averages. In 1990, only 9.1% of the Hawaiian population 25 years old and over had completed four or more years of college, compared with the national average of 21% (National Center for Education Statistics, 1995a; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992, 1993). An in-state ethnic comparison (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993) showed that the college completion rate of 9.1% for Hawaiians was significantly below the rates for whites (30.2%), Japanese (25.2%), and Filipinos (11.6%).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The community college is the entrance to higher education for the majority of Hawaiians. Although the achievement of Hawaiians living on all of the islands are of concern, this study focused on identifying the factors affecting the persistence and transfer of Hawaiian students enrolled in the four public community colleges on Oahu (Hawaii's most populous island). Specifically, this study sought to answer the following two research questions:

1. What are the factors that best predict transfer to a four-year institution among Hawaiian students attending one of the community colleges on Oahu?
2. What are the factors that best predict retention and program completion of Hawaiian students enrolled in vocational–technical programs at Oahu’s community colleges?

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Voorhees (1987) and Tinto (1993) emphasized that community college students often have different motivations and intentions than students attending four-year institutions. Thus, students who attend community colleges may do so primarily for personal or job-related reasons and may not seek to obtain a degree. For example, many take a class or two to improve specific skills or for self-enrichment purposes, whereas others may enroll for career advancement, career change, or vocational certification or to accumulate credits to transfer to a four-year institution. Degree completion, therefore, may not be a valid measure of retention at community colleges, where fewer than 10% of students earn an associate degree or certificate (Conklin, 1993). Likewise, the factors that affect retention positively at four-year institutions may not apply in the same way for community college students.

Astin (1993, 1997), testing for factors leading to retention, argued that the more time and energy students devote to the education process, the more they will learn and develop. Spending more time studying, getting involved in school activities, and interacting with faculty members and peers all correlated positively to persistence. Other researchers (Mallette & Cabrera, 1991; Nora, 1987; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1980, 1991) found that students who are more involved with or integrated into college life are more likely to persist. Tinto (1975, 1987, 1993, 1997) maintained that academic and social integration and goal and institutional commitment are important factors for student retention. He is in agreement with Astin (1993, 1997) that greater involvement within the college community results in integration that works to reinforce both institutional and goal commitment.

Rendon (1994) added another aspect to student retention. She suggested that nontraditional students need additional support and nurturing:

Nontraditional students do not perceive involvement as *them* taking the initiative. They perceive it when someone takes an active role in assisting them. The role of the institution in fostering validation is active—it involves faculty, counselors, coaches, and administrators actively reaching out to students or designing activities that promote active learning and interpersonal growth among students, faculty, and staff. (p. 44)

Looking specifically at the fall 1979 cohort of first-time freshmen at the University of Hawaii, Takeuchi et al. (1990) performed a seven-year study to estimate the graduation rates of five ethnic groups: Chinese, Filipinos, Japanese, Koreans, and Native Hawaiians. They included variables such as high school grade point average (GPA), Scholastic Aptitude Test scores, and type of high school attended (public, private, mainland, and foreign) as important controls. They found that Japanese students had the same probability of graduation as Chinese students, who had the highest graduation rate of all students at the University of Hawaii. Filipinos had slightly more than a 50% chance and Koreans slightly less than a 50% probability of graduating from the University of Hawaii within seven years. Hawaiians had the lowest odds, 36%, of graduating in that same time period.

Feldman (1993) studied first-time students at Niagara County Community College, New York, in fall 1989 and found that high school GPA was the strongest predictor of retention. High school GPA also was a significant predictor of persistence in a study of African American males in community colleges (Hagedorn, Maxwell & Hampton, in press). Additionally, Hagedorn et al determined that college goal commitment as well as the number of credit hours taken were positive and significant predictors of retention.

The extant literature is informative regarding retention. However, there is a significant void in the area of empirical studies of retention of Hawaiian students in community colleges. To date, no studies specifically pertaining to this population have been published.

METHOD

This study tracked the fall 1991 cohort of first-time students over a 10-semester period (five years—through spring 1996) through the use of data from the UH Community Colleges Student Tracking System (UHCCSTS). The longitudinal nature of the data allowed us to systematically determine the factors that affected persistence and transfer among this group of Hawaiian students enrolled in the four public community colleges. We used logistic regression analysis to

determine the independent effects of the different variables on the dichotomous dependent variable (persistence) and estimated the probability of Hawaiian students persisting within the community college system and/or subsequently transferring to a four-year college.

Data Analysis

Persistence was predicted using logistic regression. Because persistence is a dichotomous variable, it violates an important and basic assumption of multiple regression. When a dichotomous variable is predicted, Gillespie and Nobel (1992) recommended using logistic regression, which estimates the effects of different independent variables (St. John, 1990). McGrath and Braunstein (1997, p. 402) stated, "This method of inquiry determines which of the independent variables are most highly statistically significant when taking all of the variables into account simultaneously." Cabrera, Stampen, and Hansen (1990), Mallette and Cabrera (1991), and Feldman (1993) also found that logistic regression allows the researcher to mix continuous and categorical variables and to explore the effects of categorical and continuous variables on dichotomous dependent variables, such as in a study to determine the probability of a student persisting, dropping out, or transferring.

Study Sample

During the fall of 1991, 2,065 students at the four community colleges self-identified themselves as Hawaiian. We first reduced the sample to those who were first-time enrollees (593) and then selected only those students who indicated their intentions to pursue degrees or certificates (235 in liberal arts and 312 in vocational-technical programs). Thus, the final sample sized used in the study was 547. Female students comprised 64% of the liberal arts majors and 48% of the vocational-technical group. The majority of students (421) were between the ages of 17 and 24.

Data Analysis

For students declaring their intention to get either a certificate or associate degree in one of the vocational (nontransfer) programs, persistence was coded 1 if the goal was achieved within the five years or if they were still enrolled; persistence was coded as 0 if the student left prior to goal achievement. For the liberal arts students, the dependent variable was coded 1 if they transferred to a four-year

institution, graduated with an associate degree, or were still enrolled. If a student left the community college before earning the two-year degree or did not transfer within the five years, the dependent variable was coded as 0.

We checked for transfer to four-year institutions in Hawaii—the three baccalaureate degree-awarding institutions under the UH system (UH—Hilo, UH—Manoa, and UH—West Oahu) as well as the private institutions (Brigham Young University—Hawaii, Chaminade University, and Hawaii Pacific University). We assumed that the Hawaiian community college students in this study were unlikely to transfer to institutions on the mainland or to other countries because many of them were nontraditional students with families of their own as well as extended families who have lived in Hawaii for generations.

Independent Variables

The UHCCSTS includes basic demographic information (i.e., gender, age, ethnicity, citizenship, place of residence) as well as enrollment information (e.g., degree major, hours enrolled, cumulative GPA). It does not include financial aid information, however. Those data were obtained from the four community colleges as well as from the Kamehameha Schools Bishop Estate (KSBE), the largest provider of private college aid to Hawaiian students, and were added manually to the data set. Table 1 provides a full description of the variables included in each block for these analyses.

The blocks were added in a forward blockwise fashion. For each variable that was found to be a significant predictor of persistence, the estimate of the change in the probability of the dependent variable resulting from a unit change in the predictor variable was estimated (Petersen, 1985). Cabrera (1994) explained that, for categorical variables, this statistic is interpreted in terms of excluded categories, whereas for continuous variables, it is the “incremental effect on the outcome variable resulting from a unit change in the dependent variable” (p. 246).

RESULTS

Table 2 provides the results of the forward entry procedure on each block of variables on the dependent variable, persistence, for the liberal arts students, whereas Table 3 illustrates the same procedure and effects for the vocational–technical students. Each column lists the parameter estimates for the specific model under consideration.

TABLE 1 Blocks of Variables Used in the Analysis

Block	Explanation
1: Background	Gender (1 = male, 2 = female) Age at enrollment Location (0 = rural, 1 = urban)
2: High school-related	Type of high school (0 = private, 1 = public) Average reading score of high school attended Average math score of high school attended Admissions criteria (0 = nonselective, 1 = selective) Affiliation of high school (0 = secular, 1 = religious)
3: College-related	Average number of credit hours Enrollment status (0 = continuous, 1 = stopout) Cumulative grade point average Change in major [used only in the vocational–technical sample (0 = no, 1 = yes)] Previous four-year credits (0 = no, 1 = yes) Campus 2 (0 = other campus, 1 = attended Campus 2) Campus 3 (0 = other campus, 1 = attended Campus 3) Campus 4 (0 = other campus, 1 = attended Campus 4)
4: Financial Aid	Financial aid (0 = no, 1 = yes)

For each step, or model, the scaled deviance G^2 and degrees of freedom are also noted. Both Tables 2 and 3 contain four models. Model 1 represents the effect of background characteristics on the likelihood of persistence, Model 2 adds the effects of high school experiences, Model 3 represents the additional effects of college experiences, and Model 4 adds financial aid variables and represents the final model.

Although G^2 declined with the addition of each new model for both samples, the greatest change occurred when the college experience block (Model 3) was added. The reduction of G^2 with each successive model provides evidence of an appropriate fit between data and model. Table 4 provides the results of the test of the model changes as recommended by Cabrera (1994). Based on the change in G^2 , financial aid contributed the most to fit, whereas high school experience did not have a significant effect on the models for either liberal arts or vocational–technical students.

Significant Variables for Liberal Arts Students

The independent variables that were significant for liberal arts students include attending an urban high school, taking more credit hours, having a higher cumulative GPA, starting with credits from

TABLE 2 Effects of Background, High School and College Experiences, and Financial Aid on Persistence for Liberal Arts Students

Factor	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Gender	-0.5455	-0.4750	-0.6870	-0.7105
Age at enrollment	-0.0380	-0.0263	-0.0308	-0.0450
Location	-0.4098	-0.3068	1.1266	1.5212*
Type of high school		0.1647	0.8762	1.2256
Average reading score		0.6119	0.7038	0.9080
Average math score		-0.3306	-0.4901	-0.5860
Admissions criteria		-0.2536	1.4016	2.5788
Affiliation of high school		2.0276	0.3957	-0.0675
Average no. of credit hours			0.4390***	0.3457***
Enrollment status			-0.5169	-0.7653
Cumulative GPA			2.2643***	2.7012***
Previous four-year credits			2.3862*	2.8156*
Campus 2			1.9818	1.7435
Campus 3			1.4624	1.8392
Campus 4			2.5841*	2.7209*
Financial aid				2.2867***
G^2	266.537	253.822	165.159	142.099
df	206,276	203,408	249,477	170,836
G^2/df	1.292	1.248	0.662	0.839
Cox & Snell R^2	0.017	0.076	0.399	0.463
Nagelkerke R^2	0.024	0.104	0.547	0.634
PCP	63.59	64.08	83.50	84.47
χ^2, df	3,623,4	16,339,9	105,002,16***	128,061,17***

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

TABLE 3 Effects of Background, High School and College Experiences, and Financial Aid on Persistence for Vocational–Technical Students

Factor	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Gender	1.1228	1.2348	1.4857	1.9167
Age at enrollment	-0.0010	0.0033	0.0111	0.0439
Location	0.1894	0.0251	-0.0606	-0.1610
Type of high school		0.2330	-0.2898	-0.3084
Average reading score		-0.0993	0.1417	0.2215
Average math score		0.3270	0.1765	0.2308
Admissions criteria		5.2118	4.8823	4.9444
Affiliation of high school		-4.7636	-4.9134	-4.8921
Change in major			2.3540	2.3983
Average no. of credit hours			0.1703**	0.1282*
Enrollment status			0.5315	0.5325
Cumulative GPA			0.8143**	0.8340**
Campus 2			-0.6269	-0.5185
Campus 3			-0.6910	-0.7148
Campus 4			-1.3726	-1.4998*
Financial aid				1.0568**
G^2	262.883	259.622	229.701	222.592
df	204.466	203.451	198.779	198.340
G^2/df	1.286	1.276	1.156	1.122
Cox & Snell R^2	0.036	0.052	0.181	0.209
Nagelkerke R^2	0.049	0.070	0.246	0.285
PCP	64.22	64.22	67.16	72.06
χ^2, df	7.540, 4	10.801, 9	40.723, 16***	47.831, 17***

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

TABLE 4 Effects of Adding Factors on the Fit of the Model for Liberal Arts and Vocational–Technical Students

Model	df	G^2	Δdf	ΔG^2	Improvement of fit (p)
Liberal Arts					
1 Background	206	266.54	—	—	—
2 Adding high school experience	203	253.82	$df_1 - df_2 = 3$	$G_1^2 - G_2^2 = 12.72$	0.0601
3 Adding college experience	249	165.16	$df_1 - df_3 = -43$	$G_1^2 - G_3^2 = 101.38$	0.0000
4 Adding financial aid	171	142.09	$df_1 - df_4 = 35$	$G_1^2 - G_4^2 = 124.45$	0.0000
Vocational–Technical					
1 Background	204	262.88	—	—	—
2 Adding high school experience	203	259.62	$df_1 - df_2 = 1$	$G_1^2 - G_2^2 = 3.26$	0.2896
3 Adding college experience	199	229.70	$df_1 - df_3 = 5$	$G_1^2 - G_3^2 = 33.18$	0.0006
4 Adding financial aid	198	222.59	$df_1 - df_4 = 6$	$G_1^2 - G_4^2 = 40.29$	0.0001

a four-year institution (reverse transfer), and receiving financial aid. The model predicted that attending an urban high school increased the probability of a student persisting by 36.2% over a student attending a rural high school. The estimate of the change in the probability for average number of credit indicated that for every hour of credit that the student enrolls in college, the likelihood of persistence increased by 8.62%. The estimate of the change in the probability for cumulative GPA indicated that for every one full grade point increase in the student's cumulative GPA, the student's odds of persisting grew by 54.2%. For the variable of previous four-year institution credit, students who started out at a four-year institution and then transferred to a two-year college or students who already had baccalaureate degrees and enrolled at a community college increased the likelihood of persistence by 55.3% over other students. Enrollment at one of the campuses, designated as Campus 4, increased the likelihood of persistence by 54.4% over the campus used as a comparison. Finally, students who receiving financial assistance showed a 49.3% greater chance of persisting over students not receiving financial aid.

Significant Variables for Vocational–Technical Students

Four independent variables were significant for vocational–technical students. The estimate of the change in the probability revealed that for every hour of credit enrolled, the probability of persistence increased by 2.7%. For every one full grade point increase in cumulative GPA, the chance of persistence increased by 19.3%. Students receiving financial assistance increased their probability of persisting by 24.9% over students who did not receive assistance. Finally, vocational–technical students attending Campus 4 decreased their likelihood of persistence 20.2% over vocational–technical students at the reference campus.

CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY

In their order of predictive ability, the six significant variables predicting persistence of liberal arts students were (a) cumulative GPA, (b) receipt of financial aid, (c) average credit hours, (d) enrollment at Campus 4, (e) previous four-year institution experience, and (f) location of high school. For vocational–technical students, the relative order of predictive ability was (a) cumulative GPA, (b) receipt of financial aid, (c) average credit hours, and (d) attendance

at Campus 4. For vocational–technical students, attending Campus 4 had a negative effect on persistence, whereas for liberal arts students, the effect was positive.

Academic Integration

This study found significance with traditional academic integration variables of GPA and full-time enrollment (average credit hours). It should be noted that previous research on community college students has not been consistent in this finding. Therefore, policies to aid students to achieve academically and to enroll full time are encouraged.

Educational Goal Commitments and Institutional Commitments

For liberal arts students, attending Campus 4 increased the likelihood of persistence by 54.4% as compared with students attending Campus 1. However, for vocational–technical students, attending Campus 4 resulted in a 20.2% decrease in the likelihood of persistence. These results most likely are due to Campus 4's strong liberal arts curriculum and focus on transfer programs. By contrast, the comparison campus (Campus 1) places more emphasis on its vocational curriculum and focuses on associate degree and certificate programs. Therefore, a student may be better served by choosing a campus that focuses on the kind of curriculum in which he or she wishes to enroll.

Historically, reverse transfer students (those with four-year college credits) have been negatively viewed as nonpersisters by their previous four-year university. However, these students were 55.3% more likely to persist than students who initially began their education at a community college. Their relatively high likelihood of persistence may indicate that the community college can function as a safety net after failed attempts at a four-year or other type of institution. This finding may have implications for advising students who have been unsuccessful or who are having problems at four-year institutions.

Financial Aid

Next to cumulative GPA, receipt of financial aid was the most predictive variable for persistence for both liberal arts and vocational–technical students. Given the general lower socioeconomic status of Hawaiians in Hawaii, it may be that financial assistance is especially important. In addition to federal college aid, for which

all students with financial need are eligible, Hawaiian students also qualify for assistance that is specifically targeted for ethnic Hawaiians. Several federal programs have been authorized as special set-asides for Hawaiians, such as the Native Hawaiian Education Act, the Native Hawaiian Health Care Act, and the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act. Hawaii state agencies (e.g., the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, and UH) also offer financial assistance in the form of scholarships and tuition waivers. Finally, the largest provider of college financial aid for Hawaiians is the private charitable educational institution, KSBE. For the academic year 1997–1998, KSBE alone provided almost \$6 million in college financial aid to about 1,760 Hawaiian students attending the 10 colleges and universities in the UH system (KSBE Financial Aid Department, 1998). However, the key to getting college financial assistance is to apply early and complete the process.

In addition, there is support to provide free education to Native Hawaiian students in reparation for UH's use of crown and government lands that were ceded to the United States after the 1898 annexation of Hawaii. Part of UH—Manoa in Honolulu, Oahu, and the entire UH—Hilo campus on the island of Hawaii are situated on lands that once belonged to Hawaiian crown and government. Yet, the state of Hawaii has never compensated Hawaiians for revenues and other benefits derived from use of these lands. The addition of tuition waivers for Hawaiians may also result in increased student persistence.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study identified the persistence factors most important for one cohort of Hawaiian students who attended community colleges on the island of Oahu. Still to be addressed is whether these same factors are significant for Hawaiian students attending the other community colleges on the islands of Hawaii, Maui, Molokai, Lanai, and Kauai. Also not addressed was the question of whether these factors have the same effect on non-Hawaiians attending college in Hawaii.

Some of the data from the UHCCSTS can be used to explore and address these important and unanswered questions. However, demographic information alone provides limited insights into students' interactions with the institution. The UHCCSTS does not include data related to students' involvement in campus activities, such as social or cultural clubs, or interactions with faculty members. Having these kinds of data would help the institutions and researcher to understand student involvement or lack of involvement in campus activities. In the

future, the UHCCSTS should collect these types of data for all students. For studies like this one, which focused specifically on ethnic Hawaiians, information about culture, values, and traditions may also be important. The Alu Like (1988) study raised the question of cultural influences on Hawaiian student persistence. However, that study did not explore the issue sufficiently, and other studies and reports have used anecdotal rather than empirical evidence to show the relationship between knowledge of and involvement in Hawaiian cultural traditions and college persistence. Therefore, a qualitative study of Hawaiian community college student persistence would add significantly to the findings of this study.

CONCLUSION

A problem for all institutions continues to be financing programs to meet the needs of students. In the cases of programs and services that specifically target Hawaiian students at the state's community colleges, funding comes from two primary sources: the federal government, through authorized set-aside programs for Hawaiians, and the privately endowed KSBE. Two Hawaii state agencies for ethnic Hawaiians (the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands) also offer scholarships.

However, the number of students receiving aid from these agencies and attending the community colleges is relatively small, and these agencies do not provide other support services for aid recipients.

The Native Hawaiian Vocational Education Project, which is authorized and funded by the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act, provides counseling assistance to Hawaiian students enrolled in the community colleges. In addition to financial assistance, KSBE provides counseling services through its College Retention Program. If funds for these programs are reduced or eliminated, there would be little or no support services at the community colleges specifically for Hawaiians. Also, the community colleges no longer would receive the nearly \$1.5 million that KSBE currently contributes toward financial aid (KSBE Financial Aid Department, 1998). Considering the significance of financial aid in the retention of Hawaiian students, we can reliably predict a direct, negative impact on their numbers if the community colleges no longer had these funds and services.

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