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Enacting Kū‘ē through makawalu discourse: A Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit study of Native Hawaiian students

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This research article applies a Kanaka ‘Ōiwi (Native Hawaiian) Critical Race Theoretical (Kanaka‘Ōiwi Crit) framework to examine Native Hawaiian students’ experiences with kū‘ē (resistance). Through a qualitative data analysis of 91 student voices from four panels, four public hearing testimonies, and 43 newspaper essays published from 2019 to 2024, this article answers how Kanaka ‘Ōiwi students in the K–12 and higher education sectors kū‘ē (resist) in public discourse. Findings reveal that students engage in makawalu (multiple perspectives) discourse to address cultural, economic, educational, and social issues affecting Kanaka ‘Ōiwi. They invoke ‘ike kūpuna (ancestral wisdom) to construct a kahua (foundation) of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi knowledge, which includes Hawaiian language, proverbs, stories, and aloha ‘āina (love of land). Students strengthen this kahua by sharing ‘ike kumu (foundational knowledge) and ‘ike pono‘ī (personal knowledge). The wisdom shared in this article demonstrates how Indigenous knowledge systems (a) kū‘ē colonial worldviews and practices under Hawai‘i’s settler state, (b) disrupt majoritarian narratives about youth participation in civic activities, and (c) affirm the potentialities of family-school partnerships to kū‘ē for the Lāhui Hawai‘i (Hawaiian nation) and the global Indigenous community.

Keywords: Critical race theory, discourse, identity, Native Hawaiian, resistance

Glossary

‘āina	land, lit. that which feeds
aloha ‘āina	love of land
ea	sovereignty
haumana, haumāna	student/s
‘ike	knowledge
‘ike kūpuna	ancestral knowledge
‘ike kumu	foundational knowledge
‘ike lawelawe	performance knowledge
‘ike pono‘ī	personal knowledge
kahua	foundation
kalo	taro
Kānaka Hawai‘i	Native Hawaiians
Kanaka ‘Ōiwi	Native Hawaiian/s
kū‘ē	resist; resistance
kuleana	responsibility/ies
kūpuna	ancestors; elders

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Lāhui Hawai‘i	Hawaiian nation
makawalu	multiple perspectives
mālama ‘āina	caring for the land
mana‘o	insight/s
mo‘okū‘auhau	genealogy/ies
mo‘olelo	story/ies
‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i	Hawaiian language
‘ōlelo no‘eau	Hawaiian sayings
oli	chants
‘ōpio	youth
pono	just; justice
wai	water/s

1. Introduction

> I believe my kūpuna[1] [ancestors] live through me. Therefore I know exactly how it feels to have something stripped away from you because of these rules and rights America has over you. . . . It was important to our kūpuna to make sure we have the right resources to be capable to keep our cultural aspects known for our next generation. . . . If you love Hawai‘i so much, then show it. Show us you care. Show you care about us and not just the image you put out to please the million-dollar owners out there. Give back our right to our ‘āina [land, lit. that which feeds] and respect the fact that we need more than luxury houses and the cliché image that is being sold to the tourist. It takes all these Kānaka Hawai‘i[2] [Native Hawaiians] to come up here and feel like they’re wasting their breath on a situation that should have been dealt with a long time ago. They continuously show up to beg you guys to finally do something about it, yet for the past 130 years, nothing has been put into action. How many times do we have to speak for you guys to hear us? (Hawai‘i Commission on Water Resource Management, 2023, 2:27:00).

In the vein of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in education, I intentionally begin this article with an excerpt of public testimony by Ka‘iulani Pa‘a, a 16-year-old haumana (student) from Ke Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Kekaulike (Kekaulike Hawaiian Immersion School), following the devastating 2023 Maui fires to demonstrate the capacity for experiential ‘ike (knowledge) and cultural wisdom to kū‘ē[3] (resist) oppressive western

[1] English translations for Hawaiian language terms and phrases are provided upon first reference. Readers who are unfamiliar with the language should consult the glossary and the footnotes for contextual information about the author’s intended meaning for terms that have multiple translations. Hawai‘i place names and schools are not included in the glossary.

[2] Kānaka Hawai‘i and Kanaka ‘Ōwi are used interchangeably to refer to Native Hawaiians, the Indigenous People of the islands presently considered the U.S. state of Hawai‘i.

[3] Here, kū‘ē is used as a verb to mean “resist.” However, it is also used in this article as a noun, meaning

policies while advancing social justice aims (Martinez, 2020). In this case, Ka‘iulani’s calls to action before the State of Hawai‘i’s Commission on Water Resource Management prove that ‘ike kūpuna (ancestral knowledge) empowers Kanaka ‘Ōiwi (Native Hawaiian) haumāna[4] (students) to speak publicly about the root causes of inequities they face. Moreover, her weaving of ‘ike kūpuna and ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) in a political setting dictated by western law rejects settler colonialism and white supremacy as epistemic frames, a stance that this article emulates to disrupt academic hegemony via an unapologetic incorporation of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology and ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. Although Ka‘iulani testified on behalf of the Lahaina community’s particular fight to restore their ‘āina and wai (water) in 2023, her remark about countless testimonies by Kānaka Hawai‘i over 130 years invokes makawalu (multiple perspectives) discourse and a legacy of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi kū‘ē (resistance) by the Lāhui Hawai‘i (Hawaiian nation). I elevate critical voices like Ka‘iulani’s to honor this history and affirm anti-colonial efforts to remake Indigenous identities in research.

Despite majoritarian narratives that depict pre-contact Kanaka ‘Ōiwi as submissive, they have always challenged colonialism and racism (Arista, 2019). At times, kū‘ē is violent, evidenced in the death of Captain James Cook by Kanaka ‘Ōiwi warriors in 1779 after he attempted to seize a ruling chief of Hawai‘i Island (Trask, 1999). However, kū‘ē may be peaceful, as Queen Lili‘uokalani demonstrated when she refused to attack U.S. soldiers stationed outside her home in 1893, the year that white businessmen and clergymen illegally overthrew the Hawaiian Kingdom. Here, the queen’s refusal prevented a violent war that would have further decimated an already dwindling Kanaka ‘Ōiwi population (Silva, 2004).

At the turn of the twenty-first century, Kanaka ‘Ōiwi united to kū‘ē the settler state’s education system, which propagated revisionist perspectives of Hawai‘i’s Indigenous People (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013). Haumāna demanded the inclusion of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, Hawaiian history, and Hawaiian culture in K–12 and higher education institutions, joining activists, parents, and teachers at marches to the state capitol. These efforts resulted in the creation of an Office of Hawaiian Education within the state’s Department of Education and Hawaiian culture-based education (CBE) schools that serve community goals (Espania et al., 2019).

The 2019 Kū Kia‘i Mauna (Protect Maunakea) movement surrounding the construction of a thirty-meter telescope atop Maunakea, a sacred mountain on Hawai‘i Island, signaled a turning point in youth kū‘ē on social media. Daily media coverage of the Lāhui Hawai‘i’s mobilization to protect Maunakea had far-reaching effects, including international attention on Indigenous Peoples’ struggle with U.S. occupation and an imposing military presence (Osorio, 2021). Since the summer of 2019,

“resistance.” It is recommended that readers use the preceding and succeeding English words to determine which translation is appropriate for each instance in which kū‘ē appears.

[4]Hawaiian language does not have a letter to delineate between singular and plural nouns. Instead, a diacritical mark over a vowel is often used to indicate a noun is plural. Thus, haumāna is the plural form of haumana.

Kanaka ‘Ōiwi ‘ōpio (youth) have voiced their opinions in public spaces to disrupt settler claims to ‘āina and wai. As a result, aloha ‘āina (love of land) has become an important value for these haumāna.

While Kū Kia‘i Mauna and aloha ‘āina have inspired numerous legal and political studies on kū‘ē in recent years (De Lude et al., 2023; Kanahele-Mossman & Karides, 2021), there have been fewer inquiries in education on youth kū‘ē. Similarly, despite calls for CRT scholars to move beyond normative Black-white binaries and oppression-focused research, a lack of CRT studies foregrounding Kanaka ‘Ōiwi kū‘ē remains (Salis Reyes, 2018). By applying a CRT in education lens to a Pacific Islander, Indigenous context, this article aims to address these gaps in cultural relevance and theory. Furthermore, in response to right-wing attacks on CRT, mounting distrust in public institutions, and circulating narratives that demonize Youth of Color (Delgado & Stefancic, 2023), this study positions CRT as a tool for liberation and uplifts resistant stories that Kanaka ‘Ōiwi ‘ōpio share to effect positive change for Indigenous Peoples in Hawai‘i and beyond.

A Kanaka ‘Ōiwi Critical Race Theoretical (Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit) framework is thus used to examine how haumāna kū‘ē in public discourse. First, Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit is operationalized and applied to review relevant literature on identity, resistance, and public discourse. The framework is then used to examine 91 haumāna perspectives from panels, public hearing testimonies, and essays published between June 2019 to February 2024. This Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit analysis found that students engage in makawalu discourse to share multiple forms of Hawaiian ‘ike and to kū‘ē interpersonal, institutionalized, and systemic oppression. The article concludes with recommendations on nurturing kū‘ē leadership skills, and political engagement among ‘ōpio and developing family-school partnerships to kū‘ē for the Lāhui Hawai‘i and the global Indigenous community. ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i is deliberately printed in regular typeface to counter hierarchical academic writing practices and to distinguish this study as anti-colonial research (Salis Reyes, 2018). Lastly, a glossary of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i concepts and their relevant English translations is provided to help readers develop familiarity with Hawaiian language and deepen their engagement with the article’s findings.

2. Kanaka ‘Ōiwi Critical Race Theory (Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit)

Two Indigenous beliefs guided this article’s theoretical and methodological foundations: namely, that stories form the basis of theories (Brayboy, 2005) and conducting research for one’s community carries a kuleana (responsibility) to do so in a respectful and reciprocal manner (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2016). Consequently, I engaged Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit not only to de-center whiteness in academia through mo‘olelo (stories) but also to pursue pono (justice) in the application of Indigenous ways of knowing and being in research. I define Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit as an Indigenous theoretical

framework that (a) foregrounds the intersecting roles of racism, settler colonialism, and occupation in the perpetuation and reproduction of social inequities among Kanaka ‘Ōiwi and (b) disrupts these root causes of oppression by sharing their lived experiences. To ground this study's data analysis in Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit, I incorporated the following four themes from Cristobal (2018):

1. Settler colonialism, racism, and U.S. occupation are pervasive in Hawai‘i's society. The consequences of these macro ideologies include the exploitation of ‘āina, the appropriation of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi identity, and the normalization of coloniality in schools (Trask, 1999).
2. Kanaka ‘Ōiwi hold identities that are contextual, multiple, intersectional, and liminal. These identities change continuously across time, place, and space (Kawano, 2023b).
3. Mo‘olelo are intimately connected to identity and kū‘ē. They are a sacred form of intergenerational resistant ‘ike for families and communities that may be unintelligible for non-Hawaiians and non-‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i speakers (Osorio, 2021).
4. Kanaka ‘Ōiwi ‘ike is antithetical to colonial epistemologies. Hence, sharing ‘ike in research entails a cultural kuleana to promote ea (sovereignty) and social justice for the Lāhui Hawai‘i (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2016).

2.1. Papakū Makawalu

As a theoretical framework guided by cultural wisdom, Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit is oriented epistemologically around Papakū Makawalu, an Indigenous lens "for understanding, acknowledging, and becoming experts" of the intellectual, physical, and spiritual "systems of the natural world" (Kanahele-Mossman & Karides, 2021, p. 450). In a research context, makawalu refers to a "process of deconstruction and reconstruction to make meaning and deepen understanding" (Keli‘ikipikāneokolohaka, 2020, p. 8). According to Reppun (2017), makawalu can lead scholars to identify four depths of ‘ike – ‘ike kūpuna, ‘ike kumu (foundational knowledge), ‘ike pono‘ī (personal knowledge), and ‘ike lawelawe (performance knowledge) – in their work. When this occurs, acquiring ‘ike moves from an impersonal search for information toward a process of developing a relationship with a repository of intergenerational cultural wisdom. Together, Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit and Papakū Makawalu dismantle colonial notions of research as individualistic by viewing ‘ike like ‘ōlelo no‘eau (Hawaiian sayings) and mo‘okū‘auhau (genealogies) as multilayered and collective. In the remaining sections, Kanaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology and theory are purposefully interwoven to deepen our understanding of kū‘ē and distinguish this study as anti-colonial research.

3. Conceptual framework

3.1. Kanaka ‘Ōiwi identity

A Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit view of contemporary Kanaka ‘Ōiwi identity foregrounds

settler colonialism and white supremacy's ubiquity in modern societies as a reason for its contentious nature within the Lāhui Hawai‘i (Cristobal, 2018). Indeed, while most pre-contact Kānaka Hawai‘i self-determined the definition and boundaries of their Hawaiian identity, present-day Kanaka ‘Ōiwi must navigate colonial ways of self-identifying according to legal, political, and social categories established by nineteenth-century settlers who sought to eliminate their "Indigenous worldviews and sociopolitical systems, and replace them with settler ways" of quantifying "Hawaiianness" (De Lude et al., 2023, p. 3).[5] Critical Kanaka ‘Ōiwi scholars have argued that the legal and political consequences of colonization continue to impact contemporary Native Hawaiians by severing them from kinship practices that encourage self-identification as a member of a global Indigenous community (Salis Reyes, 2018; Trask, 1999). Still, Kanaka ‘Ōiwi form cultural and genealogical identities rooted in relationships with ‘āina and people (Paglinawan et al., 2020). Today, Kanaka ‘Ōiwi use a variety of terms to self-identify, including N/native Hawaiian, Kanaka Maoli, Hawaiian American, and Hawaiian National (De Lude et al., 2023).[6] I hypothesized that resistant haumāna rely on self-determined definitions over colonial beliefs to express their identity and kū‘ē.

Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit also contends that identity varies according to critical consciousness, an ability "to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire, 1970, p. 35), and dysconsciousness, "an uncritical habit of mind (including perceptions, attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs) that justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order of things as given" (King, 2015, p. 113). Ideologically, Kanaka ‘Ōiwi haumāna's positioning on this spectrum between critical consciousness and dysconsciousness may change throughout their lives (Kawano, 2023b). However, it is this critique of oppression that supports a capacity for ea, aloha ‘āina, and kū‘ē (Wright, 2018). Therefore, this article assumed that students' kū‘ē in public discourse is indicative of critical consciousness.

3.1.1. Kanaka ‘Ōiwi families and culture-based education schools

Extant literature on Kanaka ‘Ōiwi identity formation highlights the influence of families and schools on transmitting understandings of "Hawaiianness" to haumāna (Wright, 2018, p. 31). Hawaiian epistemologies view families as the center of individual well-being and the foundation for identity-based relationships (Cristobal, 2018). Similarly, Indigenous research on CBE schools revealed these institutions' capacity to nurture students' cultural identities, sense of belonging, and sense of community (Kawano, 2023a). At present, approximately 30 CBE schools across Hawai‘i serve more than 5,000 Kanaka ‘Ōiwi in the K–12 and higher education sectors (Espania et al., 2019). This designation includes Hawaiian-focused public charter schools, Hawaiian language immersion schools, private schools (e.g. Kamehameha Schools),

[5] See De Lude et al. (2023) for a succinct historical account of Hawai‘i's political and legal colonization.

[6] I use Kanaka ‘Ōiwi because of its translation as "people of the land," which invokes a political identification as Indigenous to Hawai‘i.

and public colleges (e.g. Hawai‘inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge).

Since their creation, CBE schools have played key roles in increasing the number of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i speakers within the Lāhui Hawai‘i (Espania et al., 2019) and mobilizing communities to participate in political activities, such as Kū Kia‘i Mauna and public hearings after the 2021 Kapukākī (Red Hill) water crisis on O‘ahu and the 2023 Maui fires. As a result, I postulated that conversations with or lessons from family, teachers, and peers may influence the ‘ike that haumāna share to kū‘ē. To this end, homes and schools were positioned as sites where kū‘ē may be introduced and internalized to effect political and social change.

3.2. Kū‘ē as resistance

While Kanaka ‘Ōiwi resist oppression in private, interpersonal contexts, this article intentionally focused on enactments in public, social settings to pay homage to the 1897 Kū‘ē[7] Petitions, which contained the signatures of over 38,000 Kanaka ‘Ōiwi in opposition to Hawai‘i’s annexation to the United States. Until Noenoe Silva’s (2004) archival research revealed the majority of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi in 1897 signed the Kū‘ē Petitions, haumāna were led to believe their kūpuna supported U.S. occupation. Kū‘ē is thus an appropriate term to operationalize resistance in this study because of its affiliation with documented proof of ‘ike kūpuna’s ability to delegitimize colonial narratives. Moreover, kū‘ē’s connection to the overthrow and annexation highlights the political nature of resistance, especially when it is enacted at institutional and systemic dimensions.

Education likely plays a major role in students’ motivation to kū‘ē for the Lāhui Hawai‘i. Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua’s (2013) analysis of activism among Hālau Kū Māna Public Charter School haumāna suggested a potential relationship between cultural ‘ike and sociopolitical kū‘ē. She recalled the use of oli (chants) to kū‘ē for the equitable funding of public CBE schools in the early 2000s. For one haumana, Noelani Duffey-Spikes, enacting kū‘ē aligns with critical consciousness. While reflecting on giving speeches at the state capitol to articulate her political beliefs, she said, “It wasn’t like we were just kids out there saying, ‘Kū‘ē” [but] who don’t even know what they’re fighting for. We knew exactly what we were talking/about, why we’re fighting against or supporting a bill” (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013, pp. 224–225).

Given the diversity within contemporary Kanaka ‘Ōiwi communities (Paglinawan et al., 2020), there are numerous ways for ‘ōpio to kū‘ē. Since 2019, more Kanaka ‘Ōiwi students oppose state and military control of ‘āina and wai, reflecting aloha ‘āina and a critical education in the “historical and cultural foundations” of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi ea (Fujikane, 2019, p. 42). To enrich the mo‘okū‘auhau[8] of youth resistance with contemporary examples, this study aimed to identify recent enactments of kū‘ē by ‘ōpio.

[7] Kū‘ē is used as a proper noun, serving as the name for these historic petitions.

[8] Mo‘okū‘auhau is used as a singular noun.

3.3. Public discourse

In pre-contact Hawaiian civilization, Kanaka ‘Ōiwi primarily shared information and knowledge orally. However, soon after foreign contact, Euro-American settlers introduced beliefs about English's superiority over ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, the legitimacy of the written word over spoken word, and the supremacy of white discourse styles over those of Indigenous Peoples (Lucas, 2000). Despite assimilationist tactics by Protestant missionaries and U.S. businessmen throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Kanaka ‘Ōiwi harnessed discourse to kū‘ē colonization. Shortly after a Hawaiian alphabet was created and used to print western bibles in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i as early as 1826 (Lyon, 2017), "nearly three-fourths of the Native Hawaiian population over the age of sixteen years were literate in their own language" (Lucas, 2000, p. 2). Through their literacy, Kanaka ‘Ōiwi "fought the overthrow and annexation with everything they had, and especially with discourse" (Silva, 2014, p. 304).

In this article, public discourse was operationalized as written and oral conversations and reflections by K-college students in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i or English that has been made widely available on the Internet. To honor Hawaiian language newspapers as crucial spaces for Kanaka ‘Ōiwi to communicate with one another and mobilize between 1834 and 1948 (Silva, 2004), the written data in this study were student essays published in a Hawaiian-serving newspaper. To recognize the intersections between kū‘ē and civic engagement (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013), the oral data came from video recordings of student panels and public hearings. With its focus on public kū‘ē, this article heeds De Lude et al.'s (2023) call to amplify Kanaka ‘Ōiwi voices in public opinion research, which is often "mobilized against Indigenous Peoples" to serve corporate interests (p. 6). In this way, I bolster the capacity for ‘ōpio to shape public discourse and policy debates, while engaging in reciprocal research grounded in pono[9] (just) intentions.

3.3.1. Makawalu discourse

Makawalu discourse is a communication style central to Kanaka ‘Ōiwi and a Papakū Makawalu philosophy. According to ho‘omanawanui (2019), engaging in makawalu discourse encourages Kanaka ‘Ōiwi to "embrace the depth and breadth" of Hawaiian ‘ike (p. 56). Considering the layered, poetic meanings of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i words and phrases, makawalu discourse is also a critical thinking strategy to "perceive and articulate the interrelationships and interconnectedness" of diverse perspectives (Kaomea et al., 2019, p. 276). It involves interpreting information, connecting to history or previous stances, and raising similar or alternative views to co-construct wisdom.

To depict this deconstruction and reconstruction of multiple viewpoints, Kanaka ‘Ōiwi scholars have referenced imagery of forming rock walls (Keli‘ikipikāneokolohaka, 2020; Reppun, 2017). Since rocks are considered "steadfast

[9]Pono was previously used as a noun for "justice." Here, it is used as an adjective.

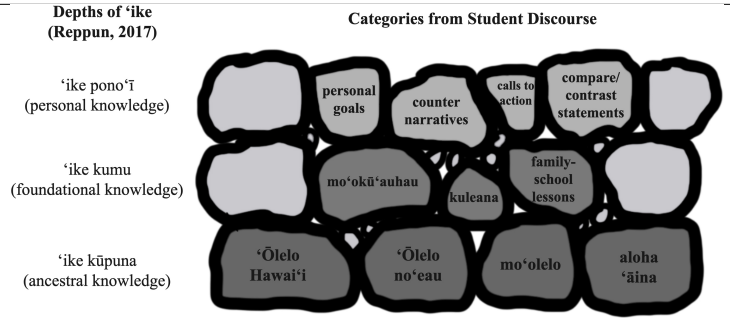

Fig. 1. Makawalu discourse rock wall model for enacting kū‘ē.

embodiments of the land, as well as witnesses to countless histories occurring around them over centuries," they represent living, Hawaiian ‘ike (Hermes, 2022, p. 138). In effect, the methodical pooling together of diverse knowledge under makawalu discourse parallels the process of layering different stones to create a uniform structure. For instance, the role of ‘ike kūpuna as a cultural and spiritual kahua (foundation) for makawalu discourse is similar to the function of a foundational base stone. ‘Ike kumu is comparable to wedge stones that prop up larger rocks, and ‘ike pono‘ī resembles top stones, which compress rocks below. ‘Ike lawelawe performs a function similar to that of filler stones, which vary greatly in size and shape to close gaps. A visualization of this metaphor is illustrated in Fig. 1 and explained further in the findings.

4. Method

A Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit framework that uplifts Native Hawaiian student perspectives to disrupt racism, settler colonialism, and U.S. occupation in academia informed this qualitative study's methodology in two important ways. First, all decisions concerning data collection and analysis were scrutinized to ensure they benefit Lāhui Hawai‘i interests and uphold my personal kuleana to affirm Kanaka ‘Ōiwi ea in research. Second, student voice and mo‘olelo were positioned as experiential wisdom that challenges deficit modes of thinking about the potentialities of Indigenous youth participation in public discourse.

4.1. Data collection

A systematic search process was used to gather secondary student perspectives via material collection. *Ka Wai Ola*, a monthly newspaper funded by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs[10] since 1980, was selected as the main source for written material because

[10]This is a Hawaiian-serving government council formed in 1978 to benefit Kanaka ‘Ōiwi interests.

of its wide following across Hawai‘i and its recurring youth columns. Each issue includes a feature story, news briefs, advertisements, community announcements, and a variety of essays and opinion pieces from staff and guest authors, who tend to publish left-leaning or Hawaiian nationalist views. Readers can engage with content online and in print, and authors can write articles in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and English. The newspaper's website was accessed to search for online versions of student essays.

YouTube, a video sharing website and social media platform founded in 2005, was selected to search and watch video recordings of panels and hearings featuring ‘ōpio perspectives. Though the search results on the site are dictated by complex algorithms and filtered according to users' preferences and online history (Noble, 2018), YouTube is also a "learning community" where different opinions can be publicly shared (Kellner & Kim, 2010, p. 12). Consequently, many Kanaka ‘Ōiwi-serving organizations have created "Channels" that function as archives for each video creator's content. This study primarily searched for content from Kanaeokana, a Kanaka ‘Ōiwi organization with ties to CBE schools. Channels of local media sources that covered public hearings were also accessed to find student testimonies.

The two websites were searched using the keywords "youth" or "‘ōpio." On YouTube, these terms were combined with "Native Hawaiian" AND "panel" OR "hearing" OR "meeting" AND specific events that garnered heavy media attention, such as "Maunakea" OR "Lahaina." To focus on contemporary discourse, results were narrowed according to publication date from the start of global attention to Kū Kia‘i Mauna in June 2019 until present day, February 2024. Materials were narrowed further based on the author or speaker's identity as Kanaka ‘Ōiwi and a K-college haumana, as well as the content of their essay or testimony. One essay was excluded for its business advertisement content.

This collection method yielded 43 essays and eight videos of youth panels and public testimonies (see Appendix for a full list of materials). Most of the essays were published in *Ka Wai Ola*'s "He leo hou – A new voice" and "Ka leo o nā ‘ōpio – Voice of the youth" columns, which feature monthly guest contributions. The majority of haumāna who published essays in these columns are current students and graduates of CBE schools. Similarly, the students who participated in youth panels and public testimonies often identified themselves as representatives of their family, home community, and CBE institution. While most student essays were not explicitly connected to politics, the panels and hearings polled public opinion on legislative elections, Kū Kia‘i Mauna, the Kapukākī water crisis, and the Maui fires.

Ninety-one different student perspectives from over 25 public and private schools were represented in the data. Their discourse was transcribed into ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i or English based on the language used by the author or speaker. However, due to my lack of fluency in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, English translations were obtained for analysis. Two haumāna published more than one essay during the period reviewed, and five haumāna appeared in more than one video analyzed in this study. Nine haumāna published an essay and participated in a panel or public hearing.

4.2. Data analysis

The unit of analysis was resistant discourse, defined as critiques of oppression across interpersonal, institutional, and systemic dimensions. Interpersonal critiques targeted individual beliefs or actions, while institutional critiques challenged majoritarian policies and practices at schools, homes, and the state government. Systemic critiques were explicit statements that named oppression in multiple institutions or throughout history due to settler colonialism, racism, or U.S. occupation. Kanaka ‘Ōiwi history and mo‘olelo were also coded as resistant to colonial narratives of Indigenous Peoples (Cristobal, 2018).

The first cycle of coding yielded 427 instances of resistant discourse and over 500 *in vivo* codes based on students' words and phrasing. These codes were then organized into 11 categories using values and metaphor coding. Values coding was selected to highlight what haumāna think and feel is important and what they "personally think/feel to be true" (Saldaña, 2021, p. 168), while metaphor coding was used to examine how haumāna "communicate experiences, meanings, and understandings through comparison and evocative imagery" (Saldaña, 2021, p. 201).

Next, a word count analysis was conducted to determine the frequencies of each category in the data. Using these frequencies and Reppun's (2017) makawalu depths of ‘ike framing, the 11 categories were organized into three themes, representing one assertion about the content of students' resistant discourse. Then, hypothesis coding was used in accordance with Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit to analyze the three themes and "search for rules, causes, and explanations" of student kū‘ē (Saldaña, 2021, p. 219). This additional round of coding resulted in a second assertion about the organization of students' discourse. The two assertions are described and depicted as a visual representation in the next section.

5. Findings

The haumāna in this study enacted kū‘ē through makawalu discourse. Their collective ‘ike reflected 11 categories – ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, ‘ōlelo no‘eau, mo‘olelo, aloha ‘āina, mo‘okū‘auhau, kuleana, family-school lessons, personal goals, counter narratives, calls to action, and compare/contrast statements – and three themes: ‘ike kūpuna, ‘ike kumu, and ‘ike pono‘ī. Student perspectives from the data are presented in Table 1 and contextualized to explain each theme. A makawalu discourse rock wall model that aligns with ‘ike lawelawe (see Fig. 1) is also discussed to visualize how these themes interconnect.

5.1. ‘Ike kūpuna: ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, ‘ōlelo no‘eau, mo‘olelo, aloha ‘āina

‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, ‘ōlelo no‘eau, mo‘olelo, and aloha ‘āina were highly frequent categories of resistant ‘ike. With 84 instances, ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i was the most frequent

Table 1
Selected examples of themes and categories from data

Themes	Categories	Operationalization	Example from student discourse
ʻIke kūpuna	ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi	Use of Hawaiian language or references to its significance	"ʻO ka wai he mea koʻikoʻi loa no mākou no ka mea inā ʻaʻohe wai, ʻaʻohe ola. A inā ʻaʻohe ola, ʻaʻohe kānaka mai ka ʻāina. ʻO ka wai ka mea hoʻomaka i nā mea āpau mākou nā kānaka e pono ai." [Water is very important for us because without water, there is no life. And if there is no life, there will be no people from the land. Water is the starting point of everything we humans need.] – Lehiwa Balagso (Hawaiʻi Commission on Water Resource Management, 2023, 1:49:47)
	ʻŌlelo noʻeau	Use of Hawaiian sayings or references to their significance	"ʻAʻohe hana nui ke alu ʻia. No task is too big when done together by all, and so we have to work together in unity, no matter if you're a haumāna, if you're a makua [parent] or a kūpuna. We need to work all together to holomua [move forward]." – Maui Iokepa-Guerrero (Kanaeokana, 2020, 1:06:57)
	Moʻolelo	Use of term or sharing of stories	"Me and my younger sister Kealaula, we were both hāpai-ing [sharing] this manaʻo last night in the car on the way home from working with our dad and we were really touching on this manaʻo of you know normalizing ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi, … and we have many speakers, more than probably what is thought and me and my sister were just kind of hāpai manaʻo, and we were saying or I was saying that, moving forward the normalization of ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi is kind of what should be done." – Kahauolilani Keliʻikula (Kanaeokana, 2021, 1:18:10)
	Aloha ʻāina	Use of term or stance taken on the land's significance	"When I tell moʻolelo that uplift ʻāina, I am treating ʻāina like a chief. When I call ʻāina by its right name, I am respecting ʻāina just like I respect people. When I practice hana kūpono [balanced, intentional work], I am treating ʻāina like a chief. We should all have an aloha ʻāina mindset because it can help us create a better understanding of who we are by connecting us to our kūpuna/ancestors." – Kalei Cirillo-Nahinu (Cirillo-Nahinu, 2023, para. 7)
ʻIke kumu	Moʻokūʻauhau	Use of term, sharing of genealogy, or reference to individual or collective genealogical relationships	"My ʻohana [family] has lived in Lahaina for 19 generations, and I am here today representing my kūpuna, who have worked for many years to restore Mokuʻula and Mokuhinia [historic wetlands devastated by sugar plantations] and our vision … to restore Mokuʻula and Mokuhinia, but we need the wai." – Kaliko Teruya (Hawaiʻi Commission on Water Resource Management, 2023, 2:04:03)

Galley Proof 26/09/2024; 16:04 File: efi–1-efi240084.tex; BOKCTP/xjm p. 12

Table 1, continued

Themes	Categories	Operationalization	Example from student discourse
	Kuleana	Use of term or reference to individual or collective responsibility	"I feel that we have a kuleana to our ʻāina and our kūpuna, but we also have one to ourselves: to live, make memories and make the best you can with the life you are given. This is my way of fulfilling both kuleana to myself and to my kūpuna." – Laʻi Bertelmann (Bertelmann, 2021, para. 7)
	Family-school lessons	Reference to family or school influence on personal attitudes, beliefs, and values	"The most important lessons I have learned about kalo come from the farmer and man that I consider a second father – Adam Asquith. After years of talking with him, the most important thing I have learned is that wherever you go, even if it's wet or dry, the kalo will grow as long as you give it enough love." – Sela Kauvaka (Kauvaka, 2021, para. 3)
ʻIke ponoʻī	Personal goals	Articulation of personal vision or goal for future	"When I'm singing mele [songs] or reciting oli it always makes me feel refreshed and powerful and calm. I know where I am physically and mentally when I listen or participate in oli and mele. I understand who I am and who I need to be and how it connects to everything around me." – Vaihiti Eckart (Eckart, 2022, para. 4)
	Counter narratives	Statement challenging the status quo under settler colonialism and anti-Kanaka ʻŌiwi ideologies and rhetoric	"When Hawaiian language immersion schools began nearly 40 years ago, many people believed that their students would not be able to speak English or attend college. As a recent graduate of Dartmouth College, an Ivy League university, I can attest that those assumptions were incorrect. My parents raised me entirely in Hawaiian at home and sent me to a school taught through my native language. According to researchers, students who attend my alma mater, have higher high school graduation and college attendance rates than the state average." – Kalāmanamana Harman (Harman, 2024, para. 1)
	Call to action	Statement invoking action by readers or audience	"E nā hoa heluhelu makua (to the adult readers), I challenge you to hold space for the voices of the younger generations. We have much value to bring to the table if you let us. We are the future mākua [parents] and kūpuna./E nā hoa heluhelu ʻōpio (to the youth readers), I challenge you to be the change that you want to see in the lāhui. Don't be afraid to speak up and voice your opinions especially in a room full of adults. We are the future mākua and kūpuna." – Mia Waiʻaleʻale Sarsona (Sarsona, 2021, para. 9–10)

Table 1, continued

Themes	Categories	Operationalization	Example from student discourse
	Compare/contrast statements	Explanation of similarities and differences between western culture and Kanaka ʻŌiwi culture	“My ancestors here in Hawai‘i enacted a culture that compelled them to live in accordance with the natural world and had no intentions of harming it. Members of this modern society, such as the U.S Navy, enact an ungodly culture that is driving the world to global extinction. Kumulipo [Kanaka ʻŌiwi creation chant] teaches us that man is the youngest member of the natural world, therefore, we must listen to and care for our older siblings while they take very good care of us. Genesis [first book of Christian bible] teaches us that the world was made for man and man was created in God’s image to rule and control it. This is where Indigenous peoples and colonizers differ.” – Kaʻula Krug (Krug, 2022, para. 1)

category in the data. Eleven out of 43 essays were written completely in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, and 30 haumāna spoke primarily in Hawaiian language during panels and public hearings. For these haumāna, ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i was central to their identity as Kanaka ‘Ōiwi and an essential way to kū‘ē. Isaac Keola Swain (2022) described his pride in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i because of its resilience despite colonialism, the loss of Native speakers to foreign disease, and the banning of the language's use in public spaces from 1896 to 1986 (Trask, 1999). Similarly, in support of a bill that would mandate the use of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i on official state signs and documents, Kealaula Keli‘ikula asserted her right "to learn and read and write in Hawaiian," given that it is her first language (Kanaeokana, 2021, 1:21:07). This same line of thinking was evident during a state water commission meeting in Maui, when over 20 students from Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Lahaina (Lahaina Hawaiian Immersion School) testified on behalf of their community in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, demonstrating their right to use their ancestral tongue in public government spaces (Hawai‘i Commission on Water Resource Management, 2023).

‘Ōlelo no‘eau, mo‘olelo, and aloha ‘āina were also featured prominently in the written and oral data. Students incorporated ‘ōlelo no‘eau 61 times in their discourse. As a final piece of advice to ‘ōpio on being leaders in their communities, Maui Iokepa-Guerrero said, "'A‘ohe hana nui ke alu ‘ia. No task is too big when done together by all," relying on an ‘ōlelo no‘eau[11] to express his belief that social change requires collaboration (Kanaeokana, 2020, 1:06:57). As hypothesized under Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit, mo‘olelo was another common element of resistant discourse, with 69 instances in the data. When advocating for Indigenous cultural rights, haumāna referenced stories of sacred places and personal memories. For instance, Kahauolilani Keli‘ikula recalled a family conversation about "moving forward the normalization of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i" during an ‘ōpio panel (Kanaeokana, 2021, 1:18:50). Aloha ‘āina was mentioned 49 times, especially when haumāna challenged colonial claims to land by occupying military forces and threats to Indigenous protection over natural resources by the settler state. As an example, Kalei Cirillo-Nahinu's (2023) essay on aloha ‘āina opposed colonial perspectives of land as a commodity. Instead, she argued that people should view "'āina like a chief" that deserves respect and love (para. 7).

These four categories symbolized ‘ike kūpuna, ancestral knowledge that haumāna invoked to ground their stances in the Lāhui Hawai‘i's beliefs of respecting kūpuna[12] (elders) for their wisdom. Furthermore, haumāna frequently cited the phrase, "I ka wā ma mua, ka wā ma hope" [the time before, the time to come], which is commonly interpreted as "the future is in the past." This demonstrated ‘ike kūpuna's status as a repository to which students looked to explain historic contexts of present issues and to justify their counterarguments to settler logic.

[11] ‘Ōlelo no‘eau is used as a singular noun.

[12] Kūpuna is used to refer to "ancestors" in the past as well as living "elders" in the present.

5.2. ‘Ike kumu: Mo‘okū‘auhau, kuleana, family-school lessons

Haumāna also shared mo‘okū‘auhau, their kuleana,[13] and family-school lessons to kū‘ē. Mo‘okū‘auhau can be found in the data 39 times, with most students referencing genealogical relationships with ‘āina to explain their right to care for Indigenous plants and animals and sacred sites throughout Hawai‘i. For example, during her testimony on water management rights after the 2023 Maui fires, Kaliko Teruya explained that her family lived in Lahaina for 19 generations to make a case for their right to manage their community's wai[14] (Hawai‘i Commission on Water Resource Management, 2023). This notion of continuity in aloha ‘āina was also evident in 34 instances of resistant discourse that reflected students' complex sense of kuleana as lineal descendants of Hawai‘i. In an essay describing her role as a member of the Lāhui Hawai‘i, La‘i Bertelmann (2021) wrote that she believes haumāna "have a kuleana to our ‘āina and our kūpuna, but we also have one to ourselves: to live, make memories and make the best you can with the life you are given" (para. 7).

Lessons on cultural attitudes, beliefs, and values from families and schools were found 32 times in the data. While advocating for more sustainable agricultural practices to mitigate mounting climate change crises in Hawai‘i, Sela Kauvaka (2021) described how working with a mentor she considers "a second father" led her to embrace kalo (taro) as a key to a self-sustaining future (para. 3). She concluded that by being with kalo and family, she learned "to always be kind and humble" (para. 7). CBE schooling experiences similarly impacted Malia Kukahiwa's (2022) view of patience, perseverance, and trust while learning. Although she feared distance learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic would hinder progress to revitalize ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i through Hawaiian immersion schools, Malia recalled her teachers' patience with haumāna. She wrote, "Even when things got hard, they persevered and kept going. People thought that school was the only place where we could revive our language. . . . We knew that language wasn't a place but a people – it didn't matter where we were as long as there were people to speak it" (para. 2). To this end, family-school lessons helped haumāna consider how their values relate to those of other Kanaka ‘Ōiwi.

Mo‘okū‘auhau, kuleana, and family-school lessons comprised the second-most frequent group of categories in this study. Altogether, these three categories reflected ‘ike kumu, the foundational knowledge that students learn from educators in their everyday lives. The discourse in this theme included personal views about the significance of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi ‘ike and connections to family histories and genealogies as sources of that wisdom. As Maui asserted while discussing the recognition of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i in Hawai‘i's schools as a sign of respect by the settler state government,

[13] Kuleana is used in this section as a plural noun, with the exception of La‘i's use of the term, which is interpreted as a singular noun.

[14] Wai is used as a plural noun.

Kanaka ‘Ōiwi kū‘ē for cultural rights and Native Hawaiian interests because “that’s just Hawaiian style. You gon’ make like that cause your grandmaddah [grandmother] did it, your maddah [mother] did it, and now you gon’ do it” (Kanaeokana, 2020, 39:25). Therefore, mo‘okū‘auhau, kuleana, and family-school lessons conveyed what it means to kū‘ē and how to kū‘ē in the present.

5.3. ‘Ike pono‘ī: Personal goals, counter narratives, calls to action, compare/contrast statements

In addition to reflecting on current issues, haumāna looked to the future and discussed personal goals, counter narratives, calls to action, and compare/contrast statements in their public discourse. There were 10 instances in which resistant discourse aligned with personal goals. Unlike western norms of setting individualistic goals, these haumāna’s goals sought to benefit their communities. For example, Vaihiti Eckart (2022) expressed her desire to continue learning oli to preserve it for future haumāna. She recognized that reciting oli helped her understand who she is and how she is connected to everything around her, demonstrating Kanaka ‘Ōiwi students’ capacity to connect their sense of purpose to their kū‘ē (para. 4). When haumāna voiced an urgency to enact their visions, calls to action usually followed. These types of statements, which were mentioned 25 times in the data, sought to persuade community members and elected officials to support their cause. In one instance, Mia Wai‘ale‘ale Sarsona (2021) implored adults “to hold space for the voices of the younger generations,” pointing out their role in the success of student kū‘ē (para. 9).

There were 28 times when haumāna shared counter narratives opposing colonial histories of Hawai‘i and deficit views of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi students as lazy and unintelligent. Kalāmanamana Harman’s essay (2024) on being a graduate of a Hawaiian immersion school and an Ivy League college enacted kū‘ē by disproving negative assumptions about Hawaiian immersion students as incapable of mastering English or pursuing higher education. Kalāmanamana’s counter narrative paralleled ‘Aipono Kamoku’s mana‘o (insight) on his experiences with distance learning as a Hawaiian immersion student. He stated, “this distance learning helps us show how smart we are and our ability to be able to focus on our work . . . to really show what our ability is and how we’re able to learn,” providing a counter narrative to learning loss rhetoric that assumes Kanaka ‘Ōiwi students did not learn during school closures in 2020 (Kanaeokana, 2020, 57:50).

Counter narratives also disrupted anti-Indigenous histories of Hawai‘i that circulate on social media. Madison Velasco’s (2022) essay on the misrepresentation of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi on TikTok opposed the spreading of “false information about Hawai‘i” and the mocking of Indigenous cultures and traditions (para. 3). She presented historical truths about the past, including the illegal overthrow of Queen Lili‘uokalani and the banning of hula in public spaces. In doing so, Madison rejected colonial thinking about Kanaka ‘Ōiwi and urged other haumāna to tell “mo‘olelo in our own way” to “ensure that non-Hawaiians (who know nothing about us) aren’t spreading falsehoods

about our heritage" (para. 9). Here, Madison's kū‘ē revealed the ability for history to empower students to refuse coloniality in the present.

Lastly, haumāna resisted oppressive colonial thinking by comparing and contrasting western and Kanaka ‘Ōiwi cultures. This type of resistant discourse was found 16 times in this study. In an essay on colonialism, Ka‘ula Krug (2022) identified several ways that Kanaka ‘Ōiwi and settlers differ. He argued that Kanaka ‘Ōiwi sought balance in the world, while colonizers like the U.S. Navy enacted "an ungodly culture that is driving the world to global extinction" (para. 1). Similarly, Hema Watson's opposition to a bill that would allow casinos to be built on Hawaiian lands illuminated differences in monetary values for Kanaka ‘Ōiwi and settlers. He stated, Kanaka ‘Ōiwi "strive for mālama ‘āina [caring for the land], we strive for, you know, love and nurturing rather than purely a market value. . . . Capitalism kind of shifts people and turns everything into a value" (Kanaeokana, 2021, 41:10). Later in the conversation, Hema advocated for the mandatory use of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i over English in the state government and supported policies that embrace Indigenous languages in government like those in Aotearoa (New Zealand). These statements make clear these students' preference for Indigenous knowledge systems in contrast to those of western colonizers.

Personal goals, counter narratives, calls to action, and compare/contrast statements symbolized ‘ike pono‘ī personal knowledge that students articulated to contemplate their role in the Lāhui Hawai‘i. While perspectives within this theme varied due to individual experiences, students commonly grounded their mana‘o[15] in ‘ike from their family, schools, and communities. Though least frequent in this data corpus, these categories of resistant discourse were the most explicit in their critique of institutionalized and systemic forms of oppression. Haumāna who voiced calls to action and circulated counter narratives often named colonialism or racism as root causes of interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts, thereby advancing social justice aims in their demand for community-wide change.

5.4. ‘Ike lawelawe: Makawalu discourse

This study's second major assertion is that students used makawalu discourse to organize their arguments and to discuss ‘ike kūpuna, ‘ike kumu, and ‘ike pono‘ī. Leiana Carvalho's essay (2021) on Pololū, a sacred valley in the Kohala district of Hawai‘i Island, opened with a personal introduction in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and an ‘ōlelo no‘eau describing her relationality to Pololū. Then, she shared a mo‘olelo[16] and a mo‘okū‘auhau[17] about Pololū as the "first home to Wākea [Sky Father] and Papa [Earth Mother]," who are credited with creating Hawai‘i, kalo, and Kanaka ‘Ōiwi (para. 4). Leiana reflected on family lessons next, recalling her grandfather's

[15] Mana‘o is used as a plural noun.
[16] Mo‘olelo is used as a singular noun.
[17] Mo‘okū‘auhau is used as a singular noun.

memories of being raised in Kohala and spending days in Pololū. The essay ended with a call to action to respect Pololū and to protect it from deforestation for capital gains (para. 9). Thus, by interconnecting multiple stories and perspectives to argue for aloha ‘āina, Leiana deepened her relationship with Pololū.

After nearly 20,000 gallons of jet fuel from the U.S. Navy's storage facility at Kapukākī leaked into O‘ahu's freshwater aquifer supply in 2021, haumāna engaged in makawalu discourse during a panel discussion with a local councilmember. They interpreted points from peers, acknowledged alternative views, and brought new ‘ike to the conversation. In this excerpt, Maui built on a previous point by a peer who described the navy as a "bad guest" to Hawai‘i, saying,

> I just wanted to share a little bit of mana‘o and this might be a question, it might not, but you know, kind of going off of, why don't we get the navy kicked out and what not and knowing you know, national security, I think it's important to understand that wai is also important to us as well. You know, without wai, we're killing ourselves, and aside from protecting us from foreign nations and foreign countries, we need to look deep within ourselves and understand our kuleana, and I think that's like a huge theme that we need to kind of push because if our navy doesn't see that kuleana, and they don't understand that kuleana, if our state doesn't understand that kuleana, then there really won't be any more pushing to it, and that's what we have to do as kānaka (Kanaeokana, 2022, 58:22).

Here, Maui offered a Kanaka ‘Ōiwi perspective on wai. He called on others to recognize its importance and resisted the militaristic, settler state's view of water as a commodity, while expressing his belief in collective kuleana that Kanaka ‘Ōiwi have to protect wai. Shortly after, Hema took up Maui's stance on wai, explaining,

> I talk to my dad a lot when it comes to this kind of stuff, and one thing he always says is, from a Hawaiian cultural perspective, no matter what, it's all about the mo‘okū‘auhau,[18] and if you think about it, water is the original progenitor of everything. And so whether you come from Nānākuli[19] or Wai‘anae or if you come from Kuli‘ou‘ou, you will always have to have come from water at some point, and I think it's that kind of boundary that we shouldn't cross, that we should always take care of our kūpuna,[20] and they are considered our kūpuna as well (Kanaeokana, 2022, 1:04:26).

Hema shared family lessons and named wai as an ancestor of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi to kū‘ē against colonial views of water as non-living. Moreover, he supported Maui's call to respect wai.

Additionally, haumāna revealed makawalu discourse's ability to empower others to engage in critical conversations. In 2019, Auli‘i Aikau testified at a public hearing

[18] I interpret Hema's use of mo‘okū‘auhau as a singular noun.

[19] These are predominantly Kanaka ‘Ōiwi communities on the island of O‘ahu.

[20] I interpret Hema's use of kūpuna here as "elders." In the next instance, it is taken to mean "ancestors."

opposing a thirty-meter telescope atop Maunakea, saying that listening to other Kanaka ‘Ōiwi kū‘ē gave her the courage to testify. She shared, “All of you have really inspired me to speak, and I just feel like if I didn’t speak tonight, then I would have this huge regret of not doing it, so I encourage even more of you guys to speak” (Kamāmalu‘ula News, 2019, 0:13). By listening to makawalu discourse on Kū Kia‘i Mauna, Auli‘i connected ‘ike and gave mana‘o on the Lāhui Hawai‘i’s capacity to keep fighting settler colonialism. In this way, makawalu discourse represented ‘ike lawelawe, a deep form of knowledge that Kanaka ‘Ōiwi invoke to demonstrate content mastery and teach others. Therefore, makawalu discourse served as a blueprint for haumāna to present their ideas as well as an educational tool to persuade others to kū‘ē.

5.4.1. A makawalu discourse model for enacting kū‘ē

A visualization of this methodical layering of discourse that students engaged to kū‘ē is depicted in Fig. 1. It is illustrated using a Papakū Makawalu rock wall metaphor to compare the three themes from this study’s findings to the purposeful stacking of different types of stones. Several haumāna in this study alluded to this metaphor in their resistant discourse. For example, Hūala‘i Pe‘a (2021) cited the ‘Ōlelo no‘eau “E paepae hou ‘ia ka pōhaku” (Re-set the stones, so that our home’s foundation is solid) while explaining her personal goal to build up her cultural knowledge to be a better representative of her people (para. 3). Similarly, Maui shared the proverb “‘O ke kahua ma mua, ma hope ke kūkulu” (the foundation first, then the building) to remind himself to learn multiple forms of ‘ike and deepen his connections with family to contribute to the Lāhui Hawai‘i’s wellbeing (Kanaeokana, 2020, 56:44).

In this model, the 11 rocks connect to the 11 categories found through qualitative coding. These rocks are organized into three layers that correlate with each theme’s frequency in the data, with the most frequent theme positioned as the wall’s foundation, and the least frequent theme situated at the top. The rocks and the diagram labels are purposefully similar in size to avoid ranking each individual theme or category’s significance, which may occur if using frequency-based visualizations that format less prominent themes in smaller font sizes. Thus, this model is a culture-based visualization that presents a Kanaka ‘Ōiwi discourse pattern and a variety of strategies that haumāna use to kū‘ē.

Accordingly, ‘ike kūpuna mirrored base stones in this study. ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, ‘ōlelo no‘eau, mo‘olelo, and aloha ‘āina formed an intellectual, physical, and spiritual kahua that haumāna referenced to construct a firm stance against oppression. Moving upward, ‘ike kumu symbolized wedge stones. Mo‘okū‘auhau, kuleana, and family-school lessons performed a similar function to these types of stones by bolstering ancestral knowledge and a prioritization of collectives over individuals. Finally, ‘ike pono‘ī paralleled top stones by compressing future visions of an empowered Lāhui Hawai‘i into impactful goals, counter narratives, calls to action, and compare/contrast statements.

Although ‘ike lawelawe is not labeled on this diagram, it connected gaps in knowledge, thereby performing the role of filler stones. Indeed, ‘ike lawelawe is an apt comparison for makawalu discourse, which was used to link diverse ‘ike from the past and present to build for the future. As a result, ‘ike lawelawe took on the kuleana of securing the wall’s structural integrity. Ultimately, this model depicts the interconnections of multiple parts to create a unified whole, representing the process in which individual Kanaka ‘Ōiwi stories come together to form strong, resistant ‘ike (Abad & Gonzalez, 2020).

6. Discussion

A Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit framework nourished by Papakū Makawalu principles revealed that Kanaka ‘Ōiwi haumāna kū‘ē using makawalu discourse to oppose colonial knowledge systems and advocate for Kanaka ‘Ōiwi political agency over ‘āina and wai. In doing so, haumāna leaned especially on ‘ike kūpuna and ‘ike kumu to construct a multilevel metaphorical wall of multigenerational, didactic resistant discourse. ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i was frequently communicated by haumāna, confirming the hypothesis that students would self-determine their identities to kū‘ē. It is fitting for ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i to align with ‘ike kūpuna because it is the Lāhui Hawai‘i’s ancestral tongue and a historic symbol of kū‘ē against cultural genocide during the 90-year ban of Hawaiian language in schools. To this end, one implication of this study is its affirmation of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i as another salient aspect of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi identity and kū‘ē. Future Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit studies should consider amending Cristobal’s (2018) third theme to recognize ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and mo‘olelo’s significance for Hawaiians.

Additionally, since most students had a CBE schooling background, this study confirms the impact that a formal education grounded in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and culture has on identity formation, political kū‘ē, and enactments of aloha ‘āina (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013). The revelation that family-school lessons represent ‘ike kumu confirms the prediction that these institutions shape students’ awareness of critical sociopolitical issues afflicting the Lāhui Hawai‘i and their sense of kuleana to kū‘ē on its behalf. While this study’s secondary data analysis limits its ability to draw conclusions about students’ motivation to write and publish essays in *Ka Wai Ola* or participate in political panels and hearings, the views that haumāna articulated via written and oral discourse confirm they are actively learning and internalizing Hawaiian ‘ike in homes and schools to critique cultural, economic, political, and social policies and practices. Thus, a second implication that this study offers is the significance of family-school partnerships in validating Indigenous knowledge systems and instilling an urgency to kū‘ē among ‘ōpio. Based on the resistant discourse analyzed in this study, it is likely that haumāna include families, schools, the Lāhui Hawai‘i, and ‘āina within their definition of community. However, since few students referenced resistance by other Indigenous Peoples, it is less clear if these haumāna possess a global understanding of community, signaling an opportunity for future critical research.

6.1. Critique and limitations

The author's inability to communicate fluently in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i is an important critique because it limited the layered meanings captured in this study. Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit was applied to analyze discourse that was either originally in English or translated to English. Therefore, it is likely that terms and phrasing in the data may yield different interpretations for ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i speakers. Furthermore, while 91 student perspectives were collected, additional ‘ike could have been discovered by reviewing other Hawaiian newspapers and social media posts, which helped connect Indigenous Peoples around the world during Kū Kia‘i Mauna in 2019 (Kanaeokana, 2020). However, considering this is the first Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit study on student kū‘ē, future research can investigate if the makawalu discourse rock wall model applies in other digital settings. Lastly, although this study did not collect primary source data, the article affirms Kanaka‘ŌiwiCrit's ability to uncover humanizing stories from secondary sources. Moreover, through qualitative data analysis, I uplift anti-colonial possibilities of examining publicly available data, which can be accessed by interested readers and used to hold scholars accountable for the weight of their words in ways that analyses of private speech sometimes cannot accomplish without violating participants' right to confidentiality. As Indigenous students continue to be pushed out of national education discourses for being statistically insignificant in large quantitative studies (Wright & Saelua, 2023), I urge Kanaka ‘Ōiwi scholars to kū‘ē by undertaking anti-colonial research that critically engages with big datasets and invokes cultural ways of knowing and being to ensure our voices are heard and considered.

6.2. Recommendations

This study contains critical mana‘o on CBE schools and ‘ōpio participation in civic activities, which community leaders, educators, and policymakers may find valuable for their work. First, the number of fluent ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i students included in this article's corpus suggests CBE institutions are crucial sites for the transmission of Indigenous knowledge and civic engagement. Although this study did not exclude students based on their schooling background or focus specifically on students' schooling experiences, teachers and schools clearly influenced students' identity formation and their decision to kū‘ē outside the classroom. If community leaders or policymakers are genuinely invested in supporting Kanaka ‘Ōiwi interests, more funding and more respect should be given to recognize these institutions for their role in encouraging political engagement among students.

Second, this study verifies that children and youth participate in civic activities, shape public discourse, and respectfully engage with views that oppose their own. Indeed, 20 students who testified at the October 2023 water commission meeting for the Lahaina community were between the ages of 10 to 13. While discussing a possible bill that would lower Hawai‘i's minimum voting age from 18 to 16, Maui reminded his peers that there are "preschoolers and kindergarteners who have very good thoughts

on political aspects" (Kanaeokana, 2021, 20:53). In effect, by illuminating a reality in which Kanaka ʻŌiwi kūpuna, parents, and children are politically active, these haumāna speak back to colonial literature on public opinion polls and low voter turnout rates claiming Kanaka ʻŌiwi do not care about Hawai‘i's future (De Lude et al., 2023). Therefore, educators should introduce critical consciousness to young children to prepare them to kū‘ē in a society where settler colonialism, racism, and occupation are pervasive. It is possible to deconstruct these complex concepts in childhood settings and reconstruct deeper understandings as students mature (Thomas, 2022). Through makawalu discourse and ʻike kūpuna, an intellectual, physical, and spiritual kahua can be built to last regardless of age.

7. Conclusion

By foregrounding KanakaʻŌiwiCrit, this study rejects western definitions of research and advances Indigenous knowledge on the intersection of culture, schooling, and society. Through a culturally-grounded secondary data analysis of 91 student perspectives, we have a deeper understanding of the cultural wisdom and conversation style that Kanaka ʻŌiwi ʻōpio use to kū‘ē in public discourse. As we continue to witness and learn of cultural genocide in Palestine, the Congo, Sudan, and New Caledonia, it is crucial that scholar activists, politicians, and community leaders consider ʻōpio voices and the potentialities of makawalu discourse as a liberatory tool to articulate Indigenous solutions to the global war against oppression. In an age of rampant misinformation and divisive political tactics, this paper highlights the importance of building a kahua in ʻike kūpuna and ʻike kumu to strengthen ʻike pono‘ī and ʻike lawelawe. Moving forward, critical educators and parents/caregivers must recognize their kuleana to nourish these types of resistant knowledges among ʻōpio so they learn to kū‘ē for all Indigenous Peoples.

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Asterisks indicate the reference was a secondary source analyzed in this study.

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Appendix

Full List of Secondary Materials

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