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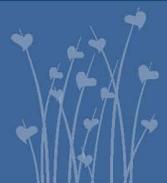
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Filipino Amerasians: Gauging Stigmatization, Intolerance and Hate Mongering in a Pluralistic

Asia Pacific Society

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Abstract

Empirical and evidence-based researchers have neglected stigmatization, bias, name-calling, intolerance and even hate mongering experienced by Filipino Amerasians and other biracial Pan Amerasian progeny abandoned abroad by U.S. serviceman fathers. This condition persists in the Philippines and has been reliably documented in other East and Southeast Asian nation-states (i.e., Japan, Okinawa, South Korea, Vietnam, etc.). A relatively recent multiple-case study investigating psychosocial risk and mental health among Filipino Amerasians in Angeles, Pampanga, site of the former Clark air base, substantiated long reported anecdotal claims that Anglo (White) and particularly African (Black) Amerasians were targets of victimization and traumatized by verbal harassment, hate, and occasional violence by mainstream Filipino natives. These marginalized Amerasians faced stigmatization and ridicule because of skin color and pigment differences, uncommon facial features, hair texture variances and differential personal demeanors. Even severer criticism was brought against Africans and Anglos because of the unproven, stereotypical view that the vast majority of Amerasian mothers were sex laborers with their children rejected by servicemen fathers for that reason. The notion that in a pluralistic and multi-racial society Filipino Amerasians experienced less discrimination and prejudice set the stage for U.S. Immigration to diminish easements for Amerasians. In contrast to other nation-states where Amerasians (e.g., South Korea, Vietnam and Cambodia) reside, the belief is that stigmatization and its correlates are higher. However, these faulty conclusions take on exceptional geo-political sensitivity in the reality marginalized Amerasians face in the Philippines, the former U.S. colony and commonwealth.

Keywords: Filipino Amerasians, Asian Americans, Stigmatization, Name-calling, Hate Mongering

Introduction

Estimates vary widely and inconclusively as to the precise number of mixed-heritage, biracial Filipino Amerasians living in the Republic of the Philippines today. What is not contested, however, is that for a long time anecdotal accounts, news media reports and a sparse volume of empirical researchers have contended that military Filipino Amerasians and Pan Amerasians, also distributed in other scattered parts of the Western Pacific Basin, have been heavily stigmatized largely due to their mixed-race characteristics and controversy of birth origin.

The notion of military abandonment of stigmatized and often illegitimate offspring dated to the Philippine American War (1899-1902) and the early U.S. colonial years of the war's immediate aftermath (Coffman, 2004; Wolff, 2006). The height of contemporary public concern over the comparatively obscure Filipino Amerasian human tragedy seemed to reach its apogee not long after numerous entrenched bases were withdrawn in 1992 when the Philippine Senate voted not to renew extension of the R.P.-U.S. Military Bases Agreement of 1947.

Included in the mix were the massive Subic Bay naval base, Olongapo; the equally sprawling Clark air base, Angeles, the Crow Valley Bombing and Gunnery Range, Tarlac, as well as dozens of smaller naval, marine and air force installations and camps. Many bases were part of the notorious AMO (Angeles, Manila and Olongapo) Amerasian Triangle, a wide swath of low lying and semi-mountainous landscape in west central Luzon, believed to contain the highest number of mixed-race Amerasians anywhere in East and Southeast Asia (Kutschera, Pelayo & Talamera-Sandico, 2012). But attention to the AMO Triangle and human travail

confronting marginalized Filipino Amerasians rapidly lost its luster. This occurred once the U.S. Court of Claims in Washington D.C. dismissed a \$69 million class action suit brought against the U.S. government and the Department of Navy on behalf of stranded, abandoned and orphaned Amerasian children surrounding Subic Bay port, Cubi Point naval air station and San Miguel naval communications station near Olongapo. The action sought child support, day care, job training and other compensations (Maclear, 1995; Montes, 1995) for many thousands of impoverished Filipina national mothers, caretakers and foster parents left with fatherless Amerasian children. However, not all Amerasians were included in that failed settlement attempt and are the focus of this study.

Demographics of Amerasians in the Philippines

The most widely reported and commonly publicized number of military Amerasians was approximately 50,000 infants, children and adolescents abandoned, stranded, unsupported or orphaned (Gastardo-Conaco & Sobritchea, 1999; Levi, 1993; Montes, 1995). That estimate was made at the time of U.S. bases withdrawal in 1992. However, Kutschera and Caputi (2012) estimated that when considering all age groups, including adults, the elderly and second generation Amerasians, 200,000-250,000 military Amerasians, and conceivably many more, reside in the archipelago today. Significantly, neither U.S. nor Philippine governments ever took an authentic or comprehensive census of mixed-race African (Black), Anglo (White) or Hispanic (Latino) Filipino Amerasians. Moreover, in analyzing findings from the Kutschera and Caputi (2012) research, Bondac (2012) points out that Amerasians in the Philippines actually continue to grow at an exponential rate. This is so, in part, given the approval of the 1999 R.P. – U.S. Status of Forces Agreement which permits U.S. military personnel, including high numbers of private corporate defense contractors, to once again operate and train with the Philippine military

and conduct either publicized or classified combat operations against militant Muslim extremists and terrorists in Mindanao as part of the Global War on Terrorism.

The vast majority of military origin Amerasians, the forsaken progeny of U.S. uniformed service members, government employees and corporate military contractor fathers and Filipina national women are highly marginalized socioeconomically and heavily stigmatized. Kutschera (2013) and Kutschera and Talamera-Sandico (2012) maintained that Filipinos ostracized many mothers and their Amerasian children because of their reputed involvement as military prostitutes and sex laborers. The researchers posited, however, no scientific study of this widely held stereotype is available to determine its veracity.

Currently, the U.S. troops and bases deployed and garrisoned in Pan Amerasian enclave nations include: Japan, Okinawa and South Korea as well as the heavily fortified U.S. Territory of Guam in the Marianas island group. Schade (1980) reported widespread dispersal of mixed-race military Amerasians in numerous other locales dating to or even before World War II, and extending to the Vietnam American War (1964-1975). Such enclaves included: Cambodia, mainland China, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), Taiwan (Formosa), Thailand and Vietnam and possibly other scattered Pacific Island groups of Micronesia. Also new pockets of modern day military Amerasians in Afghanistan and neighboring Muslim countries including Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan present in Central Asia, where U.S. marine, army and air forces and more recently NATO troops and units been active since the onset of the Global War on Terror in 2001.

Literature Review

There are long standing news media, personal anecdotal accounts and a small body of empirical literature confirming significant, consistent levels of stigmatization, discrimination, name-calling, intolerance, harassment and isolated incitement to physical violence (hate

mongering) against biracial Filipino Amerasians, particularly darker-skinned Africans (Blacks). Such aggression and assaults usually emanated from mainstream or low lander Filipino natives; in isolated instances foreigners were reported or observed as protagonists.

Various inquiries undertaken in the past two decades, including either studies with various size samples or literature studies and reviews (i.e., Ahern, 1992; Cantani, 1997; Gastardo-Connaco & Sobritchea, 1999; Levi, 1993; Montes, 1995; Sturdevant & Stoltzfus, 1992) essentially report conditions of low socioeconomic (SES) and marginalized standards of living for most Amerasians. Kutschera (2010, 2011) found significant presence of stigmatization, discrimination, name-calling, verbal harassment, and incitement to physical violence (hate mongering) among Amerasians. The multiple-case study linked these conditions to a high number of stigma tainted psychosocial risk and stress factors and suggested they were strongly related to high levels of anxiety, depression, stress and psychosomatic illness found among the sample.

Similar instances of stigmatization, discrimination, verbal harassment and hate mongering have been reliably, but sporadically reported in other East and Southeast Asian nation-states that spawned mixed-race Amerasians. These consequences occurred following U.S. troop and base deployments dating to World War II. Characterized as part of a broader *Pan Amerasian* social construct (Kutschera, 2010, 2011), these enclaves or pockets of Amerasians were or are possibly large and dispersed enough to stand as a separate or inclusive Diaspora apart from the significant Filipino Amerasian diasporic conglomeration (Kutschera, 2013).

Filipino Amerasians were specifically excluded from immigration easements generously provided a number of other Pan Amerasian groupings from the 1982 Amerasian Immigration Act passed by the U.S. Congress and signed by President Ronald Reagan (Levi, 1993; Montes,

1995). In part, the reason was because of the empirically untested belief that Filipinos sustained less of a degree of stigmatization and discrimination than other military Pan Amerasians and that the Philippines were not considered a modern, post World War II combat fire zone (Ahern, 1992; de Leon, 2012a, 2012b). The Cambodians, Laotians, South Korean, Thai and Vietnamese Amerasians included in the 1982 legislation were believed to have somehow sustained greater and more intense measures of stigmatization. Vietnamese Amerasians faced this criticism and rejection due to their origin at birth, physical features and phenotypical mannerisms, but were particularly regarded as socially contemptuous because they were held to be the children of enemy U.S. combat and invasion forces (Bass, 1996; McKelvey, 1999).

The two most significant empirical studies published on contemporary military Filipino Amerasians are believed to be Gastardo-Conaco and Sobritchea (1999) and Kutschera (2010, 2011), who confirmed marked levels of stigmatization and discrimination, essentially driven by two factors: (a) the widespread belief but empirically untested hypothesis that the bulk of Amerasians were offspring of Filipina prostitutes or sex laborers and (b) differential physical attributes, including darker skin color, non-conforming facial features, different hair texture and styles and different or odd phenotypical and personal mannerisms. These latter issues particularly affected stigmatization of African Amerasians and made them twice the victim of discrimination (Gastardo-Conaco & Sobritchea, 1999).

Contemporary Amerasian Stigmatization and Mental Health Studies

Falk (2001) posited that the propensity for development of stigmatization (and hence intolerance and hate mongering) was pronounced among groups, such as biracial and mixed-heritage individuals, prostitutes or sex laborers, the homeless and immigrants and refugees or populations viewed as being alien or from the outside. Notably, these conditions or variations

were all reported as stigma-related psychosocial risk or potential mental stress factors possessed by many military Filipino Amerasians in the Kutschera (2010, 2011) field dissertation study titled *Stigmatization, Psychosocial Risk and Core Mental Health Symptomatology among Amerasians in the Philippines: A Multiple-Case Study*. Conducted over a three year period (2007-2010), all participants were from the AMO Amerasian Triangle, specifically Angeles, Pampanga, site of Clark air base.

Methodology and Sample

With a multiple-case study design, the focus was the impact of stigmatization, discrimination and verbal harassment-related psychosocial risk and stress factors and their impact on a sample (N=16) of mixed-parentage Anglo (White) and African (Black) Amerasians. The sample divided into two distinct age groups: adolescents (16-to-19 years) and young adults (20-39).

The sample was nonclinical (i.e., not in mental health treatment). The purposive sampling method ensured participants had a reasonable likelihood of either encountering stigma due to mixed-heritage origin of birth and physical features, or to assure qualities believed typical of the study phenomena (Fortune & Reed, 1999; Rubin & Babbie, 2005).

Instruments and Research Site

Data-gathering instruments included a semi-structured, researcher designed interview guide and the Australian developed Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21) (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). The research site was the Angeles-based Amerasian outreach programs of the Philippine Children's Fund of America (PCFA) with cooperation from the Pearl S. Buck International, long active in Amerasian field outreach.

Results and Findings

Risk Factors

A total of 82 physical risk factors (i.e., homelessness and housing insecurity) and 76 mental stress factors (i.e., living in socially dysfunctional, derivative households headed by mothers engaged in sex laborer occupations [Kutschera & Talamera-Sandico, 2012]) were identified. Stigma-related risk and stress factors included: exposure to biracial tension, name-calling, verbal and physical harassment (intolerance), incitement to physical violence (hate mongering) and resultant or related behaviors including abandonment despair, identity confusion, family disorganization, diminished self-esteem and social isolation.

Strikingly, the administration of the DASS-21 measurement scales revealed over half the sample (62.5%) scored severe levels of anxiety and depression, or to a lesser extent stress. More than half the sample also voiced or demonstrated psychosomatic complaints or illness suggesting a robust presence of somatic disorder.

Case Study Profiles

Aretha, African Adult Female – Case 1 A politically astute and articulate single African woman in her early 30s, Aretha claimed to be homeless, unemployed or under employed many times in her life. The misfortune originated because of an ongoing feud with her Filipina national stepmother, whom she claimed stepped into her life and prevented her from claiming her father's military pension, which she regarded as her birthright inheritance.

Two years after her interview for the study Aretha was videotaped in the Italian documentary film depicting stranded first and secondary generation African Amerasian progeny in Subic Bay-Olongapo titled *Left Behind by the Ship* (2010). She was working with an Amerasian activist group counseling young Amerasians on how to fill out voluminous forms required by the U.S. Embassy in Manila to commence immigration proceedings as an

Amerasian offspring. Obviously scarred because of an unrelenting barrage of racist and demeaning name-calling and harassment she experienced throughout the years, Aretha regarded herself as “a survivor who one day will get off these islands of hell.”

“I’ve been called the worse, most vile names you can ever put against a person: slave, nigger, black hole, fat lips, *mustafa* (ugly dark colored person). No one gets used to this and you know what? You have no place to go on this island to try and stop it!” Sometimes she was blindly held out for ridicule for being the daughter of a prostitute though she believes her natural mother, or step mother, ever engaged in sex labor. “Every Amerasian’s mother worked on Fields Avenue (one of the legendary red light district streets in Angeles City) – that’s the myth.”

Aretha tells a harrowing story of heavy stigmatization and discrimination throughout her life, including job rejection, failure to advance at work, lost university scholarship opportunities, virulent race baiting and angry name-calling. “Feelings of inferiority,” “angry as hell” and “putting up with insulting behavior” are all phrases used during a lengthy and at times rambling interview. Names hurled at her in every stage of her life: school, social situations, and the workplace included “G.I. baby,” “African bastard,” “African hole,” “nigger,” “nigra,” “slave,” “alien,” “bum,” and “kulot” (or kinky hair).

Aretha obsessed over the stigmatization and intolerance she believed surrounded her well into adulthood, indicative of a life as a tortured journey. Mired in family dysfunction including confrontations, verbal and physical abuse from her stepmother, her teenage and early adult years included periods of wandering and homelessness. She had a series of unsatisfying, low paying jobs and promotional setbacks for an otherwise articulate young woman – skillfully fluent in English and Pilipino (Tagalog) – although with an incomplete college education. Single with no

children and often coupled with lesbian, live-in partners, Aretha toiled at a variety of jobs including messenger, office assistant, custodian and data entry clerk and recorder.

Aretha self-reported 13 psychosocial risk and stress factors; in a cross-case analysis the results were significantly above the sample mean (9.93). In addition to the aforementioned conditions, including high impact stigmatization from name-calling and verbal harassment at school and on the street, her Axis IV environmental risks included: low medical and mental health access, intense social isolation, low self-esteem, psychosomatic complaints or illness, periods of unemployment, underemployment and housing insecurity. Despite it all, Aretha managed a high enough GAF or Global Assessment of Functioning enabling her to stay at work even if it is intermittent or sporadic. “I won’t let them get to me,” she insisted. “I am not a bum!”

Marvin, Anglo Adult Male – Case 2 An unemployed, socially isolated, single Anglo Amerasian in his early 20s, and an admitted alcohol and drug abuser, Marvin lived with his natural Filipina mother in an impoverished settlement (squatter) near San Fernando, Pampanga. His diminutive family circle survived primarily on subsistence income from a small sari-sari (household-based convenience store) hut. Income from the store earned between PHP5000 to 9000, or US\$115 to 200 monthly- an above average income for such typical operations and enabled Marvin to support his Red Horse beer and *shabu* (crystal methamphetamine) drug habits. Marvin admitted he often passed time in idleness fantasizing meeting his long departed father, a U.S. marine stationed at Subic Bay. Marvin’s Idaho born enlisted father met his mother when she worked as a “bar fine” dancer at a club outside the base catering to U.S. Seventh Fleet navy men and marines on shore leave.

His mother’s early avocation and the fact that his father eventually left and never supported the family troubled Marvin profoundly. “Whites were supposed to have it better than Blacks at

school but that wasn't so when they suspected Mom was a whore," he starkly admitted. Marvin experienced some of the harshest physical and verbal assaults of any Amerasian kid at school. Unrelenting victimization occurred through physical attacks, shoving incidents, name-calling, and incessant teasing from classmates, hostile neighbors, even street people and strangers. He was called "tisooy" meaning "handsome" in a positive sense, but also translating into the demeaning "White boy" in dark tones of voice, "singaw," or alien, and "Amerkanong hilaw," or half-breed, whether the venue was school, neighborhood fiestas, street side, at work, or even from normal interface with Filipino pals. Marvin learned to eventually steel himself from the hurt by socially isolating. "They've (Africans) have definitely had it much worse than the Whites...treated badly, like 'basura' (garbage), or 'azkals,' or street dogs...but we're not much far behind."

Self-reporting a total of 13 risk and mental stress factors included such issues as history of homelessness, low access to health care services, low social desirability, excessive school absences and tardiness, numerous psychosomatic ailments including persistent migraine headaches, sharp back and leg pains. Marvin also experienced periodic onsets of diarrhea or irritable bowel syndrome symptoms and presented feelings of just not feeling well physically or mentally.

Almost always Marvin thought he wasn't worth much as a person and had feelings of low self-esteem; frequently he found it hard to relax. Sometimes he felt so anxious he became conscious of his heart beating erratically despite lack of physical exertion. Clearly, when compared with other sample participants and particularly Anglo counterparts, Marvin exhibited behavior reactions and physical and mental symptoms reflecting severe effects of various levels

of stigmatization encountered during early childhood. “I’m alive so I consider myself a survivor.”

Felix, African Adolescent Male – Case 3 “I got high. I guess it help me dull the pain [*sic*]. I guess you could call me throwaway kid,” Felix smiled through a mouth of missing teeth and oddly wrinkled, bruised, pock marked facial skin. But the hurt was palpable when he described how classmates called him “Aeta” or the “Igorot” (dark skinned mountain people of Luzon) or “ampon,” meaning abandoned or sometimes adopted person. Sometimes the stigma and intolerance would manifest itself in something comparatively simple and subtle, such as not being selected or chosen last to play after school for a pickup basketball or soccer game.

Bold confrontations between African Amerasians and Filipino national kids would deteriorate into physical violence and what one might call hatemongering in the sense of inciting or urging others to violence. The majority of kids Filipino or Amerasian would often just stand around like spectators. Felix recalled forlornly that in high school a day would rarely go by without a bloody fistfight. Alternatively, pre-scheduled fights occurred in the play yard after school. “It was mostly always over the racial thing, the skin and hair difference, or some remark like ‘you are the bastard son of a prostitute – that’s why your Daddy isn’t home for his G.I. baby, right...right Negro?’”

Felix never met his father, and his mother whom he thought to be a former bar hostess, dancer and part time prostitute, never steadily supported him during the brief, infrequent times they lived together. A local couple informally adopted him and his sister a few years back. Felix spent most of his days hanging around the street, carousing with friends, or chatting with neighbors in front of the family’s tiny food stall attached to the side of the house. Sometimes the socially isolated and low self-esteem addled teenager would venture from home selling

cigarettes, chewing gum and playing cards showing pornographic images along one of the city's traffic congested boulevards. Unsure of his father's identity and conflicted over his own, Felix would act out at night during neighborhood fiesta nights, binge drinking by swilling from cheap 35 peso (US\$.55 cents) pints of rum interspersed with Manila beer chasers.

DASS-21 scores revealed Felix struggled with borderline severe anxiety and moderate, but significantly elevated depression, along with significant signs of psychosomatic illness. He complained of anxiety, worries, and insecure feelings over gloomy job prospects and past family hurts. Cross-case analysis revealed he had a total of 12 psychosocial risk and stress factors among the highest of any adolescent sample participant. Especially painful were stigma and harassment from his days as a skinny, dark skinned military Amerasian arriving at grade school and finding he was unwelcome. A sense of physical and mental anguish seems to erupt from many places he complained. "They (his classmates) just never let you forget that you were different from them in any number of ways."

Mariah, African Adolescent Female – Case 4 A frail, thin framed asthmatic teenage souvenir vendor, Mariah is one-half Aeta. She is truly an anomaly among the sample. As a participant who could be potentially doubly stigmatized, her Clark air base sergeant father was African American; her mother, a dark, full blooded Aeta, daughter of the indigenous mountain people native of the Zambales mountains near Mount Pinatubo. Her father met her mother at Clark when she worked at the base laundry. So their relationship and Mariah's origin was the natural offshoot of many "boy-girl" or "man-women" liaisons springing up between military personnel and Filipina national women. Yet Mariah remembers that many times she was harassed as much by Filipinos for her very dark skin, as she was for possibly being the daughter of a sex laborer. "It was blind sometimes, the kind of criticism we would take, it was mindless."

Mariah's DASS-21 scores indicated she had severe anxiety cutoff levels and also recorded moderate but clearly elevated levels of depression and stress. She self-reported 10 psychosocial personal risk and mental stress factors. Cross-case analysis showed this number to be one above the mean for the sample. Negative personal or physical risk factors ranged from high poverty, housing insecurity, and low access to medical and mental health services to low social desirability and excessive school tardiness and absences.

Like many respondents reporting high stigmatization presence in their personal lives Mariah also exhibited many symptoms of psychosomatic illness with a provisional diagnosis of somatic disorder and possibly comorbid acute anxiety disorder. Her somatic complaints consisted of persistent, severe headaches, unexplained sudden onset of indigestion, diarrhea, intermittent insomnia and unexplained fatigue. Such conditions were likely to worsen, given she was reluctant to seek professional help because of low family income and limited access to community health services and a tradition among many Aetas of not going to outside sources for resolution of personal issues.

Michelle, Anglo Adult Female – Case 5 Michelle was a light skinned Amerasian solo parent mother caring for two, pre-teen children. Employed at one of the expanding number of corporate telephone call centers, she provided customer service for U.S. corporate account sited at the Clark Freeport Zone. Despite being the best educated of the sample with a bachelor's degree in behavioral health, she was unable to find immediate employment as a psychology counselor, an original professional goal. At the time of her interview Michelle believed that her being mixed-race Amerasian may have held her back professionally. But when interviewed a few years, after employment as an addictions counselor with the Philippine Department of Social

Welfare and Development, she said being a mixed-heritage Anglo Amerasian with pronounced Caucasian features and light skin color may have actually helped her.

Upon deeper reflection she maintained that similar good fortune had been experienced by several of her Anglo Amerasian female friends and acquaintances related in some measure to their more U.S. American than native Filipina physical appearances and phenotypical mannerisms. She maintained that this so-called *mestiza*, or mixed look favoring the Caucasian side was very popular and an appearance and style sought by many mainstream, but darker skinned contemporary Filipinas.

Michelle struggled as the daughter from an impoverished household, nominally headed by a sex laborer. When she reached puberty, she became pregnant and had two children of her own by a Filipino boyfriend out of wedlock. Despite these personal setbacks she managed to educate herself by winning several full college tuition scholarships. While growing up, Michelle witnessed race prejudice directed at both Anglos and Africans. But it was always more intense for Africans. “I had a great deal of empathy for them. There is no question they’ve had it the worse.”

The great irony, said Michelle, is that to the best of her knowledge Latino or Hispanic Amerasians have remained essentially unaffected by the stigmatization and intolerance phenomenon. “Unless their mothers are suspected of having been in the sex industry, they probably experienced the least bias from Filipinos. This situation occurred because, by appearance, Latino Amerasians actually look very Filipino. Many even had a popular *mestizo* appearance, but were not necessarily viewed as Amerasian outsiders.”

Michelle claimed she personally witnessed extreme prejudice, name-calling, harassment, even violence and beatings of Africans in high school and in the tent city “resettlement area” in

Angeles where her mother and family lived following the disastrous 1991 Mount Pinatubo volcanic eruption. “In a sense, sometimes it took on an almost illogical and automatically destructive (*sic*) form. Black Amerasians were viewed as outsiders period. Therefore, they were deserving of what anyone could throw at them!” Then, later on at the call center job she noticed, perhaps in a more subtle application, that “even though African Amerasians were hired and actually sought out because they were capable of speaking clearly and understandably to other African American customers back in the states, they were actually treated poorly. They often had to work night or odd hour shifts and very rarely ever promoted once hired.”

On a social note, Michelle recalled, “It’s was not unusual at all to go to a party, a fiesta and hear someone call out hey, hey ‘tisoy’ (White) to me, or hey, hey ‘nigger’ to my African friend. Then they’d stare us down making us feel unwanted and inferior.” And it can get very personal. “My own friends at college automatically assumed my African Amerasian pal was a ‘bar girl’ because of her dark skin. In their view all African women are automatically connected to the *kasarian industriya* (sex industry).”

Michelle’s DASS-21 score readings were among the most normal within the sample. She self-reported a handful of psychosocial risk and stress factors, including low income, periodic homelessness, a history of underemployment, witness to intense name-calling, discrimination and bi-racial stress and originating from a family with derivative family construct features.

Discussion and Analysis

The five representative cases included a cross section of the sample of 16 adolescent and adult participants. Many of their testimonials and conditions were also typical across the spectrum of the remaining sample and are discussed below.

Emergent Themes

Among the predominant psychological themes and conceptual patterns emanating from the research interview schedule - many laden with stigma related overtones – were expressions of intense abandonment as a result of the fathers absence. In several instances abandonment occurred by both natural parents. Other prominently expressed themes and patterns included stigmatized, intense and dramatic exposure to racial prejudice, bias and discrimination by mainstream Filipinos, personal identity conflict, confusion, tension and loss.

The themes and patterns emerging from analysis of these case studies, when focus is placed specifically upon attestations of stigmatization, intolerance and hate mongering essentially support the observations and conclusions drawn in both the Gastardo-Conaco and Sobritchea (1999) and Kutschera (2010, 2011) research studies, as well as other scattered informal research on the topic (e.g., news media long standing anecdotal claims). Hatred and prejudice, at the minimum the least unacceptable and inappropriate of conduct, and at the worse despicable and repulsive behavior by any societal standards, manifested itself in a most venal way against mixed-race Amerasians. Such were truly surprising expressions as the research unfolded given that the Phillipines is known in the Asia Pacific region for its essentially pluralistic culture and highly diverse society. It was the product of successive migrations of numerous peoples including Malays, Negritos, Polynesians and the Chinese, two lengthy periods of Western civilization colonization (Spanish Imperial Empire, 1521-1898 and the U.S., 1898-1946), and a conglomeration of different languages and dozens of local dialects (Aluit, 1990; Luna, 1990; The Philippines, 2013).

The two research studies cited above maintained that the primary direction of anti-social behavior and prejudice against Amerasians covered an expanse of expressions, but appeared to obsess blatantly on two primary forms: (a) the almost mindless, illogical belief that most if not

all Filipina national mothers of Amerasian progeny were sex laborers; therefore, they and their children were totally deserving of universal and unrelenting condemnation and blame from society-at-large. Falk (2001) summarized such phenomena as “sex, rejection and contempt” (p. 265), and (b) physical and phenotypical differences inherent in Amerasians and predominantly African Amerasians. These focused on such details of the anatomy as color and skin pigment, hair texture, the shape and slope of head, facial features such as the eyes, lips, nose and ears, and the general physique, plus more subjective factors, such as personal mannerisms and the way a person interacts with the environment around themselves.

Additionally, a less objective, more subjective component to this hate formula - relating to individual disposition or the way a person carries or portrays themselves to others - was a form of mannerism (i.e., how they physically and emotionally composed themselves and interacted with the environment surrounding them— sometimes described as a phenotypical component). Falk (2001) maintained that stigmata such as this has a way of highlighting the differences or enhancing the concept of *the other* or “an outsider,” much in the way that “an immigrant (of which the Amerasian has many characteristics in common) is also, by definition, an outsider and hence the target of stigma” (p. 219).

Falk (2001) further noted, “The degree to which the stigma of foreigner or alien to an immigrant varies considerably because of the experiences and cultures from whence the immigrant came varies so much” (p. 219). Thusly, as Michelle graphically described her memories and emotional state after witnessing what appeared to be a pattern of banal abuse directed at African Amerasians, she analyzed the events in this way. “In a sense, sometimes it took on an almost mindless and automatic destructive (*sic*) form. Black Amerasians were viewed as outsiders, period. Therefore, they were deserving of what anyone could throw at them!” Most

tellingly, Mariah used the same precise terminology in discussing her own experiences of Filipino violent reactions to the widely held notion that all Amerasians were bastardized, contemptuous children of Filipina sex laborers. “It was blind sometimes, the kind of criticism we would take *It was mindless* (Italics authors).”

The evidence clearly reflected that the severe level of stigmatization and intolerance directed against military Filipino Amerasians had contributed in a negative way to many of their psychosocial personal risk and stress factors. In the Kutschera (2010, 2011) research, these factors were a contributing and possible causal factor in their high levels of core mental health symptomatology and propensity to develop psychopathology or mental disorder.

In retrieving literature for his study, Kutschera cited Finch, Hummer, Kolody and Vega (2001), who identified the seminal studies of Hughes and Demo (1989) and Pearlin (1989) in categorizing stigmatization and discrimination as stressful life events. Oftentimes, these events resulted in or appeared to contribute to anxiety, depression or general malaise. In the large sample of Hughes and Demo study (1989), this 13-year longitudinal study of low socioeconomic status (SES) and poverty stressed African Americans found that, “Racial inequity and discrimination have serious negative effects on personal self-efficacy” (p. 403).

Klonoff, Landrine and Ullman (1999) cited Jackson et al. (1996) in their longitudinal study as significant not only in their own research on the subject of stigmatization and discrimination, but also on its impact on psychiatry. By assembling a probability sample of 2,107 African Americans, their interview responses resulted in the finding of a “relationship between racial discrimination and psychological distress or symptoms (as cited in Klonoff, Landrine & Ullman, 1999, p. 330).

Demonstrably, in case study after case study, and not only among the five sample participants from Kutschera (2010, 2011) chosen above for representative discussion, the highest and most widespread core mental health symptomatology recorded was anxiety. For example, study participants Aretha, Marvin, and Felix all scored in anxiety ranges on the DASS-21, ranging from borderline severe to extremely severe anxiety. All offered personal accounts of intense experiences and incidents with stigmatic and racial hatred on the part of Filipino antagonists. Each was provisionally diagnosed with an anxiety-related disorder (i.e., generalized anxiety, acute anxiety to PTSD or post-traumatic stress disorder).

Moreover Aretha, Felix and Marvin, like Mariah and five other participants in the study, reported many symptoms resembling psychosomatic illness or possible somatic disorder. This pattern was commonplace and requires an explanation of this complex, physical and mentally intertwined disorder.

Johnson (2004) conceptualized that psychosomatic illness was anxiety and stress-related and had valuable diagnostic implications for underlying mental depression and mood disorders, bipolar, anxiety related disorder and stress related illness, all presenting in one form or another in the 2007-2010 Angeles study. Fischbein (2011) noted that psychosomatics were routinely described as illnesses in which somatic or physical symptoms presented. However, due to mental trauma they go unrecognized by the patient and thus susceptible to misdiagnosis by medical doctors, physician's assistants, medical or clinical social workers or psychiatric nurses who may be among the first to receive and examine them in a health care setting. Kutschera and Sandico (in press) concluded that the high presence of somatic complaints and illness found in the Angeles sample were primarily anxiety-related, suggesting a profound linkage to the high levels

of stigmatized influenced psychosocial personal risk and mental stress factors identified by the nine participants reporting signs of this malady.

Social Implications of the Military Filipino Amerasian Marginalization

Abandonment or neglect is something Filipino Amerasians have known intimately from birth. Starting not only with wayward or stray military fathers, but also institutionalized and amplified by the U.S. government as well, by the inherent attitudes and policies ranging from either outright rejection to minimalist response:

1. U.S. Department of Defense (DOD)

In a 1970 statement commenting on the unknown number of G.I. babies born by Vietnamese national women impregnated by U.S. military personnel the DOD made a well-publicized statement on the condition which essentially stands to this day as the DOD's traditional *laissez faire* agency policy affecting all military Filipino and Pan Amerasians. "The care and welfare of these unfortunate children...has never been and is not now considered an area of government responsibility" (Lamb, 2009, p. 1).

2. The Amerasian Immigration Act of 1982 and current U.S. Embassy-Manila and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services restrictions in force and affecting Filipino Amerasian immigration.

While allowing liberalized immigration easements for Cambodian, Laotian, Korean, Thai and Vietnamese Amerasians, the 1982 law specifically excluded Filipino, Japanese (Okinawan) and Taiwanese Amerasians, who were proposed in the original draft (Ahern, 1992). One of the reasons provided at the time for Filipino exclusion was the belief that stigmatization and intolerance were greater for other Amerasians, especially the Vietnamese, seen as children of the enemy (McKelvey, 1999).

In the Philippines today a great deal of residual resentment remains among marginalized Filipino Amerasians who feel they have been forgotten or ignored by their former U.S. colonizers for being excluded from this legislation (Ahern, 1992; de Leon, 2012a, 2012b). Currently, highly restrictive immigration rules in place and administered by the U.S. Embassy-Manila and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services make it extremely difficult for impoverished first and second generation Filipinos Amerasians to claim permanent residency or citizenship due in great measure to onerous paperwork, documentation hurdles and at times seemingly arbitrary or shifting policies and procedures (Kutschera & Caputi, 2012). Growing reports reveal that second generation Africans face similarly negative and debilitating experiences over issues, such as physical differences and questions and controversy over their origins at birth, as did their first generation Amerasian parents (de Leon, 2012b).

3. Stigmatization Involving other Pan Amerasians

When responding to the needs of Amerasians, the U.S. government has tended to measurably favor non-Filipinos (Kutschera & Caputi, 2012). The 1987 Amerasian Homecoming Act underscored this policy by ultimately permitting 26,000 Viet Amerasians and 75,000 of their close relatives to immigrate to the U.S. mainland (Lee, 2009). The legislators who enacted this law as well as the 1982 Amerasian Immigration Act appeared to ignore, or conveniently or deliberately overlook the fact that the supreme forward command and military support and launch platform for massive naval and air aggression in both the Vietnam American and Korean wars originated from major installations in the Philippines. These launch facilities included Clark air base and Subic Bay naval base (Ahern, 1992; Karnow, 1989), as well as Mactan air base, Cebu, Cubi Point naval air station and San Miguel naval communications station, Zambales, and numerous others.

While ample evidence and relatively reliable documentation exists that episodes and reports of stigmatization, intolerance, name-calling and social exclusion were virulently experienced by other Pan Amerasians (i.e., Japanese, Okinawans, Koreans and Vietnamese), comprehensive or comparative research examining specific levels in these nation-states (except perhaps for a briefly coordinated U.S. government effort focusing on Vietnamese Amerasians in the post-Vietnam American War era) are unknown. However, many isolated and uncoordinated studies, books or reports (e.g., Bass, 1996; Kim, 2009; Lamb, 2009; McKelvey, 1999; Sims, 2000; Song, 2003; Wu, 2012; Yarborough, 2005; Zhou & Bankston, 1998) have presented evidence and trends of stigmatization, intolerance, hatemongering and socioeconomic marginalization of Pan Amerasian cohorts. However, for military Filipino Amerasians, the empirical research landscape is comparatively thinner..

Recommendations

The situation today described in the Kutschera (2010, 2011) study has not dramatically changed in the Philippines or for that matter in the shrinking number of countries in East Asia, where U.S. forces still remain garrisoned (primarily Japan, Okinawa, South Korea, and the strategically fortified U.S. Territory of Guam). A 2012 announcement by the Obama-Biden Administration to redirect or “pivot” emphasis of U.S. international defense posture from the Middle East and other regions of the globe to the Western Pacific Basin (Cloud, 2021; O’Callaghan & Mogato, 2012) may have some impact on the largely dormant Amerasian question. Might it redirect the public spotlight onto the mostly forgotten but languishing and perplexing military Amerasian conundrum (Kutschera, Pelayo & Talamera-Sandico, 2012)?

In view of this contemporary state of affairs, the following recommendations are offered:

1. With the dearth of research on this subject, fostering research community interests and inquiry in the Filipino and Pan Amerasian condition within academia is a critical step, particularly given that that these enclaves possess many characteristics of diasporas (Kutschera & Caputi, 2012),
2. Both the U.S. governments and host East and Southeast Asians governments are complicit and responsible for the fate befallen military Amerasians, particularly those who remain socioeconomically and psychologically at risk. Thus, alerting human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees as well as agencies specializing in the reduction of global poverty such as the Asia Development Bank, the U.N. Development Programme, and others, may work to bring this ignored or little discussed human problem out of the shadows.
3. With the U.S. and other deploying military powers in the world, including NATO, United Nations and African Union military personnel, engaging in periodic military field deployments, may well and/or are resulting in a replication of the East Asian experience. Hence, the chances of excesses of stigmatization experienced by mixed heritage, biracial offspring from soldier and military personnel liaisons with female nationals may starkly repeat themselves in other parts of the globe. Thus, an initiation of research in military science and studies disciplines focused on evaluating current and new policy formation and reviews of command control procedures becomes relevant (e.g., policies related to monitoring troop rest and recuperation policies governing off duty leisure time pursuits).
4. Finally, with the levels of stigmatization, intolerance, harassment, name-calling and hate mongering experienced by the majority of impoverished Filipino Amerasians, their potential impact on mental and physical health becomes an ongoing issue needing rectification. Clearly unstudied, inadequately researched and, for all intents and purposes, ignored by the U.S.

government, the plight of these and most other Pan Amerasians is virtually unknown to the U.S. public. With the upsurge in bullying and related violence in the U.S. and elsewhere in the world, these situations are not unrelated.

5. A coordinated, collaborative effort initiated by the United Nations to establish a consortium of agencies and organizations dedicate to extend their current services to this neglected group is well in order. Federal agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services, in combination with private funding needs to consider ways to support research and services for this neglected population. Foundations, financially supporting international and global projects need to consider underwriting research studies and programs to support to this type of consortium on global health concerns.

Conclusion

Schade (1980), an authority on the Pan Amerasian human experience and former executive director of the Pearl S. Buck Foundation, wrote more than three decades ago that mixed-heritage, biracial Amerasians were the equivalent of abused American children forgotten and forsaken in alien lands their U.S. serviceman fathers would never return to claim. Incredibly, Shade estimated that two million Amerasians alone were born in East and Southeast Asia between the 1898 Spanish American War and 1980 when he terminated his own count. Tens of thousands more have been sired since that time. What occurred with the military Filipino Amerasian Marginalization and in numerous other Pan Amerasian enclaves constituted a shameful indictment not only of the U.S. uniformed military services, but the nation as a whole. The chances of it continuing or a similar scenario presenting itself in another part of the globe are not at all farfetched. In view of these continuing scenarios, the remaining question and challenges are

do these diasporas have the right to a quality of life and can they be provided the medical and mental health services needed to achieve that goal?

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