

What Does It Mean to Be a “Good Parent” According to Hmong Parents?:  
A Phenomenological Study

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## **Dedication**

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### **Abstract**

The current study examines what constitutes good parents in the Hmong community in Minnesota. Nineteen parents (12 mothers and 7 fathers) participated in the study, and they represented 47.4% first-generation, 42.1% second-generation, and 10.5% 1.5-generation. Phenomenology was employed and symbolic interaction theory was utilized as a guiding framework to understand the meaning participants attached to their parenting role. Analyses of the interviews revealed seven domains and 46 themes that constitute good parents, including (1) provision, (2) involvement, (3) communication, (4) characteristics of good parents, (5) community perception, (6) motivation for being good parents, and (7) good parent education. Implications of the study and future research efforts are also discussed.

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## Introduction

Once in a while during a car ride home from a doctor's appointment, grocery shopping, or a family gathering my mom would reminisce about the old days. She would giggle as she relived memories of our childhood and the silly things we did. Then she would say, "You were only this big when you were born," holding out her hands in front of her and making a space about 1.5 feet wide between her left and right hands. "Now look at you. Do you know how much work it took to raise you from birth to where you are now?" I smile, like all of my siblings, whenever mom talks about our childhood and our family's past. It was indeed hard times. I recall, from my childhood, the struggle our family went through to make ends meet in rural Cambodia. I distinctly recall eating rice and salt with my dad one evening because we did not have anything else to eat. As a child, I spent most of my time fishing or trying to fish because I wanted to help bring home some food for our family.

Despite our living conditions, however, I never truly experienced hunger. I remember being hungry but my parents always came through with some food for us. My mom has always prided herself in her ability to provide nutrition for her children. In retrospect, I can't begin to imagine the sacrifices my parents must have made to be able to give us what we had.

I often try to express gratitude to my parents for their parenting. Whenever I thanked my mom for all that she did for me and my siblings, however, she would often reply, "Don't thank me. I'm just doing my job. I am doing what parents should do for their kids."

These statements took residence in my mind. As I grow older and now consider having children of my own, I often wonder what it takes to raise good children and what it takes to be a good parent. My mom often points out the many challenges parents encounter as they try to raise their children in today's society. Shute (2008) expresses this observation well when she said, "in this day of two-earner couples and single parents, when 9-year-olds have cell phones, 12-year-olds are binge drinking and having oral sex, and there is evidence that teens are more fearful and depressed than ever, the challenges of rearing competent and loving human beings are enough to make a parent seek help from Supernanny" (p. 1).

The mainstream American concept of good parents has been well researched in the literature. Thus, in the United States it is generally acknowledged that good parents are those who can balance between love and limits, restrictiveness and responsiveness, and control and flexibility (Baumrind, 1968; Steinberg, 2001). They tend to promote independence (Lawton, Schuler, Fowell, & Madsen, 1984), socially desirable behavior, motivation for achievement, and self-control in children (Steinberg, 2001). They strive to provide their children with good nutrition, educational resources, verbal interaction (Galejs, & Pease, 1986), and an environment that fosters physical, intellectual, and spiritual development (Hoghughi, & Speight, 1998). They are more likely to get involved in the lives of their children, endorse a democratic parent-child interaction style, and strive to create an emotionally friendly environment for their children (Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005).

These ideas of good parents however, are not always shared by the Asian community. Asian parents, for example, are more likely to endorse harsher parenting practices, which place more emphasis on family obligation, control, and restrictions (Chiu, 1987; Lin & Fu, 1990). These practices seem to coincide with an authoritarian parenting style (Baumrind, 1968).

While it might seem otherwise, harsher parenting does not necessarily equate to parental hostility (Chao, 1994). Instead, what seems as “harshness” may be an expression of parental concern and care. Similarly, what seems as controlling does not necessarily equate to domination, but a form of directing and managing for the purpose of aiding the smooth function and harmony of the family (Lau & Cheung, 1987). For example, Chao (1994) suggests that Asian parents do not necessarily endorse an “authoritarian” parenting style or that their parenting styles are not necessarily “strict.” Indeed, the term “authoritarian” and “strict” might be important to understand European-American parenting; however, it might not apply to Asian parenting. Chao (1994) introduced the concept of “Chiao Shun,” or training as an alternative view of Asian parenting styles. Training in this context refers to the teaching of expected or appropriate behaviors of children. Additionally, Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, and Cleveland (2005) found that good parents, according to the Southeast Asian community, are those who provide their children with guidance and coach children to carry out proper behaviors, and shelter their children from the negative influence of peers through the application of peer restriction and monitoring. Julian, McKenry, and McKelvey (1994) note that academic performance

is important within the Asian community, therefore parents emphasize the importance of academic achievement to their children.

Despite the wealth of research on the topic of parenting, there is still limited research on specific Asian subgroups, especially within the Southeast Asian community (Chao, 1994; Dinh, Sarason, & Sarason, 1994; Gorman, 1998; Kibra, 1993; Nugyen & Williams, 1988; Xiong, Detzner, & Rettig, 2001; Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005). Thus, the purpose of the present study is to contribute to this literature gap by exploring the concept of good parents within the largest Southeast Asian community in Minnesota, the Hmong. My research questions are:

- (1) What constitutes a good parent?
- (2) How does one know if someone is a good, average, or bad parent?
- (3) What do good parents do that is unique and distinctive from other “average” or “bad” parents?
- (4) What does it mean to be a good parent in the Hmong community?

### **The Hmong in Minnesota**

Very little is known about the origins of the Hmong people. Early scholars suggested that the Hmong have roots in China (Dekun, 1991; Yang, 1993). Indeed, the first mention of the Hmong was found within the written records of Chinese history. According to these records, the Hmong were present during the Shang Dynasty (1600 - 1050 BCE) and resided along the Yellow River Valley (Dekun, 1991). Due to the constant threat of domination and demands of taxation from the Chinese government, thousands of Hmong left their homes along the Yellow River Valley and migrated south

in search of freedom, equality, and a better life (Xiong, 2000). These pursuits were met with additional conflicts with the Chinese government (Savina, 1924; Weins, 1967) and eventually led to several resettlements across Southeast Asia region during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century AD (Bliatout, Downing, Lewis, & Yang, 1988; Meredith & Rowe, 1986; Smalley, 1986).

In 1960, while residing in Laos, the Hmong allied with the United States to help defend Laos against Communism and to preserve their ways of life (Hamilton-Merritt, 1993). The combat went on for fifteen years before the eventual seizure of Laos by the Communist regime (Xiong, 2000). Fearing government retaliation and persecution, thousands of Hmong left Laos and immigrated to Western countries such as the United States (SarDesai, 1989; Hamilton-Merritt, 1993). Thus, in 1975 the United States opened its doors to the first wave of Hmong refugees (Olney, 1986).

The resettlement in the United States presented the Hmong with a different set of challenges. Despair and hopelessness quickly occupied the minds of Hmong individuals as they struggled to integrate themselves to their new environment and become economically stable (Fass, 1986; Detzner, 1992). At the same time, they had to face other obstacles such as crime, language barriers, and religious and cultural differences (Gross, 1986).

Since the first wave of Hmong immigrated to the United States, the number of Hmong individuals residing in the United States has increased. According to the U.S. Census (2009), the United States is currently home to over 236,000 Hmong individuals. Furthermore, over 66,000 (28%) of those individuals reside in Minnesota. This makes

Minnesota home to the second largest Hmong population in the United States.

Additionally, Hmong accounts for 26.1% of the Asian population in Minnesota and thus makes it the largest Asian group in the state.

It was also estimated that 29.8% of Hmong population lives in poverty (U.S. Census, 2009). This is a large percentage compared to the proportion of individuals that live in poverty on a national level (14.3%). Due to lack of funding, low-income Hmong families tend to reside in neighborhoods where crime rates are high and violent activities occur frequently (Xiong, 2000).

The challenges of acculturation, language barriers, cultural differences, and poverty have impacted many aspects of the Hmong's livelihood, including parent-child relationship. Cultural differences coupled with children's disobedience have created a disconnection and erosion within the parent-child relationship (Detzner, Xiong, & Eliason, 1999; Yang, 1991).

### **Theoretical Framework**

Given that the current study endeavors to understand the meaning of good parents within the Hmong community, it is necessary to select a theory that could provide a framework for understanding how the definition of "good" is constructed, since "good" is a value-laden concept. Additionally, given that Hmong individuals reside in close and cohesive communities (Xiong, Tuicomepee, LaBlanc, & Rainey, 2006), the selected theory must also take into consideration the impact of community values on individuals' values. Symbolic interaction theory was selected as a conceptual framework to help me make sense of the ideas Hmong parents constructed.

Symbolic interaction theory is rooted in the idea that individuals assign meaning to objects in their daily lives and these meanings are developed through the interactions with others. In short, the theory examines the relationship between shared meanings (symbols), and communications and actions (interactions) (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993). Symbolic interaction theory provides a framework for understanding how individuals create symbols and how these symbols influence the individuals' behaviors. It is assumed that an individual's actions toward a thing is influenced by the meaning that the individual or individuals assign to it; the meaning of a thing came about as the result of the interaction between people; and the cultural and societal process has significant influence on the individual and the small groups residing within (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993).

In addition to the assumptions, there are two concepts that are essential to the present study: roles and interaction (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993).

Roles are viewed as the collection of norms that pertain to certain social positions. Included within the umbrella of roles are knowledge, ability, motivation, and expectations. Thus, an individual taking on a particular role should have an understanding of the knowledge, ability, motivation, and expectations that accompanied that role (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993). Roles could be formal (e.g. father), informal (e.g. best friend), have flexible boundaries, and are subjected to change with time. As a system of meaning, roles are useful because they allow individuals to anticipate future behaviors of others and to maintain regularity within their own behaviors.

Interaction is another essential concept. It serves to inform how meanings are created for and assigned to an object. It is through interaction with others that individuals create meaning and make sense of the world (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993).

### **Literature Review**

One of the earliest attempts to examine the idea of good parents was through the work of Donald Winnicott (Hoghughi & Speight, 1998). Recognizing the improbable and unrealistic expectation for parents to be “perfect,” Winnicott introduced the middle path of “good enough parenting.” Good enough parenting could be viewed as parental practices that sufficiently meet the needs of children in accordance with current cultural standards. These standards can change from one generation to the next (Hoghughi & Speight, 1998). The idea of “good enough parenting” suggested that it is not necessary for parents to be “perfect” to raise well developed children. It is enough to provide children with reliable care, unconditional love, and an environment that foster positive growth. Realistically, this is the best parents can do for their children (Hoghughi, 2004).

Followed Winnicott’s introduction of “good enough parenting,” there has been more studies examining what constitutes a “good parent.” As the result, the definitions of “good parents” are well documented in today’s literature (Hall, 1987; Lawton, Schuler, Fowell, & Madsen, 1984; Magen, 1994; Minuchin, 1974; Paguio, Skeen, & Robinson, 1989; Raina, Kumar, & Raina, 1980). However, these definitions were mostly developed within the context of the mainstream American culture (Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005).



In a study examining parents' perceptions of actual and ideal child-rearing practices, for example, Lawton, Schuler, Fowell, and Madsen (1984) conducted the study within the Caucasian, middle-class community and found that the ideal child-rearing practices are those that encourage independence, sensitivity and affection towards others, and intellectual development in children.

Additional studies on parenting within the mainstream American culture further suggested that good parents are those who provide their children with good nutrition, verbal interaction, educational resources (Galejs, & Pease, 1986), and a safe and friendly environment that foster physical, intellectual, spiritual (Hoghughi, & Speight, 1998), and emotional growth (Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005). Moreover, good parents are those who encourage socially desirable behavior, motivation for achievement, and self-control in children (Steinberg, 2001). They tend to be more involved in the lives of their children and endorse a democratic parent-child interaction style (Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005). Last but not least, good parents are those who can balance between love and limits, restrictiveness and responsiveness, and control and flexibility (Baumrind, 1968; Steinberg, 2001). In summary, good parents tend to be associated with the authoritative parenting style; a style endorsed by many researchers (Baumrind, 1968; Smetana, 1995; Steinberg, 2000) and practitioners (Bavolek, Hime, & Ly, 1995; Gordon, 1970; Popkins, 1990) as the ideal parenting style.

The definition of a "good parent" does not cut across cultures, however. Parents of different cultural backgrounds will have different ideas about the ideal child-rearing practices (Luster, Rhoades, & Haas, 1989). These ideas are largely influenced by the

culture in which the parents are part of. Thus, parents tend to exercise parental practices that reflect their own cultural values (LeVine, 1977).

For instance, Asian parents tend to adopt parenting practices that place more emphasis on control and restrictions (Chiu, 1987; Lin & Fu, 1990). Although these parenting practices are consistent with an authoritarian parenting style, which can be viewed by some researchers as harsh, rejecting, and hostile (Chiu, 1987; Lin & Fu, 1990), Chao (1994) suggests that the concept of “authoritarian” and “restrictiveness,” while essential to the understanding of parenting within the mainstream American culture, does not adequately describe Asian parenting style.

Instead, Chao (1994) introduces the concept of “Chiao Shun” as an alternative lens to examine the parenting practices of Asian parents. Chiao Shun, as Chao (1994) describes it, “is a Chinese term that contains the idea of training (i.e. teaching or educating) children in the appropriate or expected behaviors” (p. 1112). Thus, for a Chinese parent an authoritative parent could just mean an “average” parent since he or she does not meet the cultural expectation of a good parent. For example, in her study involving 50 Chinese immigrant mothers and 50 European-American mothers, Chao (1994) administered different scales measuring parental control factors, authoritative-authoritarian parenting styles, and items containing the Chinese concept of training to the two parent groups. She found that Chinese parents scored higher in the authoritarian parenting style scale, and the Chinese concept of training scale than European-American parents. Items contained within the “training” questionnaire included such questions as

“Children are by nature born good; mothers must train child to work hard and to be disciplined; and child should be in the constant care of their mothers or family” (p. 116).

In another study examining the parental values of Sami families in Northern Norway, Javo, Alapack, Heyerdahl, & Ronning (2003) found that Sami parents value child-rearing practices that include the promotion of independence, hardiness, and autonomy. Independence, in the eyes of Sami parents, includes self-reliance, self-care, responsibility, and the willingness to explore the environment. Hardiness includes self-motivation, resiliency, and the ability to be psychologically strong. Whereas independence includes self-reliance and self-care, autonomy includes the ability for children to make their own decision in the area of sleep, meal schedules, and recreational activities. To promote independence, hardiness, and autonomy parents assign their children chores (i.e. washing the floor, washing the dishes, and babysitting), tease their children, and do not impose much structure, rules and restrictions on children’s activities.

Additionally, Sami parents believe in providing closeness and love to their children. They do so by being sensitive to the needs of their children, keeping them physically close, and involving the children in family activities. Due to their value in keeping their children physically close Sami parents often practice co-sleeping with their children.

Furthermore, in their article, *Childhood in the Somali Context: Mothers’ and Children’s Ideas about Childhood and Parenthood*, Dybdahl and Hundeide (1998) interviewed mothers residing in Mogadishu, Somalia to learn about their ideas of ideal child-rearing practices. The authors interviewed 20 parents and learned that good child-

rearing practices include providing for children's physical needs such as nutrition, clothing, and cleanliness. Teaching children to be helpful to their parents is also a good child-rearing practice. Additionally, Somali mothers emphasized the importance of parents in teaching their children right from wrong, sending their children to school to get an education, and being kind to their children.

In another study exploring children's perception of good parents in Central Israel, Magen (1994) discovered that good parents are those who express feelings, are supportive and understanding, and serve as good role models for their children. Additionally, good parents buy their children presents, spend leisure time with their children, respect their children's needs, and are democratic in their parenting. Last but not least, good parents take responsibility for their children's education, and promote autonomy within their children.

Additionally, Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, and Cleveland (2005) examined adolescents' and parents' perceptions of good parents within the four Southeast Asian immigrants' populations, including representatives from the Hmong, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Lao community. They involved thirty-six parents (22 mothers and 14 fathers), and thirty-seven adolescents (17 males and 20 females) from the four represented communities in a series of focus groups. They found several attributes that are associated with good parents, including nurturing such as love and care; providing in terms of shelter, food, clothing, cultural education, and protection; positive communication involving talking nicely, no yelling or hitting and the like. Additionally,

involvement, empathy, and the willingness to ask for assistance when needed are also attributes of good parents.

In summary, all of these studies show that the concept of good parents varies depending on the individual's cultural background. Thus, to fully understand what constitutes a good parent and what it means to be a good parent, it is necessary to take an emic approach when talking to people who are from the culture.

## **Methods**

### **Phenomenology**

The present study employed a phenomenological method to understand the meaning of what constitutes a good parent in the Hmong culture. Phenomenology is a method developed by Edmund Husserl (Wertz, 2005) to examine how events, actions, and objects appear to the observer (Daly, 2007). Specifically, it is concerned with the study of human experiences and the "consciousness of physical things, values, moods, activities, and feelings" (Daly, 2007, p.94). It is developed to closely examine the everyday, taken-for-granted reality. It tries to understand how individuals make sense of or assign meaning to different aspects of their lived experiences. The phenomenological method calls for an in-depth interview of the participants so to fully capture the essence of a participant's lived experiences. Thus, researchers utilizing this method rely solely on the participants' spoken words to make sense of a phenomenon and refrain from injecting their own interpretation.

The phenomenological method is a good fit for the current study. The Hmong people have a rich oral tradition. In fact, it was not until the early 1950s that the Hmong

had any formal written language system (Bliatout, Downing, Lewis, & Yang, 1988).

Therefore, most of their values, beliefs, and norms are passed down from one generation to the next via oral communication. Given what is known about the Hmong people, it is essential to employ a method that both honors this rich oral tradition and encourages the gathering of knowledge without preconceived assumptions.

### **Sampling**

The Hmong are not a monolithic group. Thus, to capture the multiple meanings from a diverse group of parents from the Hmong community in Minnesota, a targeted sample was recruited. Specifically, we attempted to recruit 30 participants from three generations in the Hmong community: first-, 1.5-, and second-generations. The first-generation includes individuals who immigrated to the United States when they are older than 17 years old. The 1.5-generation refers to those who immigrated to the United States between ages 7 and 17 years old. Finally, the second-generation refers to individuals who were either born in the United States or immigrated to the United States prior to age 7 years (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

In this study, we attempted to recruit 10 participants from the first-generation, 10 from the 1.5-generation, and another 10 from the second-generation. The decision to recruit 10 participants from each generation was motivated by the desire to capture a more encompassing description of what constitutes a “good” parent. “Good” is a value-laden concept and depends on which generation the participants belong to, how they make sense of what is considered “good” may vary.

The first generation participants, for example, still have memories of life experiences in Laos and Thailand and adhere to the beliefs and values of their home cultures. Thus, their definition and interpretation of what constitutes a “good parent” may be more influenced by these memories, beliefs, and values. The 1.5 generation participants, on the other hand, are wedged between the old culture and the new mainstream culture. Thus, their values are most likely influenced by both cultures. The second-generation participants are the furthest from the old cultural values and traditions. They are most influenced by the mainstream culture. Thus, their ideas and views of what constitutes a good parent may not be the same as those of the first- and 1.5-generation participants (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Therefore, to obtain a more complete description of what constitutes a “good” parent it is necessary, to hear the voices of these individuals from different generations.

Determining the number of participants to participate in the study was a challenging task. While it is agreed among researchers that the ideal number of participants in a qualitative study is one that allows researchers to reach data saturation (Francis et. al., 2009; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006; Morse, 2000), the specific number which this could be achieved is still debatable. Some researchers have suggested that data saturation could be reached between 14 and 15 interviews (Francis et al., 2009). Others have suggested that 12 interviews would be enough to reach data saturation (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). Still other researchers suggested a range between five and twenty-five interviews (Creswell, 1998).

Acknowledging the challenge of obtaining minority parents to participate in a research project (McLoyd, & Steinberg, 1998), the current study went with the suggestion made by Creswell (1998) to determine the number of interviews needed to reach data saturation. In addition to wanting to understand what it means to be a good parent within the Hmong community, we also would like to hear different voices across three generations. Thus, the goal of the current study was to obtain 30 interviews from three generations of Hmong parents.

### **Procedures**

**Sites.** Participants were recruited from a Hmong charter school, an ELL adult education program in a non-profit organization, and word of mouth. The charter school serves 352 kindergarteners to 8<sup>th</sup> graded students, and most of the students (about 98%) are of Asian descent (Minnesota Department of Education, 2010). Within the Asian student group, a large proportion of the students are of Hmong ethnicity. The rest of the student body (1%) is American Indian (Minnesota Department of Education, 2010). The school also serves a large percentage of students from low SES and recent immigrant families. According to the Minnesota Department of Education (2010), 88% of the students attending the charter school received free and reduced price lunch, and 86% of the students are considered to have limited English proficiency. The charter school is staffed by dedicated educators whose goal is to create an environment that fosters academic achievement, learning, character development, and Hmong culture competency for its students, parents, and community. Due to the density of the Hmong population and



grade levels served, the charter school is an ideal location for recruiting participants for the study.

The ELL adult education program in a non-profit organization has a pre-school program that serves low-income immigrant parents. The program also focuses on literacy by teaching parents English. Parents in this program could drop their children off at the pre-school while attending classes. In 2010, the program served 599 parents from 28 countries. The majority of these students (31%) are from Laos, and most of them are Hmong. All of the students attending the program are poor (below 200% poverty line). The majority of the students (60%) are parents.

In terms of immigration, 90% of the students enrolled in the program are first-generation immigrants and the other 10% are considered 1.5-generation. Due to the density of the Hmong parent population, the ELL adult education program is an ideal site for recruiting participants for the study.

**Recruiting.** The recruiting procedures of this study were approved by the University of Minnesota Institutional Review Board. Participants' recruitment for this study was done by a research team consisting of six upper-undergraduate students in their senior year, myself, and the advisor for this study. The recruiting procedure consisted of a few steps. First, the director of the charter school and the associate executive director of the Hmong non-profit organization that runs the adult education program were contacted and informed about the study. The directors of both institutions supported the study and designated staff to work with the researchers. Thus, with the support of both directors, the

researchers met with the designated staff of both institutions to plan out the best time and method to recruit the participants for the study.

For the charter school, the staff recommended the parent conference night as a way to reach out to most of the parents. Thus, during the parent conference night (February, 2011) the researchers set up a table in the cafeteria. The cafeteria was chosen since it was where parents came to visit the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and where most parents passed through on their way to visit the K-6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers. As parents waited to visit with the teachers or were on their way to visit a classroom, parents were approached by members of the research team and were given a brief general description of the study. The team members then asked if the parent(s) was interested in participating. If the parent(s) indicated that he/she was interested in participating in the study, then the research team member asked the parent(s) for their name, phone number, and the best time to call. During the conversation with parents, members of the research team were trained to use their judgment based on the responses and conversations they had with parents on whether or not the parents were proficient enough to be interviewed in English. If a parent did not show evidence of proficiency in English, the team member would note it. This was to ensure that the individual contacting the potential participant would be fluent in both Hmong and English. As a result, 24 parents initially agreed to be contacted.

Two weeks later, a phone call was followed up by members of the research team to ask if they were still interested in participating in the study and to schedule for an interview. Of the 24 parents recruited at the parent conference night, 22 (99%) parents

refused to participate in the study. One possible reason for the refusal might be due to the time-lapse between the recruitment time and the contact time. It took our research team two weeks to start contacting the participants. During the time between the recruitment and phone contact, the team needed to work to finalize the interview questions, translate the interview questions to Hmong, and receive training on how to conduct the interview in Hmong. This process took longer than expected because some of the English words could not be directly translated into Hmong. The translation of the interview questions and training was led by the researcher's adviser. Translating the interview questions into Hmong was an additional step after we realized during the recruiting, that most of the parents who were interested in the study preferred to be interviewed in Hmong.

Due to the alarming refusal rate from the recruitment effort at the charter school, the team increased the recruitment efforts by connecting with the ELL adult education program and using word of mouth from members of the research team. Based on the recommendation of the staff at the ELL adult education program, recruitment occurred during class time at three English classes over the period of four weeks (from mid-March through mid-April of 2011).

Prior to the recruitment effort at the ELL adult education program, I had already volunteered at the adult education program for two weeks. This decision was made because I felt that it is important to give to the community before asking the members of the community to participate in a research project. The best resources that I had then were my time and knowledge. Thus, I asked the staff at the adult program for the opportunity

to volunteer at the English School. I made the same offer to the charter school but at that time they did not need any volunteers.

During my volunteered time, I had the opportunity to get to know and build positive relationships with both the staff and students at the English School. This relationship is important because it allowed me to (a) reduce the perception of power between myself and the staff and students at the English School, (b) build relationships with staff and students at the English School so they would feel more comfortable talking to me and my research team, and (c) show the community that I am not here to take what I need and leave, but I am a member of the community and I am here to be a resource to the community.

I was given the warmest welcome and support from both the staff and students at the English School during my recruitment efforts there. I believe this is due to the time I gave to the English School and the relationship I developed while I was there.

During the first week of recruitment, students of the English classes were told about the study in English and were encouraged to think it over and ask questions if they had any. In the second week, the researcher returned to the same classrooms to see if the students had any questions, and a sign-up sheet was left with the instructors of each classroom. One participant signed up for the study after the second week.

Since most of the participants at the English classes have limited English comprehension, the researcher did not feel that the message about the study was communicated clearly to the participants. The researcher felt that if the study was communicated in Hmong and by a respected member of the Hmong community, the

participants might have a better understanding of the study and might be more willing to participate.

Thus, during the third week the researcher asked his adviser to visit three English classes at the English School to speak with the students about the study in Hmong and to answer any questions the students might have. Sign-up sheets were left with the instructors once again. In the fourth week, the researcher went to the three classrooms to ask the students once more if they have any questions about the study and to collect the sign-up sheets. Eighteen participants signed up after they heard from the adviser in the fourth week. Of the parents recruited at the adult education program, 17 (99%) parents decided to participate in the study. For those parents who decided to participate in the study, the instructors kindly agreed to allow them to use class time to be interviewed. Thus, all interviews took place in a private room arranged specifically for the study by the instructors.

Participants who were recruited via word of mouth went through the same procedure as participants recruited at the charter school. However, the team members who recruited the participant(s) were not allowed to interview the participant to make sure all participants were treated the same. We recruited 29 participants via word of mouth. Of the 29 participants recruited, 19 (66%) agreed to participate.

Seventy-two participants were contacted total. Of the seventy-two participants contacted thirty-nine participants (54%) agreed to participate and 22 (31%) were interviewed. As for the other 17 participants that signed up for the study, 5 (29%) did not qualify for the study after further information was obtained from the participants, and 12

(70%) we could not get to due to time constraints. The team members that could speak Hmong were no longer able to be part of the team due to the semester ending and graduation.

### **Participants**

Of the twenty-two participants interviewed, one participant's data was discarded because it did not meet the study's criteria. This information came about after the interview was conducted. Additionally, three interviews were discarded due to equipment failure during the interview. Of the eighteen parents remaining, 61% were females and 39% were males. Eight (44.4%) of the participants were first-generation immigrants, eight (44.4%) were second-generation immigrants, and finally two (11.1%) were 1.5-generation immigrants. The mean age of the participants was 32 years ( $SD = 10.44$ ). The youngest participant was 19 and the oldest participant was 57 years old (See Table 1).

Most of the participants were married, and employed. The same number of participants have not finished high school and attended some college (Table 1). Additionally, most participants were fluent in both written and spoken English; fluent in spoken Hmong but not written Hmong, and either used Hmong and a mixture of Hmong and English when communicating with their children (see Table 2). Finally, when examining annual household income, it was found that 16.7 percent of participants have an annual household income between \$1 and \$16,000, 16.7percent between \$16,001 and \$30,000, 38.9 percent of the between \$31,001 and \$70,000, 22.2 percent have an annual household income of \$70,000 or above, and 1 participant (5.6%) did not respond to the question.

For the purpose of this thesis, only first-generation parents were included in the analysis due to time constraints and resources (See Table 1). As can be seen in Table 1, the first-generation participants were older than those of 1.5- and second-generation. Additionally, first-generation parents group included 4 mothers and 4 fathers. Comparatively, 1.5-generation participants included 1 mother and 4 fathers, and second-generation participants included 6 mothers and 2 fathers. Seven out of eight parents (87.5%) were married, and six out of eight parents (75%) had less than a high school education. One parent graduated from high school and one parent chose not to answer the question. Comparatively, one out of two (50%) 1.5-generation parents were married, and all of 1.5-generation parents had some college education. When examining second-generation parents, seven out of eight (87.5%) parents were married, and all of the second-generation parents graduated from high school. The majority of parents (87.5%) had little to no written, spoken, or reading skill in English. Comparatively, all of 1.5- and second-generation parents are fluent in written, spoken, and reading skill in English.

### **Interview**

The interview took place at the participants' homes, coffee shops, or in a conference room at the English School as preferred by the participants. The interview lasted approximately one hour. The purpose and nature of the study were explained to the participants once more prior to the interview. Participants were also given the opportunity to ask questions and decline to participate prior to and during the interview. Once the participant understood the scope of the study, had all of his or her questions and/or concerns answered, and was still interested in participating, he or she was asked to sign

the consent form. The interview procedure consisted of two parts. Part one asked the participants to fill out a demographic form (Appendix A). If participants could not read English to fill out the form, the interviewer would read the questions to the participants so that participants could provide the information to the form. Once the demographic form was completed, the interviewer then began the interview (See Appendix B for interview questions). All interviews were audio recorded for later analysis. After the interview, participants were compensated \$20 for participating.

Participants who were married at the time of the study were asked if their spouses would be interested in participating in the study. For those participants who stated that their spouses might be interested in participating in the study, a different team member was assigned to contact, schedule, and interview the spouse of the participant. Participants were also asked if it would be okay for the team to contact him/her if any questions should arise during the data analysis process. The interviews included one second-generation couple.

### **Translation and transcription**

Seven individuals, 6 undergraduate students who were part of the research team and the researcher involved in the transcription process of the current study. Of the six undergraduate students, five were fluent in both Hmong and English and one was fluent in English only. The English interviews were transcribed by the researcher and an undergraduate student in the research team. The Hmong interviews were divided amongst the 5 undergraduate students who were fluent in Hmong and English. The undergraduate students were instructed by the researcher to transcribe the interview verbatim.



Additionally, they were also instructed to employ a simultaneous translation and transcription process to transcribe the interviews. That is, rather than transcribing the interviews into Hmong before translating the transcripts into English, they were instructed and trained to listen to the interviews and translate the interviews into English simultaneously. Furthermore, discussions were engaged between the undergraduate students and the researcher about the challenge of transcribing some Hmong words into English due to the lack of vocabulary equivalence. It was decided, as a team, that in such situations, the transcribers could use their judgment and come up with an English word or words that closely describe or approximate the Hmong word(s). That word would be discussed in the research team to ensure the meaning of the word was equivalent to the original word.

To check for the accuracy of the simultaneous translated transcript, a seventh undergraduate student, who was not involved in the study and translation, was asked to transcribe 20% of the interviews to check for the reliability and quality of the translated transcripts. Cross reference of the original interview and the second transcription of the interview showed a 90% match.

### **Data Analyses**

Girogi (1997) described five basic steps that need to be achieved for a qualitative method to be considered a phenomenological method. These steps included (1) collecting verbal data (2) reading the data (3) breaking the data down into parts (4) organization of data, and (5) summarizing the data. The collection of data must include open-ended questions so as to give the participants as much room as possible to express their thoughts

and view-points. This also allows the researcher to collect detailed descriptions of the lived experiences sought in the study.

The data of the current study were analyzed following the steps recommended by Giorgi (1997) in conjunction with the addition made by Javo, Alpack, Heyerdahl, and Ronning (2003). The addition includes discussing the results of the data with the participants to get the consensus from the participants. Since the researcher of the current study is not Hmong, it is easy for misunderstandings and misconceptions to occur. Thus, this adaption is necessary to minimize any misunderstanding between the researcher and the participants.

In this study, the following analysis steps were followed. (1) Data collection. The researcher and his research team went to the community to collect lived experienced data from Hmong parents. (2) Translation and transcription. Once the data were collected the researcher and his team translated and transcribed the data and typed them into a word document. The researcher then assigned each line in the word document a number. This was done to better track the analysis process. (3) The global reading of the data. Once the transcription and numbering were completed, the researcher printed out the document and read the data without any attempt to conduct detailed analysis of the data. Due to the holistic nature of the phenomenological method, it is necessary to read the data as a whole first to gain insight into the global aspects of the data. (4) Detailed analysis of the data. A detailed analysis followed the holistic reading of the data. In this step, the researcher searched for the meaning units within the data. This was done by carefully reading of the data, identifying expressions that conveyed a meaning, and then noting the

meaning. This was done within the context and everyday language of the participants. (5) Organization of the data. Once meaning units were identified, the researcher read through the meaning units to see if they formed any themes. (6) Summarizing the data. The data were summarized using a thematic approach, grouping the data into domains and themes. (7) The researcher took the results back to the participants to verify the findings.\*<sup>1</sup>

Detailed analysis of the data consisted of three steps. In step one, each paragraph of the transcript was carefully read to gain an understanding of the main idea being communicated. Two or three statements were selected from the paragraph that best summarized the idea(s) communicated. At the end of each statement the identification number associated with the interview and the line where the statement was found within the interview transcript was recorded. The numbers are recorded within the parentheses. The first number is the interview's identification number and the second number is the line number where the statement could be found within the interview. The statements are then recorded on separate rows within an Excel spread sheet. For sorting purposes a letter was placed next to each statement that communicated similar ideas.

For example, in the paragraphs:

*“To be a good mother, she has to clean the home, cook for the children, and teach them to do things around the house. This is because if one day I am no longer here, they would not know how to do it. When they, my children, have a wife or husband, they will know*

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<sup>1</sup>\* *Due to time constraints, we were not able to complete this step before the completion of the current report. It is still our intention to take the results back to the community to get their thoughts on the findings.*

*how to do it. So I teach my kids. They are really helpful around the home with cleaning and mopping and dishes. They help me with laundry. I teach them all this and they all know how to do it”(46, 33-39).*

*“In my opinion, I think a good father needs to take care of the children. By taking care of the children, the father needs to find food/clothing [and] provide shelter for the children to live and eat so they would not be starved. The father also needs to support the children by encouraging them to strive for what they want instead of giving up”(61, 8-11).*

The statements that would be selected are:

A	<i>(1) “To be a good mother, she has to clean the home, cook for the children, and teach them to do things around the house”(46, 33-34).</i>
A	<i>(2) “When they, my children, have a wife or husband, they will know how to do it. So I teach my kids”(46, 35-36).</i>
A	<i>(3) “A good father needs to take care of the children. By taking care of the children, the father needs to find food/clothing [and] provide shelter for the children to live and eat so they would not be starved”(61, 8-10).</i>
B	<i>(4) “The father also needs to support the children by encouraging them to strive for what they want instead of giving up”(61, 10-11).</i>

These statements were selected because they best summarize the ideas communicated in the two paragraphs. That is, to be a good parent, one must provide for the children’s needs, such as nutrition, clothing, and shelter. Additionally, good parents need to also provide independent training so that when the children become adults they

would know how to do the necessary household chores or tasks. Furthermore, good parents need to be able to communicate and connect with their children through the use of encouragement. The second and third idea was best summarized by the second and fourth statement. Once the paragraphs were summarized, a “sort” function in Excel was used to group statements expressing similar ideas together.

The letter “A” was placed next to the first three statements above because they communicate a similar message, that is, all three statements communicate provisions that good parents should do for their children. The letter “B” was placed next to the last statement because it communicates a different idea than the first three statements. The last statement mentioned encouragement, which is the communication and connection that good parents should make available to their children.

In step two, each statement was further summarized using a few words. For example, the statements:

A	<i>(1) “To be a good mother, she has to clean the home, cook for the children, and teach them to do things around the house” (46, 33-34).</i>
A	<i>(2) “When they, my children, have a wife or husband, they will know how to do it. So I teach my kids” (46, 35-36).</i>
A	<i>(3) “A good father needs to take care of the children. By taking care of the children, the father needs to find food/clothing [and] provide shelter for the children to live and eat so they would not be starved” (61, 8-10).</i>
B	<i>(4) “The father also needs to support the children by encouraging them to strive for</i>

	<i>what they want instead of giving up”(61, 10-11).</i>
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Would be further summarized to: (1) Provide nutrition and clean home, (2) Provide independent training, (3) Provide nutrition, clothing, shelter, and (4) Provide encouragement.

A	<i>(1) “To be a good mother, she has to clean the home, cook for the children, and teach them to do things around the house”(46, 33-34).</i>	<i>Provide nutrition and clean home</i>
A	<i>(2) “When they, my children, have a wife or husband, they will know how to do it. So I teach my kids”(46, 35-36).</i>	<i>Provide independent training</i>
A	<i>(3) “A good father needs to take care of the children. By taking care of the children, the father needs to find food/clothing [and] provide shelter for the children to live and eat so they would not be starved”(61, 8-10).</i>	<i>Provide nutrition, clothing, and shelter</i>
B	<i>(4) “The father also needs to support the children by encouraging them to strive for what they want instead of giving up”(61, 10-11).</i>	<i>Provide encouragement</i>

The summary of each statement was added in a column next to the statement (see above).

Once all of the statements were summarized, a sort function was used to group similar statements’ summaries together.

The third and final step is to look at the Excel sheet to determine themes, domains, and frequencies of the themes. Frequencies were determined by the number of times each theme was mentioned across the interviews. If one interview mentioned the same theme or themes multiple times, it would still count as one mention. If two interviews mentioned the same theme or themes, that theme(s) would count as two mentions.

Once the themes and domains were determined, it was recorded in a table. The themes were then given a label of “variant,” “typical,” or “general.” These labels were borrowed from the Consensual Qualitative Research method (Hill et al., 2005). In accordance to the Consensual Qualitative Research method, a label of “variant” was given to themes that were mentioned by at least one case but less than half of the cases, a label of “typical” was given to themes that were mentioned more than half of the cases but short of all cases, and finally, a label of “general” was given to themes that were mentioned by all cases. In our study, this translates to a labeling of “variant” for themes mentioned by 1-3 cases, “typical” for themes mentioned by 4-7 cases, and “general” for themes mentioned by all 8 cases.

## **Results**

Analysis of interview transcripts of first-generation Hmong parents revealed seven domains and 46 themes (see Table 3). The domains included provision, involvement, communication, characteristics of good parents, community perception, motivation for being good parents, and good parent education. Each domain contained a number of themes. In the interest of space, only “typical” and “general” themes will be

discussed for domain(s) containing more than 3 themes. For those domain(s) containing 3 themes or less, at least two of the themes will be included.

### **Provision**

Under this domain, there are five themes (see Table 3). The first theme is providing education support for children. All eight parents we interviewed talked about this theme when asked what constitutes a good parent. All parents interviewed agreed that providing educational support for their children is a must for parents to be considered good parents. For example, when asked what she would do to be considered to be a good parent, one mother replied, “I think that I will support my children to finish their education” (46,145). Another mother stated, “[a good mother] cook for the kids, take care of them, help the kids with their education, be able to give them what they need” (66, 1b). Moreover, one father explained, “if there is any meeting at school, you [as a good father] should attend [the meeting] to support [your children in] their education” (71, P2).

The second theme is providing nutritional, clothing, and shelter needs for children. Six out of eight parents discussed this theme during the interview. As one father stated, “I think a good father needs to take care of the children. By taking care of the children, the father needs to find food/clothing or provide shelter for the children to live and eat so they would not starve” (61, 8-10). Another mother stated, “to be a good mother, she has to clean the home, cook for the children, and teach them to do things around the house” (46, 33-34). Still another mother described, “[to be a good mother] you have to cook breakfast, lunch, and dinner for them [your children] so that they have the strength to go to school and other places” (52, 4-5).



Last, but not least, providing training for children is also mentioned by five of the eight parents we interviewed. Training here refers to skill training to prepare children to be independent adults and teaching children how to stay out of trouble. One participating mother indicated that teaching her children to do household chores is an important aspect of a good parent. Her reasoning for this is, “when they, [my children], have a wife or husband, they will know how to do it” (46, 35-36). Another mother described the method she used to teach her children some of the household chores. As she describes it, “if I want them [her children] to learn how to cook and stuff, I would ask that I need their help and then they would come and we would cook and joke around together” (52, 134-136). Furthermore, one father shared, “if he is a good father, he will teach his wife and children what is right and wrong and to not do anything [that will cause them] to be in trouble” (47, 53-54).

### **Involvement**

The involvement domain contains six themes. The first theme is involving in the child’s life. The majority of parents, six out of eight, mentioned that being involved in the lives of their children is something that good parents need to do. Involvement in this context includes active participation in the daily lives of the children. As one mother explained, “...if they [my children] wants to go somewhere I do drop them off and when it’s time for them to come back I do go right back and pick them up” (52, 33-35). Another mother puts it this way, “when my kids get home, I ask them how school went, and how their education is” (46, 26-27).

The second theme under the involvement domain is involving in the household chores. Five out of eight parents believe that active participation in household chores is something that good parents need to do. As one father puts it, “I think a good father needs to clean the house” (61, 2). Another father emphasized the importance of involvement in household chores when he stated, “[a good father should] know how to love and help one another in the household so that there won’t be any fights, arguments or breakup within it [the family]” (71, P2).

### **Communication**

A majority of first-generation parents agreed that effective communication is something that good parents need to have with their children. Effective communication in this context refers less to precision or communicating an idea in a precise way, but refers more to gentle communication. Thus, the first theme we identified is “talking nicely” to children. Six of the eight parents we interviewed mentioned this as a criterion to judge whether a parent is a good or bad one. When communicating to children, one mother suggested that good parents, “don’t yell or talk nonsense [to the children], and if [they] do talk, [they need to] think before talking” (46, 57-58). Another mother explained, “a good mother need to know [how to] choose their words wisely and gently [when talking] to their children” (62, 2-3). To illustrate the importance of “taking nicely”, one father explained, “I use gentle words [to talk to my children] because I believe that gentle words would convince [and] show them that I care about their education so they would do their homework” (61, 63-65).

Encouraging children is the second theme under the communication domain. Four of the eight parents discussed this theme as an important indicator of what good parents should do. Encouragement in this context is a combination of encouraging children to stay in school and to strive for their goals. A father participant expressed that, among other things, a good father “also needs to support the children by encouraging them to strive for what they want instead of giving up” (61, 10-11). In addition, a mother explained, “I was telling my kids to study hard even if we don’t have money, it’s okay”(46, 145-146). Furthermore, another father explained that a good father should encourage their children to “focus and study hard and do well in school so that it [their education] can help their future”(69, S1).

### **Characteristics of Good Parents**

Nuzzled under the domain of characteristics of good parents are 20 themes. Characteristics of good parents refer to the personal traits that parents must possess to be considered a good parent. When describing what personal characteristics good parents must have, many parents agreed that patience (five out of eight) and being a good role model (four out of eight) is something that is necessary for good parents. Patience is the ability to not react negatively, at least not immediately, towards children when they do something that is disapproving to the parents. As one mother described it, “be patient with them, the children, so when they do something wrong, don’t show them your anger right away and try to be more patient with them” (66,1d). Additionally, one father explained, “even if they, [the children], make a mistake, you should be patient and teach

them why they made the mistake and how to fix it” (71, P14). Finally, one mother simply put it, “a good mother’s personality should be patient” (46, 57).

The ability to be a good role model to one’s children is an important characteristic of a good parent, according to first generation Hmong parents. As one mother described, “[to be a good mother, you need to] be a role model to your kids” (66,1d). Another mother further explained, “you should act good so you could be a role model for your kids” (46, 43). A good role model in this context is one who possesses many positive behaviors, including but not limited to, staying away from gambling, alcohol consumption, be honest, modest, and be respectful and kind to others. As one father elaborates, “[to be a good father] he has to be a good role model who doesn’t go out and party [or] flirt with other women, [and] don’t gamble or drink [or] do drugs” (71, P2).

### **Community Perceptions**

The community perceptions domain consists of one theme. While parents agreed that providing for the needs of children is an important part of being a good parent, some parents (two out of eight) acknowledged the influence their community has on whether or not they viewed themselves as good parents. This is true in how the community viewed the behavior of their children. As one father described it, “in the Hmong community if the daughters are good daughters then it means that the parents are good parents, and they know how to teach the daughters to be good people” (61, 37-39). One mother explained that she knows she is a good mother when “other kids come stay with my kids, [and] they (the parents) [would] ask, ‘how come your kids don’t fight or say mean stuff to others?’” (46, 36-38). Thus, well behaved children, in the eyes of the community, are a reflection

of good parents. In other words, good parents are judged by the community based on how well their children behave.

### **Motivations to be Good Parents**

Eight themes were found under the “motivations to be good parents” domain. When asked about the importance of being a good parent, parents provide a variety of answers. Some of these answers include the ability to be a good role model for other community members (four out of eight), having a good reputation within the community (three out of eight), and the ability to teach children to be good (three out of eight).

Being a good role model is an important aspect of a good parent. Good role models are not limited to the children; they are also applicable to the community. A good parent not only needs to be a good role model for his children, but also for his community. As one father described, “[it is important to be a good father because] others will see me as a good father. They will learn from me and it will be good for others” (47, 175-176). Furthermore, one mother explained that one of the reasons why it is important for her to be a good mother is because she could show parents the importance of building bonds with their children. As she puts it, “right now our Hmong parents don’t really build that bond with their children” (52, 217-220). Bonding with children is something that she believes is necessary for good parents to do. Additionally, one father stated that “for our Hmong community, if we are good role models [and] our leaders don’t lie and are truthful towards everyone and ourselves, then...if everyone thinks like I think then we can be very good [as a community]” (71, P46).

When parents are good parents, the community recognizes that quality and views those parents highly. As one mother explained, “[it is important to be a good mother because] other people might think it is good because they can see that I am able to teach my children well and being a single mother it is good too because there are people who can’t teach their kids to be good” (52, 217-220). This recognition, in turn, provides parents with a good reputation within the community. In short, as another mother puts it “[it is important to be a good mother because] other will see that you are important” (46, 94).

The ability to teach children to be good is, according to Hmong parents, an importance of being good parents. As one mother stated, “[It is important to be a good mother] because if you are a good mother, you are able to teach your kids to be good” (52, 203-204). Another mother simply stated, “[a good mother should teach her children] good only and not teach them anything bad” (46, 6-7). Teaching children to be good includes, but is not limited to, keeping children from joining gangs and keeping children in school.

### **Good Parent Education**

Under the good parent education domain there are three themes. When asked where they learned how to be good parents, the majority of Hmong parents (six out of eight) credit their own parents. As one mother stated, “My parents taught me [to be a good parent]. I know from them” (46, 75-56). Another mother explained, “I learned [how to be a good mother] from my parents” (62, 36). Furthermore, one father stated, “I learned [how to be a good parent] from my own parents” (61, 40).

Other parents (three out of eight) credit themselves in addition to their parents. As one father stated, “all of this [my views of what makes a good parent] is just from how my parents raised me and how I think” (71, P20).

Still other parents (two out of eight) credited clan leaders in addition to their parents as their source of good parent education. One father explained, “The leader of my clan is a good father. I said this because I saw that he take good care of his children, especially [his daughters]. [H]e has seven girls and all of his seven girls are good daughters” (61, 30-32). Earlier in his interview, this father stated that having well behaved children, especially daughters, is one quality of a good parent.

### **Discussion**

The current study examines the construct of good parents within the Hmong community. Overall, we found seven domains and 46 themes that constitute good parents. The seven domains include (1) provision, (2) communication, (3) involvement, (4) characteristics of good parents, (5) community perception, (6) motivation for being good parents, and (7) good parent education. Of the seven domains, provision, involvement, communication, good parents education, and characteristics of good parents are the most salient, ranging from “typical” to “general” based on the Consensual Qualitative Research method (Hill et al., 2005).

#### **Provision**

Provision is the only domain all parents in this study discussed as a symbol of good parents. According to these parents, good parents in the Hmong culture mean that they have to support their children’s education; provide for their children’s nutritional,

clothing, and shelter needs; training children to be successful (*txim txiaj*), including cooking, cleaning, and abstaining from alcohol and drugs; meeting the financial needs of the family; and providing cultural education to children.

These themes have been consistently found in the cross-cultural literature (Chao, 1994; Julian, McKenry, & McKelvey, 1994; Magen, 1994; Dybdahl & Hundeide, 1998; Goyette, & Xie, 1999; Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005). For example, the theme of providing for children's needs such as nutrition, clothing, and shelter has been found in studies where parents came from a less developed country where food and clothes were scarce such as those in Southeast Asia (Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005) and Somalia (Dybdahl & Hundeide, 1998).

Similarly, the theme of providing education support to children cuts across cultures, but more salient in cultures outside the United States where public education might not be readily available to every family, such as Southeast Asia, Somalia, and Israel (Dybdahl & Hundeide, 1998; Magen, 1994; Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005). Furthermore, this finding supports the longstanding knowledge that Asian parents tend to view education highly and often encourage their children to perform well in school (Julian, McKenry, & McKelvey, 1994; Goyette, & Xie, 1999).

For the Hmong in particular, support for children's education is viewed as a very important indicator for good parents since many first-generation Hmong, including participants of this study, did not have the opportunity to get their education back in their native countries because public education was not available to all children. Given this



context, it is not surprising that this theme emerged as the most salient one compared to others in this study.

### **Involvement**

Involvement is the active participation of parents in the lives of their children. Involvement is the second most salient domain in the consideration of good parents according to the participants of the current study. Six of out eight (“typical”) parents agreed that being involved in the daily lives of their children is something that parents should do in order to be good parents. Good parents therefore need to involve themselves in the lives of their children, including the social and academic aspects; participate in the completion of household chores; be responsive to their children; monitor their children’s activities; be physically present for their children; and discipline their children if need be.

The idea of parental involvement was mentioned by family researchers as an attribute of good parents (Julian, McKenry, & McKelvey, 1994; Magen, 1994; Dybdahl & Hundeide, 1998; Hoghughi & Speight, 1998; Javo, Alapack, Heyerdahl, & Ronning, 2003; Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005). Indeed, parental involvement was observed by researchers within the mainstream American (Julian, McKenry, & McKelvey, 1994; Hoghughi & Speight, 1998; Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005), Sami (Javo, Alapack, Heyerdahl, & Ronning, 2003), Somali (Dybdahl and Hundeide, 1998), Israeli (Magen, 1994), and Asian (Chao, 1994; Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005) culture as a practice of good parents. Similarly, Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, and Cleveland (2005) found that parental involvement was identified as an attribute of good parents in the Cambodian, Lao, and Vietnamese community. This

attribute, however, was not mentioned by the Hmong parents. Thus, this finding is a new contribution to the good parent literature.

Involvement in household chores was also found to be an important contributing factor of a good parent. As far as the author knows, the literatures on good parents within the Asian community have yet to mention this as a practice of good parents. Thus, this finding is a contribution to the good parent literature.

### **Communication**

Equally important as involvement is communication. Communication or the ability to connect with children has emerged as the third most salient domain when considering what constitutes a good parent in this study. Six out of eight (“typical”) parents mentioned communication as something good parents need to provide to their children. Therefore, good parents are supposed to talk nicely to children, encourage children to talk nicely to each other, and build relationships with children to enhance the communication between parents and children. Specifically, parents of this study told us that good parents are those who talk to their children nicely. They tend to refrain from yelling and hitting. They explain more and command less when interacting with children.

This finding, although insightful, seems to run counter to what has been found in the literature about Asian parents, where they have been characterized as harsh and authoritarian (Ho, 1986; Steinberg, Dornbsch, & Brown, 1992; Xiong, Detzner, & Cleveland, 2005; Yum, 1988). For example, in the Southeast Asian community “when parents speak, children are expected to listen without questioning. Any attempt to

question or ‘talking back’ is considered disobedient” (Detzner, Xiong, & Eliason, 1999, p. 5).

It is perhaps after years of frustration about parenting children in the United States (Hughes, 1990; Xiong, Detzner, & Rettig, 2000) coupled with the level of acculturation among parents may have realized that the traditional one-way communication is no longer viable to raise children in America. This is something to be observed in future studies with this population and other immigrant populations in the United States.

### **Good Parent Education**

Good parent education is the fourth most salient domain in this study. Parents identify “good parent education” as what helped them to form their own definition of good parenting. When asked from whom they learned how to be a good parent, six out of eight parents (“typical”) identified their own parents. Although this finding was insightful, it is not surprising considering the general Asian parenting philosophy. Since training children is an important value to Asian parents (Chao, 1994), it is not surprising that training children how to be good parents is a skill that falls within that arena.

### **Characteristics of Good Parents**

Characteristics of good parents came out to be the fifth most salient domain in this study. Five out of eight parents (“typical”) mentioned that a good parent tends to be patient and has the ability to be a good role model. Since “training” is an important responsibility of a good parent, it makes sense that good parent also needs to be able to be patient with their children.

Parents do not expect children to know how to behave at all situations, nor do they expect children to know all of the necessary skills to be an independent adult. Thus, whenever children make mistakes, it is necessary that parents show patience towards their children so to help their children correct their mistakes. This attribute is very similar to the attributes of “understanding” and “forgiving” found in the research conducted by Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, and Cleveland (2005). The attributes of “understanding” and “forgiving” convey the idea of compassion good parents give to their children. Patience also communicates compassion but it goes a step further by encouraging the provision of further guidance given to children by parents to help correct a mistake or complete a task. In their study, Xiong, Eliason, Detzner, and Cleveland (2005) discovered that the attributes of “understanding” and “forgiving” are only mentioned by Cambodian parents as an attributes of good parents. The current study found that Hmong parents also value similar attributes, which is a new contribution to the literature.

The ability to be a good role model for their children is an important characteristic of good parents. Good parents go beyond teaching children how to be good members of society; they also model the way. This is important, as one mother explained, “[i]f you don't act good, your children [will] not listen to you and will be far apart from you” (49, 69-70). As far as this researcher knows the literature on Asian parenting has yet to mention good role model as an attribute of good parents. Therefore, this finding is a contribution to the literature.

The collective community plays an important role in the construct of good parents within the Hmong community. Hmong parents mentioned two domains that contribute to

the definition of good parents that are influenced by their community. These two domains are community perception and motivation parents have for being good parents. Within the community perception domain, parents mentioned well-behaved children in the eyes of the community as an important contributing factor in defining a good parent. Within the motivation to be good parent domain, parents mentioned being a good role model for the community, and having a good reputation within the community as two contributing factors in the definition of good parents.

This finding speaks to the collective philosophy of the Hmong culture. Within the United States, Hmong immigrants live in close and cohesive community. Members of the Hmong community shared many beliefs, norms, values, and rituals that make up the Hmong ethnic identity (Xiong, Tuicomepee, LaBlanc, & Rainey, 2006). Within such close-knit community, members tend to feel more pressure to maintain social harmony. One way to accomplish this task is through preserving face (Ow & Katz, 1999). Face preservation allows members of the community to be connected to the overall collective community. In our case, parents' mindfulness of the community's perceptions in the creation of good parent's definition could be explained by the parents' desire to maintain social harmony and avoid social shame and isolation.

### **Theory Integrations**

Symbolic interaction theory articulates that individuals construct meanings through the interaction process with other individuals. These meanings, in turn, influence the individual's behaviors (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993). Incorporated within symbolic interaction theory are a list of assumptions including: (1) individuals' actions towards a

thing(s) are influenced by the meanings that individuals assigned to that thing; (2) the meaning of a thing(s) came about as the result of the interaction between people; and (3) the cultural and societal process have significant influence on the individual and the small groups residing within (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993).

When viewing the current study through the framework of symbolic interaction theory, it is possible to see the process Hmong parents go through as they construct the definition of good parents and the influence of the collective Hmong community on the development of the definition. The third assumptions of symbolic interaction theory, listed above, explained that the individuals are subjected to the influence of cultural and societal process that the individuals have membership to (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993).

Due to the collectivist philosophy embedded within the Hmong culture and the close-knit community Hmong individuals reside in (Xiong, Tuicomepee, LaBlanc, & Rainey, 2006), the pressure to conform to community's norms and values are strong. Through years of development, the Hmong community, as a whole, has agreed on a set of attributes that makes up the concept of "good". When the individual Hmong parent interacts with the larger collective community, their definition of "good" was constructed and influenced by that interaction. Thus, not wanting to deviate from the collective philosophy and risk social seclusion and community rejection, Hmong parents incorporate the collective community's definition of good parents within their own definition of good parents. Here, it is possible to see the influence the collective community has on Hmong parents' construct of good parents. Additionally, it is possible to understand why Hmong parents include such attributes as well-behaved children in

accordance to the community, good reputation, and good role models within the community in the makeup of good parents.

Once the definition of good parents was created in the minds of individual Hmong parents, it is then used as a guideline to help shape the behavior of Hmong parents. The first assumption of symbolic interaction theory, listed above, explained that the individual's interaction with an object is influenced by the meaning the individual assigned to that object (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993). The object in our case is the concept of good parents. Under the umbrella of good parents, reside a list provisions and behaviors that need to be carried out if the title of "good parent" is to be gained. The current study has begun to uncover that list. Such actions as provision and characteristics of good parents are guidelines of actions and behaviors. The participants in the current study strive to fulfill these actions and guidelines. These actions and behaviors are in constant check by the collective Hmong community, and feedback is provided by the community to the individual members. An example of such feedback comes in the form of pride, shame, and saving face.

Saving face is an important value within the Hmong community (Xiong, Tuicomepee, LaBlanc, & Rainey, 2006). Individuals do not want to lose face due to the heavy consequence of community rejection and abandonment (Xiong, 2000). Thus, Hmong parents will strive to fulfill the requirements of good parents so to avoid the shame of being labeled a bad parent and to gain the pride of having the title of good parents bestowed upon them by the community. Taken together, the requirements of good

parents and the feedback and interaction of the community help parents define and carry out their parental roles.

### **Implications for Practice and Future Research**

The current study revealed a beginning list of the attributes that make up a good Hmong parent. Additionally, the current study also illustrates the important role the collective community plays in the construction and parents' perception of good parents within the Hmong community. These lessons can be used to inform best practices for parent education programs serving Hmong parents.

Previous researches have noted that many currently established parent education programs were based on the middle-class European-American parenting philosophy (Gordon, 1970; Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1976; Popkin, 1990; Xiong, Detzner, Keuster, Eliason, & Allen, 2006) which may not be effective for the Asian population. The findings of the current study could be used as points of consideration when developing parent education programs for Hmong parents.

More specifically, the current study illustrates the necessity of incorporating the collective community's philosophy into the program's curriculum and acknowledging the influencing role the community has on Hmong parenting values. Furthermore, it would also be beneficial to invest the time to understand how Hmong parents see themselves within the community, their concerns, and work with parents to improve their current situation instead of imposing our outcomes. Doing this will increase the effectiveness of the program's ability to serve Hmong parents.



The current study only examines the results of eight first-generation Hmong parents' interviews. While these interviews provide rich insights into the definition of good parents within the Hmong community, it is incomplete. Future study would benefit from the inclusion of Hmong parents from younger generations (e.g. 1.5- and second-generations), which is the plan for the current study. We've already collected interviews from 1.5- and second-generation Hmong parents. We plan to analyze these interviews for comparisons and publication considerations.

Additionally, interviewing parents with children of different developmental stages (e.g. parents with children ages zero to five, school age children, and teenagers) would also provide meaningful insights into the definition of good parents. Parents with younger children might define "good parents" differently than parents with school age children or teenagers.

Furthermore, the definition of good parents may vary depending on the gender of the parents. Thus, comparing mothers' views of good parents and fathers' views of good parents could provide valuable insights into the concept of good parents. This is something that could be explored in future studies.

Moreover, it would be interesting to examine the stability of good parents over time. Would the definition of a good parent change over time? If so how? These are important questions to ask, especially within a minority population like the Hmong. Acculturation literatures have suggested that child-rearing philosophy of minority cultures is influenced by the length of exposure to the majority culture. With increased exposure, the child-rearing philosophy of minority cultures tends to move towards that of

the majority culture (Kobayashi-Winata, & Power, 1989; Javo, Alapack, Heyerdahl, & Ronning 2003). This is something that would be worthwhile to explore in future studies.

Last but not least, while the current study provided insights into the concept of good parents within the Southeast Asian community, it only captures the voice of one Southeast Asian group. Future study would benefit from the inclusion of other Southeast Asian groups (e.g. Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laos, etc.) so to capture a more complete understanding of the concept of good parents within the Southeast Asian community.

### **Limitations**

The current study contains a few limitations that are warrant for discussion. First, the participants of the current study were recruited from convenient locations. Thus, the current study is limited in its ability to generalize the findings to Hmong parents residing in other geographic locations. Future studies would benefit from more random recruitment strategies and from more diverse geographical locations.

Second, due to time constraints the current report only presented the results of the definition of good parents through the views of first-generation Hmong parents. Thus, this limits the study's ability to apply the findings to parents of younger generations. The overall study does include interviews from 1.5- and second-generation parents. Perhaps the definition of good parents is more feasible for these later generations once the remaining interviews are analyzed. This is the next step of the current study.

Third, the current study has not reached data saturation for all domains and themes found. Data saturation happens when an idea was mentioned over and over again by the participants and no new information about that idea was generated (Glaser, &

Strauss, 1967; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). In the current study, the idea of providing educational support was mentioned over and over again by all eight parents and no new information about that idea was communicated by the parents. This might be due to the small number of participants. Due to time constraints, the current report only includes the voices of eight out of 19 participants. The other participants' data had not been analyzed. Perhaps more of the domains and themes will become saturated once the other interviews are analyzed.

Fourth, due to language barriers, the researcher was not able to personally interview all of the participants in the current study. Many participants preferred to be interviewed in Hmong, and since the researcher was not able to speak or understand Hmong, he was not able to personally interview these participants. As a result, the researcher had to rely on the Hmong-speaking undergraduate research team members to conduct the interview. Although training was provided to the undergraduate team members by the researcher and his adviser, the lack of interview experience prevented the undergraduate team members from gathering quality in-depth data.

Last but not least, due to time constraints and language barriers, the researcher was not able to contact the first generation participants to ask follow-up and clarifying questions of their interviews. Thus, occasions during the data analysis, the researcher had to use his best judgment to make sense of any confusing points in the interviews. Despite these limitations, the current study does provide valuable insight into the concept of good parenting in the Hmong community.

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Table 1

*Participants' Marital Status, Employment, Generation, and Education Level Characteristics*

Characteristics	N	Frequencies (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age			32.50	10.44
Gender				
Male	7	39		
Female	11	61		
Marital Status				
Married	15	83.3		
Divorced	3	16.7		
Employment Status				
Employed	11	61.6		
Unemployed	6	33.3		
No Response*	1	5.6		
Education Level				
Less than high school	6	33.3		
High School Graduate	2	11.1		
Some College	6	33.3		
College Graduate	2	11.1		
Masters or higher	1	5.6		
No Response	1	5.6		
Generations				
1 <sup>st</sup>	8	44.4		
Age			38.9	12.35
1.5	2	11.1		
Age			28.00	8.49
2 <sup>nd</sup>	8	44.4		
Age			27.25	4.27

Note. 1<sup>st</sup> Generation: Older than 17 when they moved to the United States. 1.5 Generation: Between 7 and 17 years old when they moved to the United States. 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation: Younger than 7 years old when immigrated to the United States or born in the United States.

\*A "No response" is given to any participants who do not answer the question(s) asked.

Table 2

Table 2

*Participants' Language Proficiency and Language used to communicate with their children*

Characteristic	N	Frequencies (%)
English Language Fluency		
Written		
Not at all	1	5.6
A little Bit	5	27.8
Quite Well	3	16.7
Very Well	9	50
Spoken		
A little Bit	7	38.9
Quite Well	3	16.7
Very Well	8	44.4
Hmong Language Fluency		
Written		
Not at all	6	33.3
A little Bit	5	27.8
Quite Well	3	16.7
Very Well	4	22.2
Spoken		
A little Bit	1	5.3
Quite Well	2	10.5
Very Well	15	83.3
Language used to communicate with children		
English	1	5.3
Hmong	8	44.4
Mixed	9	50.0

Table 3

*Attributes of Good Parents According to 1<sup>st</sup> Generation Hmong Parents*

Domains	Example Quotes	Frequency
<b>Provision</b>		
Providing Education Support	I think that I will support my children to finish their education (46, 145)	8 (General)
Providing Nutrition, Clothing, and Shelter	I think a good father needs to take care of the children. By taking care of the children, the father needs to find food/clothing or provide shelter for the children to live and eat so they would not starved (61, 8-10).	6 (Typical)
Providing Training	When they, my children, have a wife or husband, they will know how to do it [e.g. cook, clean, etc] (46, 35-36)	5 (Typical)
Providing Finance	[What I can do to be a good father is] figure out a way to find money to help support [my] children. (69, S41).	2 (Variant)
Providing Cultural Education	tell the kids about our culture and tradition...(66, 1b)	1 (Variant)
<b>Involvement</b>		
Involving in child's life	...If they [my children] wants to go somewhere I do drop them off and when it's time for them to come back I do go right back and pick them up (52, 33-35)  When my kids get home, I ask them how school went, and how their	6 (Typical)



education is (46, 26-27).

Involving in household chores	I think a good father needs to clean the house (61, 2)	5 (Typical)
	[A good father should] know how to love and help one another in a household so that there won't be any fights, arguments or breakup within it [the family] (71, P2).	
Responsive	When they [my children] cry, do what you can to not make them cry (47, 103-104)	3 (Variant)
Monitoring	To be a good mother, you have to take good care of watching over your children (52, 3)	3 (Variant)
Physically Present	I am always with them [my children] at all times (52, 12)	2 (Variant)
“Discipline”	A good mother must discipline the children to learn how to talk wisely (62, 9-10)	2 (Variant)

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#### Communication

“Talking Nicely” to children	Don't yell or talk nonsense and if do talk, think before talking (46, 57-58)	6 (Typical)
Encouraging children	[A good father] also needs to support the children by encouraging them to strive for what they want instead of giving up (61, 10-11)	4 (Typical)

Building Relationships with children

A good father must build a bond/friendship with his children (71, P10).

1 (Variant)

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#### Characteristics of Good Parents

“Patience”

Be patient with them, the children, so when they do something wrong, don’t show them your anger right away and try to be more patient with them.(66, 1d)

5 (Typical)

Good Role Model

[A good mother need to] be a role model to your kids (66, 1d)

4 (Typical)

Respectful & Kind

When you step outside of the home, be able to respect people, no matter how they are (52, 210)

3 (Variant)

Employed

A good father, first he must have a job (69, S9)

3 (Variant)

Good Spouse

He [a good father] will also talk with the wife first before doing anything (47, 54)

3 (Variant)

Educated

One of the goals [of a good father] should be to learn how to read and write - get an education (69, S1)

3 (Variant)

Don't Gamble	...Don't gamble or do something that is not good (47, 27)	2 (Variant)
Honest	[A good mother] If you have kids and they want something you should give it to them, if you don't have it then you should just let them know that too(52, 105-107)	2 (Variant)
Love Children	...as long as he love his children then he is a good father (47, 58)	2 (Variant)
Control of Children	A good father often is..able to control or take charge of the kids (69, S10)	1 (Variant)
Democratic	A good father would ask his children, 'what do you like or what do you want' or else he would come up with ideas for his kids like if you work hard and study hard I'll buy this for you or give you this (69, S15)	1 (Variant)
Don't Drink Alcohol	[a good father should] not go out and finding other women, don't drink (71, P6)	1 (Variant)
Good Judgment	[To be a good mother you have to decide] what is good to do and what is not good to do (52, 4)	1 (Variant)
Financial Literacy	A good father should also know how to balance or budget their financial needs so that there will be enough for the family (71, P2)	1 (Variant)
Fair	[To be a good father] when you love your children, you love them all equally so that they don't feel sad about it (71, P22)	1 (Variant)
“Don't Hit”	[a good father]...don't hit them [the children] (71, P14)	1 (Variant)

Awareness of Resource	If have kids, don't have too many kids so can help the kids with their education (47, 7)	1 (Variant)
Modesty	[A good mother do not] see herself too high (52, 59)	1 (Variant)
Self Control	[To be a good father] you shouldn't let your anger out for your children to see (69, S21)	1 (Variant)
Have Goals	[To be a good father] you should have goals or ideas of what you want to do (69,S1)	1 (Variant)

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#### Community Perception

Well Behaved Children	In the Hmong community if the daughters are good daughters then it means that the parents are good parents and they know how to teach the daughters to be good people (61, 37-39)	2 (Variant)
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#### Motivation for being good parents

Good Role Model for Community	...other will see me as a good father. They will learn from me and it will be good for others (47, 175-176)	4 (Typical)
Good Reputation Within Community	...other people might think it is good because they can see that I am able to teach my children well and being a single mother it is good too because there are people who can't teach their kids to be good (52, 217-220)	3 (Variant)
Teach children to be good	If you are a good mother, you are able to teach your kids to be good (52, 203-	3 (Variant)

204)

Legacy	If I'm able to be a good father then my children might keep it and make it into a story and tell it to their children that [I'm] a good parent (69, S37)	1 (Variant)
Viewed as important by children	[It's important for my children that I am a good mother because] they [my children will] love me and see [that] I'm important (46, 251-252)	1 (Variant)
Respond to parents kindly	They answered me really kind and I teach them good (46, 19)	1 (Variant)
Helpful to parents	They [the children] are really helpful around the home with cleaning and mopping and dishes (46, 36-38)	1 (Variant)
Reduce family stress	If I am a good husband and my wife is a good wife, no divorce, and life is not ruined, then we will be less stress (47, 165-166)	1 (Variant)

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Good Parent Education

“Parents”	My parents taught me. I know from them (46, 75-56).	6 (Typical)
Self	“All of this [my views of what makes a good parent] is just from how my parents raised me and how I think.”(71, P20).	3 (Variant)
Leader of clan	The leader of my clan is a good father (61, 30).	2 (Variant)

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Note. General: All 8 cases; Typical: 4-8 cases; Variant: 1-3 cases

## Appendix A

# Good Parent Demographic Form

## FOR INTERVIEWER USE ONLY

Interview ID No.: \_\_\_\_\_(Ex.PB0120101018)

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please respond to each question and mark the answer to the appropriate box (or write the response in the space provided).

1. What is your gender?
  - Male
  - Female
  
2. What is your birthday? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Month/Day/Year)
  
3. Where were you born? \_\_\_\_\_  
(City if known) (Country)
  
4. If born outside the U.S., how long have you lived in the United States?
  - All my life       Ten years or more
  - Five to nine years       Less than five years
  
5. How much is your estimated family's annual income?
  - \$1 – \$16,000       \$16,001 – \$30,000
  - \$30,001 – \$75,000       \$75,000 and above
  
6. How many adults (18 years old or older) live in your household? \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. How many children (under 18 years old) live in your household? \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. How old is/are the child/children living at home with you? \_\_\_\_\_
  
9. What is your marital status?
  - Married       Legally Separated
  - Divorce

**DIERCTIONS:** Please answer each question by placing an “X” to the appropriate box.

10. How well do you speak English ?

- Not at all       A little bit       Quite well       Very well, like an American
11. How well do you understand English?  
 Not at all       A little bit       Quite well       Very well, like an American
12. How well do you read English?  
 Not at all       A little bit       Quite well       Very well, like an American
13. How well do you write English?  
 Not at all       A little bit       Quite well       Very well, like an American
14. How well do you speak Hmong?  
 Not at all       A little bit       Quite well       Very well
15. How well do you understand Hmong?  
 Not at all       A little bit       Quite well       Very well
16. How well do you read Hmong?  
 Not at all       A little bit       Quite well       Very well
17. How well do you write Hmong?  
 Not at all       A little bit       Quite well       Very well
18. What is the language spoken mostly in your home?  
 English                       Mixed  
 Hmong                       Other language (Specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
19. When you talk to your kids, what language do you most often use?  
 English       Hmong       Mixed       Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
20. When you talk to your friends, what language do you most often use?  
 English       Hmong       Mixed       Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

<b>FOR INTERVIEWER USE ONLY</b>	
Interview ID No.:	_____ (Ex. PB0120101018)
Interviewer:	_____
Date:	_____

### Mother Interview Questions

1. In your opinion, what is a good mother?
  - a. Can you tell me more about mothers who know how to be a mother? Do you agree that all mothers act the same toward their children? Why?
  - b. What does a good mother do?
    - i. What do good mothers do that are unique and distinctive from other parents?
  - c. How does she interact with her children?
    - i. Can you give me some examples?
  - d. What is her personality like?

### Lus Noog Rau Tus Niam Tsev

1. Raws li koj xav nev, tus niam zoo ho zoo licas?
  - a. Kov xav nev, cov txawj ua niam ho zoo licas? Ua li koj puas pom tau hais tias txua txua tus niam yeej coj zoo ib yam xwb los? Vim licas?
  - b. Tus niam zoo ho coj licas thiab ua dab tsi?
    - i. Tus niam zoo ho txawv lwm tus niam txiv npaum licas?
  - c. Tus niam zoo ho coj licas nrog nws cov menyuam?
    - i. Thov koj piav qho puav yam ntxwv rau kuv mloog saib?



- i. How do you know if someone is a good mother?
  - e. Do you know someone in your community that you would say hey that is a good mother?
    - i. If yes, what makes you say that?
    - ii. What did she do that makes her as a good mother?
  - f. Where did you learn the idea of a good mother from?
    - i. Who told you?
    - ii. In what ways?
2. Would you consider yourself to be a good mother?
- a. Why or why not? What makes you say that?
    - i. Are you telling me that you're not doing what a good mother is supposed to be doing?
    - ii. Can you give me some examples of what you do with your children?
- d. Nws tus cwj pwm ho zoo licas?
    - i. Ua cas koj ho paub tias nws yog ib tug niam zoo no?
  - e. Koj puas paub ib tug neeg zoo li no?
    - i. Yog paub, vim licas koj hais tias yog nws?
    - ii. Nws ua dab tsi es koj thiaj hais tias nws yog ib tug niam zoo no?
  - f. Hais txog ua niam zoo, koj kawm qhov twg los?
    - i. Leej twg qhia rau koj?
    - ii. Qhia licas?
2. Koj puas xav tias koj yog ib leej niam zoo thiab?
- a. Vim licas koj ho hais li koj?
    - i. Koj qhia rau kuv tias koj yeej tsis ua li ib tug niam zoo ua li no los?
    - ii. Koj sim muab ob peb qho yam ntxwv txog lub sij hawm koj nrog koj cov menyuum ua si rau kuv

- iii. Can you tell me things you should be doing to your family and with your children in order to be considered a good mother?
3. Would you consider your husband to be a good father?
- Why or why not? What makes you say that?
  - Can you tell me things your husband does with your children that make him a good father?
  - Can you tell me things your husband does not do with your children that make him not a good father?
  - Can you tell me things your husband should be doing to be considered as a good father?
4. In your opinion, what is it mean to you to be a good mother?
- Is it important to be a good mother? Why and to whom?
- iii. Rau koj neev, koj yuav tsum ua dab tsi rau koj tsev neeg thiab cov me nyuam es koj thiaj li pom tias koj yog ib leej niam zoo no?
3. Koj puas xav tias koj tus txiv yog ib leej txiv zoo thiab?
- Vim licas koj ho hais li ntawv?
  - Koj tus txiv ho ua licas nrog cov menyuam es koj thiaj li hais tias nws yog ib leej txiv zoo no?
  - Koj tus txiv ho tsis ua dab tsi nrog cov menyuam es koj thiaj li hais tias nws tsis yog ib leej txiv zoo no?
  - Koj xav neev, koj tus txiv yuav tsum ua dab tsi rau koj tsev neeg thiab cov me nyuam es koj thiaj li pom tau tias koj tus txiv yog ib leej txiv zoo no?
4. Raws koj xav neev, ua ib leej niam zoo txhais tau li cas?
- Koj puas xav tias ua ib leej niam zoo tseem ceeb thiab? Vim licas thiab rau leej twg?

- b. To yourself?
- c. To your husband?
- d. To your children?
- e. To your immediate family members?
- f. To the Hmong community?

- a. Tseem ceeb licas rau koj tus kheej nev?
- b. Tseem ceeb licas rau koj poj niam nev?
- c. Tseem ceeb licas rau koj cov menyuam nev?
- d. Tseem ceeb licas rau koj tsev neeg nev?
- e. Tseem ceeb licas rau peb Hmoob nev?

**FOR INTERVIEWER USE ONLY**

Interview ID No.: \_\_\_\_\_ (Ex.PB0120101018)

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Father Interview Questions**

3. In your opinion, what is a good father?
  - a. Can you tell me more about fathers who know how to be a father? Do you agree that all fathers act the same toward their children? Why?
  - b. What does a good father do?
    - i. What do good fathers do that are unique and distinctive from other parents?
  - c. How does he interact with his children?
    - i. Can you give me some examples?
  - d. What is his personality like?
    - i. How do you know if someone is a good father?

**Lus Noog Rau Tus Txiv Tsev**

5. Raws li koj xav nev, tus txiv zoo ho zoo licas?
  - g. Kov xav nev, cov txawj ua txiv ho zoo licas? Ua li koj puas pom tau hais tias txua txua tus txiv yeej coj zoo ib yam xwb los? Vim licas?
  - h. Tus txiv zoo ho coj licas thiab ua dab tsi?
    - i. Tus txiv zoo ho txawv lwm tus niam txiv npaum licas?
  - i. Tus txiv zoo ho coj licas nrog nws cov menyuum?
    - i. Thov koj piav qho puav yam ntxwv rau kuv mloog saib?
  - j. Nws tus cwj pwm ho zoo licas?

- e. Do you know someone in your community that you would say hey that is a good father?
    - i. If yes, what makes you say that?
    - ii. What did he do that makes him as a good father?
  - f. Where did you learn the idea of a good father from?
    - i. Who told you?
    - ii. In what ways?
4. Would you consider yourself to be a good father?
- a. Why or why not? What makes you say that?
    - i. Are you telling me that you're not doing what a good father is supposed to be doing?
    - ii. Can you give me some examples of what you do with your children?
    - iii. Can you tell me things you should be doing to your family and with your children in order to be
      - i. Ua cas koj ho paub tias nws yog ib tug txiv zoo no?
6. Koj puas xav tias koj yog ib tug txiv tsev zoo thiab?
- a. Vim licas koj ho hais li koj?
    - i. Koj qhia rau kuv tias koj yeej tsis ua li ib leej txiv zoo ua li no los?
    - ii. Koj sim muab ob peb qho yam ntxwv txog lub sij hawm koj nrog koj cov menyuam ua si rau kuv siab?
    - iii. Rau koj nev, koj yuav tsum ua dab tsi rau koj tsev
- k. Koj puas paub ib tug neeg zoo li no?
    - i. Yog paub, vim licas koj hais tias yog nws?
    - ii. Nws ua dab tsi es koj thiaj hais tias nws yog ib leej txiv zoo no?
  - l. Hais txog ua txiv tsev zoo, koj kawm qhov twg los?
    - i. Leej twg qhia rau koj?
    - ii. Qhia licas?

considered a good father?

neeg thiab cov me nyuam es koj thiaj li pom tias koj  
yog ib leej txiv zoo no?

7. Would you consider your wife to be a good mother?

- i. Why or why not? What makes you say that?
- ii. Can you tell me things your wife does with your children that make her a good mother?
- iii. Can you tell me things your wife does not do with your children that make her not a good mother?
- iv. Can you tell me things your wife should be doing to be considered as a good mother?

8. In your opinion, what is it mean to you to be a good father?

- a. Is it important to be a good father? Why and to whom?
- b. To yourself?
- c. To your wife?
- d. To your children?

3. Koj puas xav tias koj tus poj niam yog ib leej niam zoo thiab?

- i. Vim licas koj ho hais li ntawv?
- ii. Koj poj niam ho ua licas nrog cov menyuam es koj thiaj li hais tias nws yog ib leej niam zoo no?
- v. Koj poj niam ho tsis ua dab tsi nrog cov menyuam es koj thiaj li hais tias nws tsis yog ib leej niam zoo no?
- vi. Koj xav nev, koj poj niam yuav tsum ua dab tsi rau koj tsev neeg thiab cov me nyuam es koj thiaj li pom tau tias koj poj niam yog ib leej niam zoo no?

4. Raws koj xav nev, ua ib leej txiv zoo txhais tau li cas?

- a. Koj puas xav tias ua ib leej txiv zoo tseem ceeb thiab? Vim licas thiab rau leej twg?
- b. Tseem ceeb licas rau koj tus kheej nev?
- c. Tseem ceeb licas rau koj poj niam nev?

e. To your immediate family members?

f. To the Hmong community?

d. Tseem ceeb licas rau koj cov menyuam nev?

e. Tseem ceeb licas rau koj tsev neeg nev?

f. Tseem ceeb licas rau peb Hmoob nev?