

**EXAMINING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INFLUENCES ON  
THE ATTITUDES TO EDUCATION AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS  
OF HMONG/MONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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## ABSTRACT

To date, little research has been conducted on the family and community influences on the attitudes to education and career aspirations of Hmong/Mong high school students. The Hmong / Mong refugees began their resettlement in the United States since 1975. The first wave came to the U.S. from 1975 to 1984; the second wave came here from 1985 to 1999; the third wave came from 2003 to the present time. The Hmong/Mong were a pre-literate ethnic minority people living in the highland areas in the northern part of Laos. They were recruited to fight the secret war in Laos and were admitted to resettle in the United States for their loyalty to the American government during the Vietnam War.

The purpose of this qualitative ethnographic study was to examine the family and community influences on the attitudes to education and career aspirations of Hmong/Mong high school students in the Twin Cities and its surrounding areas. The research questions which drove this study were: What is like to be a Hmong/Mong student at home and in the Hmong/Mong community? What are the influences on the education of Hmong/Mong students? What are the attitudes of Hmong/Mong students toward their education? What are the educational aspirations of Hmong/Mong students? What are the career aspirations of Hmong/Mong students? The literature review included an exploration of these influential and career aspirations factors.

The research design included a series of in-depth interviews with fifty-two Hmong/Mong participants ages fourteen to twenty-two years old, male and female, northern and southern Hmong/Mong, different religious affiliation, and members from eleven clans. The data were collected between the months of December 2007 to July 2008. All interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. The interviews were in both Hmong/Mong and

English. The transcripts were done by four individuals who are competent in both Hmong/Mong and English. Transcripts were analyzed for themes. Based on this analysis, results of the study were formulated. The findings of this study included the following items:

- (*What is like to be a Hmong/Mong student at home and in the Hmong/Mong community?*) (a) Constant lecture is a means of communicating expectation for Hmong/Mong students; (b) Family continues to be the main source of influence on Hmong/Mong students' education; (c) The family past and current hardship is a tool to influence Hmong/Mong students' education; (d) The Hmong/Mong community hardship and their underdog status are a tool to influence Hmong/Mong students' education;
- (*What are the influences on the education of Hmong/Mong students?*) (e) Positive connection with specific key teacher or counselor or administrator at school has positive influence on Hmong/Mong students' education; (f) Positive support network of peers influences and increases Hmong/Mong students' success in education; (g) The U.S. education system is perceived as excellent and it influences and increases Hmong/Mong students' academic success; (h) Positive self-esteem, pride, and strong character influence Hmong/Mong students' education; (i) After school programs and supportive programs increase Hmong/Mong students' success in education;
- (*What are the attitudes on Hmong/Mong students toward their education?*) (j) School is important to Hmong/Mong students; (k) Success of others influences Hmong/Mong students' education;
- (*What are the educational aspirations of Hmong/Mong students?*) (l) Hmong/Mong students have aspiration to move up their socio-economic status; (m) Hmong/Mong U.S.-born adolescents assimilate faster and become more individualistic; (n) Hmong/Mong culture is a source of

resilience to Hmong/Mong adolescents; (o) Recent arrival Hmong/Mong students have high aspiration to continue school after high school;

- (*What are their career aspirations?*) (p) First generation Hmong/Mong adolescents have high aspiration in diverse career choice; and (q) Parental involvement has positive impact on Hmong/Mong adolescents' education and career choice.

This study concurs with the Voluntary and Involuntary minorities' model of John Ogbu. The Hmong/Mong's experience in the U.S. education falls into the Voluntary Minorities category of John Ogbu. This study has crucial implications for policymakers, who are responsible for policies and programs that directly or indirectly affect the Hmong/Mong students' education; other groups that bear the implications of this study include postsecondary administrators, secondary administrators, families, advocates, individuals, and those for future research.

## DEDICATION

As I reflect on what I have learned about the family and community influences on the attitudes to education and career aspirations of Hmong/Mong high school students, I realize that I have my own story to share. My father lost his mother at the age of around one and a half to two years old and was raised by an aunt; he lost his father when he was six years old. My mother lost her mother when she was six years old and her father passed away when she was in her late teenager. As orphans from their toddler, both my parents built their life from the scratch and a hard lesson; they have emphasized the importance of education to their children since the birth of their first child in 1949 to avoid the perpetuation of their sufferance to their children. Living in the remote area in the mountains of Laos, they sent my siblings and me to school. I started my elementary school in 1963 in Ban Nam Chong. My parents taught me to concentrate on my education and never gave up. My older brother, *Zam Xyooj Thoj*, was my mentor. He has been my strongest role model and advocate. My three older sisters made tremendous sacrifice for me by helping my parents with the slash and burnt agriculture and allowing me to attend elementary and secondary schools away from home. From 1965 to 1975, I spent more than ten months away from home to attend school and only returned home to visit my parents, siblings, and relatives at our village, Ban Sane Louang for a period of two weeks to two months during the summers. My other siblings always gave me their support and courage. Without the love and sacrifice of my parents and siblings, I would not be where I am today.

My family was admitted to resettle in the United States on April 24, 1976 as refugees from Laos when Indochina fell into the control of the communist regime. My family fled Laos on May 20, 1975 and spent one year in the refugee camps in Nam Phong, Khone Kaen

and Ban Vinai, Loei. Three months after my resettlement in the U.S., I received my GED diploma from Providence Adult Education Department and started my college education in Providence, Rhode Island in the fall of 1976.

I began my life in the United States with a jewelry factory of \$2.30 per hour and attended college part-time; I was active in my refugee community such as being interpreter for my relatives, organizer and activist for my church and the Hmong/Mong community self-help organization. My struggle to obtain education to improve my life and my experiences of helping my relatives and my Hmong/Mong community to adjust to their new life gave me opportunities to learn and build advocacy skills. I have been a lifelong learner since 1963, an interpreter since 1976, and an activist since my exodus from Laos to Thailand and eventually to the United States.

I have been honored to work with many in the Hmong/Mong American community over the past 32 years. They have shared their traditions, history, struggles, success, suffering, and friendship with me. I have learned so much from this rich journey. I am also honored to have the opportunity to interview fifty-two Hmong/Mong adolescents for this study. They were willing, open, and honest to participate in this study. My gratitude to them is beyond measure. My father who was a healer and community leader inculcated me well with the servant leadership. My mother, an herbalist and natural social worker, inspired me to become a social worker. My mother-in-law, a negotiator and risk-taker also motivated me to take the leadership role of being a lifelong educator. My three sons and daughter gave me my strengths in searching for better skills in parent education. My experiences of being their father in encountering challenges have made me learning to be a stronger advocate and have higher quality of parenting skills. Finally, my wife has given me unending support, courage,



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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

Who are the Hmong/Mong people? The answer is that Hmong/Mong people are an ethnic Asian group living in “southwestern China, northern Vietnam, northern Laos, northeastern Burma, and northeastern Thailand.” (Goldfarb, 1982, p. 6; Thao, 1999b, p. 9; Yang, 1993b, p. xiii-xv; & Quincy, 1988, p. 56-61).

The Hmong/Mong (pronounced *Mong*) people are one of the ethnic groups called Miao in China (Lemoine, 2005; Yang, 2005d). They emigrated from China to Indochina in 1860 during the Taipang revolt in southwestern China (Culas & Michaud, 2004; Livo & Cha, 1991; Yang, 1993b). Indochina included three former French colonies, Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia. The French granted independence to them in the early 1950s. The Hmong/Mong first reached northern Vietnam then Laos. Touby Lyfoung (1996), a prominent Hmong/Mong leader in Laos, said that his father arrived Laos in 1875 (Culas & Michaud, 2004). There are two dialects for the ethnic group. Hmong is the appropriate pronunciation of the “white Hmong” with the nasal “H” sound, whereas the “green Mong” pronunciation doesn’t have the nasal “H” sound (Yang, 1999a; Thao, 1999b). In this study the researcher will honor both Hmong and Mong to reflect each dialect’s pronunciation. Members from both groups are of interest in this study.

Laos is a landlocked country with sixty-eight ethnic groups. The Hmong/Mong are hill people living in the highlands where they have practiced slash and burn agriculture. They had a peaceful life in the mountains until they came into contact with the French who colonized Indochina including Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia in 1893 (Thao, 1999b;

Ngaosyvathana, M. & Ngaosyvathana, P., 1988, 1989 & 1998; Hamilton-Merritt, 1993). According to father Savina (1924), a French missionary in Vietnam and Laos, the Hmong/Mong revolted against the French's tax imposition, which resulted in a conflict called "the Mad Men War" from 1918 to 1921; the French defeated the Hmong/Mong rebels, captured their leaders, and remained in close contact with the Hmong/Mong communities in both Laos and North Vietnam. They also appointed Hmong/Mong to political positions and enlisted them to join the French armed forces in Vietnam and Laos.

In Vietnam and Laos, the French recruited the Hmong/Mong to become mercenaries to fight in the Indochina war. After the French's defeat in Dien Bien Phu, in 1954 (Robbins, 1987; Hamilton-Merritt, 1993), many Hmong/Mong fled Vietnam to Laos (Lyfoung, 1996, p. 152-153). As the French stepped out of Indochina in the early 1950s, the American government stepped in. President Eisenhower introduced the "Domino Theory" policy to Indochina to stop the communist regime spreading to the western hemisphere (Goldfarb, 1982, p.6-7; Lyfoung, 1996, p. 173; Steinberg, Wyatt, Smail, Woodside, Roff, & Chandler, 1971, p. 399). As the number of American soldiers mounted in South Vietnam, more American advisors increased in their "Secret War" in Laos. The C.I.A. recruited, trained, and paid the Hmong to fight this secret war (Evans, 1979, p. 22; Robbins, 1987, p. vii-xi; Sherman, 1988, p. 588). More than 10,000 Hmong/Mong lost their lives in this war (Goldfarb, 1982; Quincy, 1988; Warner, 1995). Half of the Hmong/Mong in Laos sided with the communist regime (Lyfoung, 1996; Quincy, 1988; Santoli, 1988). This war split many Hmong/Mong families and communities.

Having lost the war to the Communist Vietnamese forces in 1954 the French pulled out of Indochina. The American government then stepped in to stop the spread of the



communist system in Indochina (Robbins, 1987). The second Indochina conflict was the Vietnam War. In Laos, the American military advisors under the auspices of the C.I.A. approached the Hmong/Mong and trained them to become a special guerrilla force to counteract the communist force in the “Secret War”. Many Hmong/Mong were recruited and trained in Thailand and returned to perform three main tasks: (1) disrupt the North Vietnamese troops from shipping supplies to South Vietnam and (2) rescue American shot down pilots in the North Vietnam area, and (3) safeguard the American satellites in northern Laos (Robbins, 1987 & Saykao, 2004).

When the Americans pulled out of Vietnam, many Indochinese people became political targets for revenge from the communist regime. The United States admitted more than 800,000 Vietnamese refugees, 150,000 Hmong/Mong, 140,000 Lao, and 150,000 Cambodians (SEARAC, 2000). The current Indochinese population in the United States reaches 1.5 million (SEARAC, 2000). In 2003, President George W. Bush admitted another 15,000 Hmong/Mong refugees from Watt Tham Krabao, Thailand to resettle in the United States. More than 5000 of these refugees resettled in the State of Minnesota, particularly in the Twin Cities (Kaufman, 2004; Walsh, 2004; Welbes, 2005).

In the mountains of Laos, the Hmong/Mong lived in villages comprised of members of the same clan (Yang, 1993). There are eighteen Hmong/Mong clans such as *Thao, Yang, Vang, Xiong, Lee, Vue, Chang, Kue, Moua, Kong, Hang, Lo, Chue, Cheng, Pha, Fang, Her, and Khang* (Koumarn, 1978; Hmong Youth Cultural Awareness Project, 1994). Intra-clan marriage is prohibited- it is incest (Koumarn, 1978; Yang, 1993b). Villages consist of the members of the same clan. The clan system is patrilineal and patriarchal, where women move out to live with their husbands once they get married. The children carry the

clan of their father; and the clan is the welfare system of its members (Koumarn, 1978; Santoli, 1988; Miyares, 1998). The clans form strong bonds of trust, loyalty and solidarity amongst its members (Koumarn, 1978; Yang, 1993b). When a member of the clan has conflict with an outsider, the clan represents him or her to deal with the outsider (Koumarn, 1978). It is extremely important for members to live close to their clan for the sake of their own welfare. Even in the new life in the United States, most Indochinese refugees continue to stay close to their extended families (Hammond, 1986; Thao, 1982a).

The Vietnam War had significant impact on the Indochinese people. The war divided members of villages, clans, and families. Those who lived in the cities fell into the regime of the right wing government whereas those in the countryside became affiliated with the communist regime. Both sides recruited young men and women to join their forces to fight against the other. As the three countries of Indochina were poor, the war appealed to many youngsters, who became soldiers, civil servants, teachers, medics, nurses, carpenters, mechanics, and pilots (Santoli, 1988; Lyfoung, 1996). Many learned to speak French then English. French was the official language in the three countries until 1960 (Lyfoung, 1996). Both the French and the American governments introduced technology-intensive modern life to the Indochinese people. Many young Indochinese students received primary and secondary education. Some received scholarships to study at professional institutions in France and the United States (Yang, 1993b). In 1939, nine Hmong/Mong boys received elementary education (Yang, 1993b). By 1969, the figure had reached 10,000 in more than 100 village schools (Yang, 1993b).

Many Hmong/Mong women became widows; many children became orphans. The war scattered their family members. The Hmong/Mong began to move from one village to

another and depended on the rice dropped from the sky supplied by the USAID (Garrett, 1974; Greenway, 1970; Lyfoung, 1996). Indeed they have become refugees since the war broke out because their villages were the battlefields of both sides (Warner, 1995). When the French came they lived among the Hmong/Mong, and used them to fight the war (Quincy, 1988). The Americans introduced modern technologies to the Hmong/Mong. They sent recruits to Thailand for military training, and were supplied with food, clothes, weapons, jeeps, cargoes, tractors, gasoline, oil, and warplanes (Quincy, 1988; Warner, 1995; Greenway, 1970). Unlike the French, the Americans brought their own food and water from the Philippines to Laos (Weldon, 1999). The USAID had organized and delivered health care services to the Laotians through Operation Brotherhood (OB) stationed in the Philippines (Weldon, 1999). U.S forces were concentrated on Subic and Clark military bases in the Philippines. There were also American military bases in Thailand where Hmong/Mong soldiers and USAID employees received their training (Warner, 1995; Robbins, 1987). The Americans introduced a new economic system to the Hmong/Mong.

Hmong/Mong entrepreneurs opened restaurants, small merchandise stores, and a variety of meat, food, medicine, and jewelry shops. Many stopped practicing slash and burn agriculture and moved into major military headquarters and refugee camps (Garrett, 1974; Santoli, 1988). The USAID built schools and dispensaries at various Hmong/Mong refugees' camps; Hmong/Mong children, for the first time, began to see military jeeps and cargoes, and enjoyed the landing and flying of choppers and other types of warplanes. Some had the opportunity to ride those jeeps or cargoes or even fly in the warplanes to different refugee camps. Many began to wear western clothing, eating western food, and watching movies on

the screen. Many also became acquainted with the bible through missionary preachers (Garrett 1974; Greenway, 1970; Santoli, 1988; Thao, 1999b; and Weldon, 1999).

This was the beginning of the change of the Hmong/Mong life style. Many Hmong/Mong decided to adopt Christianity as their new religion. The missionaries trained Hmong/Mong pastors and built churches to accommodate Hmong/Mong Christians' needs. Indeed, the new religion also divided many Hmong/Mong families, some choosing Christianity while their relatives held on tightly to their traditional religion-animism (Bonner, 1995; Schimke, 1996; Thao, 1999b; Santoli, 1988).

In 1975 when the Americans pulled out of Vietnam, the communist regime took control of Laos. Many Laotians including the Hmong/Mong left for Thailand (Goldfarb, 1982; Rosenberg, 1980; Yang, 1993b). Those who chose to stay in Indochina after the Communists takeover faced concentration camps; many never came back including the King, Queen, and crowned Prince of Laos (Williams, 1977; Thammakhanty, 2004; Yang, 1993b). Facing political revenge from the new regime, many thousands of Hmong/Mong, members of the "Special Forces" trained and supported by the C.I.A. during the "Secret War" in Laos, collected their old weapons and brought their families to hide in the jungle (Garrett, 1980b). They ambushed and killed many communist soldiers. Many Hmong/Mong adults and children died of starvation, malnutrition, disease, and chemical poison (Fadiman, 1998). The communist soldiers killed, tortured, and captured many of them (Murphy, 1995; Hamilton-Merritt, 1993). More than twenty thousand Hmong/Mong immediately left Laos in the late spring of 1975 to Thailand where they lived in refugee camps. Through the Red Cross, the United States and United Nations supplied food and shelter for them. The Thai government gave them permission to stay temporarily in the refugee camps, and pressured

the United States and European countries to grant refugee asylum to them (Bangkok Post, 1987, November 21 & 23; Garrett, 1980; Rosenberg, 1980; Santoli, 1988). The refugee camps became the center for covert actions intended to overthrow the communist regime in Laos (Sherman, 1988; Miyares, 1998; Lo, 2001). Moreover, many more refugees smuggled their way out of Laos to these refugee camps. Thus, the never-ending refugee was born as long as these camps remained opened (Wright, 1986). More than 160,500 Hmong/Mong refugees resettled in the United States from 1976 to 1996 (Lo, 2001). Many Hmong/Mong refugees also resettled in France, Argentina, Canada, French Guyana, the People Republic of China, and Australia (Bliatout, Downing, Lewis, & Yang, 1988).

The U.S. State Department designed a refugee resettlement model for Indochinese refugees through the assistance of the Voluntary Agencies (Volags). Between 1975 and 1989, sixteen agencies facilitated the recruitment of sponsors for refugees from Laos (Miyares, 1998, p. 43-44). These voluntary agencies participated in 93.2 % of the resettlement cases over the fifteen-year period. They included State agencies, secular refugee and immigrant service agencies, and religious agencies (Miyares, 1998). Idaho, Iowa, and the Washington are states that had active resettlement agencies. The secular refugee and immigrant service agencies included American Council for Nationalities Services (ACNS), American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees, International Rescue Committee, and Tolstoy Foundation; these secular refugee and immigrant service agencies accounted for 32.0% of resettlement of Hmong refugees (Miyares, 1998, p. 44). The third group, religious agencies consisted of Buddhist Council, Church World Service, Episcopal Migration Ministries, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, United States Catholic Conference, World Relief Refugee Service, Young Men's Christian Association, and the

Church of the Latter-Day Saints; and this group accounted of 66.8% of Hmong/Mong resettlement (Miyares, 1998, p. 44).

Originally, the State Department applied the “scatter” policy of refugee resettlement for Indochinese refugees; well-intentioned policymakers argued that resettling refugees as individuals or single families would result in more rapid assimilation into American culture (Miyares, 1998; Evans, 1979; Santoli, 1988). Hmong/Mong families came to resettle at various parts of the United States. Despite policies designed to discourage enclave formation, contrasts between identities as individuals versus groups resulted in highly channelized secondary migration patterns (Finck, 1986; Thao, 1982a; Bliatout et al., 1988; Miyares, 1998). The other reason also relates to the concepts of “home.” To most Americans, the word “home” connotes a geographical location linked to the residence of immediate family members. “Home” to the Hmong/Mong is not locational, but relational, based on clan and extended family ties (Koumarn, 1978; Miyares, 1998; Hammond, 1986; Bliatout et al, 1988). Upon arrival in the United States, the Hmong/Mong gradually contacted their clan members and reunited with them in the areas where they have found more success. For example, the Twin Cities in Minnesota and the central valley areas of the State of California have become the most populous Hmong /Mong cities in the United States (Finck, 1986; Hammond, 1986).

Secondary migration takes place after three to six months of Hmong/Mong initial resettlement. Miyares (1998) listed four reasons for Hmong/Mong secondary migration to form Hmong/Mong enclaves. Borrowing from Pitman’s model of components of culture, Miyares (1998) set forth these as ethno-linguistic, ideological, economic, and socio-political. The ethno-linguistic component refers to one’s ethnic self-identification, a perception that

can continue for multiple generations after initial emigration. According to Miyares (1998), spoken language may change, as well as citizenship status, yet one's emotional affiliation to his or her nation of origin may never be lost. The ideological component refers to one's worldview and belief system. For the Hmong/Mong, this includes practice of animism and shamanism, involving the worship of ancestors, and sacrifice of animals to the spirits for protection (Conquergood, 1989; Miyares, 1998; Koumarn, 1978). The third component is the sociopolitical, which refers to the perceptions of power, leadership, and position, as well as the relationship between the individual and the group (Miyares, 1998). As indicated earlier, the Hmong/Mong culture is patrilineal and patriarchal, organized according to eighteen clans. The last component is the economic, which is through related activities, traditional forms and divisions of labor, and means of remuneration (Miyares, 1998; Koumarn, 1978).

Initially, the refugees were sponsored by many voluntary agencies such as United States Catholic Conference, Lutheran Social Services, and others (Evans, 1979; Sherman, 1988; Miyares, 1998). These sponsoring agencies recruited local churches and individuals to be the immediate sponsors for these refugees. These refugees immediately organized themselves based on their extended family model. After three months of resettlement in the new land, many families contacted their relatives and friends who lived in major urban cities. Many moved to join their families and leaders for mutual assistance (Sherman, 1988; Hammond, 1986; Finck, 1986). The sponsoring agencies or sponsors were only responsible to help the refugees for a short period of times. These refugees turned to their relatives and clan leaders for help. The **MAAs** (**Mutual Assistance Associations**) emerged to become crucial organizations to support the resettlement of these refugees. This was the time that one found many MAAs across the United States in various stages of development. There

were perhaps half a dozen mega-MAAs, with an annual budget of \$ 1 million or more, which differed little in outward appearance from large non-refugee nonprofit service providers (Abhay, 1991).

According to the Census 2000 (Hmong National Development, 2004), 186,310 Hmong/Mong were enumerated in the 50 states and Washington D.C. However, the Hmong/Mong communities estimated that the Hmong/Mong population reached 283,239 people in 2000 (Hmong National Development, 2004). The Hmong/Mong population in Minnesota is 41,800 (Hmong National Development, 2004) or 70,000 according to the Hmong/Mong community (Hmong National Development, 2004). Nearly 30% of St. Paul public school district's students are Asian and 90% of the Asian students are of Hmong /Mong ethnic group ([www.spps.org/Students.html](http://www.spps.org/Students.html), retrieved July 11, 2008). The Hmong /Mong are the majority of students enrolling St. Paul Public School district and their enrollment is 12,239 compared to 12,099 of African American and 10,576 of European American. In another word, the Hmong/Mong student population in St. Paul Public School district is 29.8% compared to 29.8% of African American and 26.1% of European American. Data from the 2000 Census indicated that 45.3 percent of the Hmong/Mong American population had no formal schooling compared to only 1.4 percent of all U.S. population in the same category (Yang & Pfeifer, 2004). About 27.2 percent of Hmong /Mong Americans enumerated in the 2000 Census were high school graduates and 11.7 percent held Associates or Bachelor's Degrees, and 1.5 percent held graduate degrees, which are much lower than figures for the general U.S. population, where 49.7 percent had high school diplomas, 21.9 percent held college degrees, and 8.9 percent had graduate degrees (Yang & Pfeifer, 2004). However the figures are better when compared with 1990 Census



data where only 11 percent of Hmong/Mong held high school diplomas and only 3 percent had Bachelor's degrees (Yang & Pfeifer, 2004 & Thao, 2002c). The Hmong/Mong have high rates of poverty, unemployment and under-employment; high school dropouts, early pregnancy, gang activities (Vuong, 1998; Howard, 1996; Thao, 1999b; Vang, 1992a; Dufresne, 1993 & Yang, 2003c). Lee (1997) discovered that racism, poverty, dependency on welfare, and welfare reform were the barriers to Hmong/Mong Americans' education, especially Hmong/Mong women's. Lee (2005) stated that the differences in educational attainment and achievement across all Asian American Pacific Islanders ethnic groups appeared to be closely related to differences in social class. Lee further elaborated that Southeast Asian Americans experienced high rates of poverty and the Hmong/Mong population had the highest poverty rate amongst this group and the rate was 37.8% compared to 29.3% of Cambodians, 18.5% of Lao, and 12.4% of the U.S. population overall. The Hmong/Mong people were known as warrior, hard working people, and law-abiding members in Laos. Now the Hmong/Mong youths appear to be heading in the wrong direction. Many resources from both the federal and local have been allocated to the Hmong/Mong communities across the nation, with mixed results. While there are negatives, there also have been successes in many Hmong/Mong families that conceivably could be attributed to education.

### **Hmong/Mong Education**

Like previous immigrants and refugees, the Hmong/Mong have had to adjust to new cultural and living conditions including finding employment, learning English and basic survival skills, and establishing their own community and support networks. As with all

immigrants, the older generation of the Hmong/Mong refugees has experienced more challenges due to language and culture barriers. The younger Hmong/Mong have had much better chances to excel in the new homeland due to more educational opportunities, which lead to better career options. Only the gifted and talented Hmong/Mong students in Laos had the opportunity to pursue their college education oversea in Europe, Canada, Australia, or the United States (Yang, 1993b; Thao, 1999b). Otherwise one had to be wealthy to be able to afford to come to the United States or France for higher educational pursuit.

Hmong/Mong students in the United States have had more chances than those in other countries to attend college, yet many have faced barrier to complete their degree. However after four decades of resettlement in the United States, there have been numerous factors to explain why many Hmong/Mong students have encountered roadblock to earn a college degree and certainly how come many have achieved their college education even though their parents did not have any formal education. Families offered emotional and financial support while their children were attending college (McLain-Ruelle & Xiong, 2005). Moreover, the Hmong National Development (2004) confirmed that the historical oppression of Hmong/Mong women has been the key to motivate and energize Hmong/Mong women to succeed in education. Additionally, Ima and Rumbaut (1989) also found that Hmong/Mong students were highly motivated to avoid negative sanctions and will go to great length to avoid shame and to protect their family name. Finally, Swartz, Lee, and Mortimer (2003) counter that Hmong/Mong high school students spent more times on homework than non-Hmong/Mong seniors; Hmong/Mong peers and their parents' support motivate Hmong/Mong students' academic success. On top of that the ESL/ELL program at public schools, the formal and informal programs and assistance for underrepresented

minorities further motivate Hmong/Mong students to succeed in their education and career paths.

Golstein (1985) asserts that there are negative public schools' perceptions on Hmong/Mong students' academic needs including low expectation toward Hmong/Mong students such as "not college material", placing Hmong/Mong students in class in which they would fulfill only minimum graduation requirements, and reacting negatively toward their language deficiency. Of course, Hmong/Mong students historically have always learned others' language since they have always been the minority even in China and Laos. Having English deficiency doesn't mean that they are not college material. Learning English, in my view, is a lifelong process journey. To expect a quick fix and to place Hmong/Mong students in inappropriate program simply defeat the preparation for them to survive at college. Lee (2001) agrees that Hmong/Mong students don't receive the necessary assistance they need to survive academically. Those who succeeded have been those worked hard, remained optimistic, considered the challenges they faced in the United States as less than those that their parents or older siblings had experienced in Laos (Ogbu, 1993; Thompson, 2001; Fendya, 1995; Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers, 1987). They believe that they have much better chance to succeed in their current life thanks to the new educational opportunities available for them in the United States. They didn't have that chance in Laos or China.

Refugees or immigrants are at a disadvantage in schools because of their limited English proficient skills, low socio-economic status, ethnic minority background, and history of underachieving (Sui, 1996). Hmong/Mong students are among the poorest students, often poorer than other immigrants and refugee students in the American system (Sui, 1996; Vang, 1999a; Vang, 2001b). In addition to poverty, these Hmong/Mong students live in

isolation, lack privacy in overcrowded dwellings, lack healthcare services, vulnerable to abuse and mistreatment, neglected or malnourished, and emotionally unstable (Yang, 1995d). Many Hmong/Mong families moved a lot in search of better housing, employment, or reunification with their clan members and their children experienced disadvantages in schools (August & Hakuta, 1997). Yet, their parents couldn't help them much academically since their parents have never had any formal education (Reder, 1982; Yang, 1993b). Being refugees and lacking the familiarity of the new culture, many Hmong/Mong students socialized exclusively among themselves as they progress from elementary to high school. This of course became a challenge for them in college (Wehlry & Nelson, 1987). The challenge has also gone to the classroom when there is difference between the cultural background of the teacher and that of some or all of the students. Heath (1982) agrees that the absence of cultural congruence affected instruction because teachers tend to assume that culturally different students in their classes would respond to language routines and the use of language in building knowledge, skills, and dispositions just as other children did. Many Hmong/Mong students have experienced isolation at schools as they struggled to fit into the school culture, which is predominantly Anglo cultural dominance model. It has been a challenge for Hmong/Mong students, especially when their English skills are limited. These students have to process their thoughts in Hmong/Mong first then in English and these students encounter more challenges relative to their English-speaking counterparts (Delgado-Gaintain, 1987).

Most Hmong/Mong parents came to the United States with high hope and expectation for their children to pursue college education, which wasn't available to them in Laos. However, many parents have become frustrated and disappointed at the failure of their

children's college education because of the huge demand of their large family size (Ima & Rumbaut 1989; Yang, 1995d; HND & Hmong Cultural and Resource Center 2004) when the parents are unemployed or under-employed (Sui, 1996). However, many Hmong/Mong students have achieved their college education in spite of the many barriers that they have experienced. Hess (2000) and Rumberger (1991) credit parenting styles, which have strong influence on academic achievement and affect the development of autonomy and maturity levels in children. Many Hmong/Mong parents have never received any form of formal education (Reder, 1982; Yang, 1993b, & Bondioli, 2000) and yet their children have successfully completed college education. Sui (1993) has discovered family factors contributing to children's academic success as follows: (1) parents demonstrate support, interest, and encouragement toward children's education; (2) parents place a high value on education, success, respect for instructors, and motivation to learn; (3) parents have strong work ethic, show positive role models, and possess authoritative parenting style. Abramson and Lindberg (1985) assert that refugee children experience academic success due to hard work, discipline, and parental pressure to maintain pride and honor, and family expectations. Caplan, Choy, and Whitmore (1992) add that those families who retain their own traditions and values have the most success in education for their children. Half of the Hmong/Mong population live in the west coast, particularly, the State of California where the Hmong/Mong enjoy the climate very much. Portes and Rumbaut (1996) have concluded that the Hmong/Mong students' academic success in San Diego emanated from the preservation of Hmong/Mong parental authority where sufficient resources exist to guide the second-generation acculturation; they stated that these resources include parental education – allowing the first generation to keep up with their children's learning and to

monitor its course and ethnic bonds – creating incentives for youth to comply with community norms and to combine them with American cultural patterns. It is important to pay attention to drastic changes in children, which lead to intergenerational tension between parents and children. This tension has negative impact on the children’s education because of losing control, humiliation, and social embarrassment (Lie, Yang, Rai, & Vang, 2004). Hmong/Mong parents in general have always been patient and done their best to nurture their children in a complex society in this country. They are willing to make paradoxical compromises to help their children cope with cultural norms and American values in order to maintain certain parental authority (Lee, 2001). The real issue is whether Hmong/Mong children understand the intention of their parents as a result of cultural barrier and pressures from their peers.

In Laos, Hmong/Mong boys were sent to school in the city whereas Hmong/Mong girls stayed home to help their mothers and aunts. Hmong/Mong men become involved in the outer or public sphere, which brings them social prestige and power, while women are involved in the inner or home sphere, which is giving them less prestige and power (Vang, 1999a). After four decades of resettlement in the United States, some Hmong/Mong parents may not totally support their daughters’ college education for fear that the daughter may be “too old” to marry after earning a college degree (Vang, 1999a). Be as it may, many U.S.-born Hmong/Mong girls have already challenged the traditional concepts and sought college education and employment outside the traditional female roles (Vang 1999a; Park, 1984; Lee, 2001). Choua Lee, a Hmong/Mong woman college student was the first Hmong/Mong elected official in the United States and subsequently, Mee Moua, another Hmong/Mong woman, was the first Hmong/Mong to be elected to the Minnesota state legislature. Lee

(2001) found that in Wisconsin, the Hmong/Mong students with the highest education aspiration and the highest academic levels of achievement were female Hmong/Mong students; these female Hmong/Mong students were more likely to participate in after school tutoring programs and worked exceptionally hard to become academically successful students. Mueller (2001) also confirmed that Hmong/Mong female high school students liked school and were motivated to learn while balancing life with their spouse, children, and family responsibilities.

Do Hmong/Mong students receive adequate parental support for their college education at home or education in general? Being refugee and minority of the minority from Laos to the United States, Hmong/Mong parents always strive for the best for their children. Ima and Rumbaut (1989) found out that Hmong/Mong parents' educational backgrounds, pre-arrival education from the refugee camps or native countries, and their perceptions of the American educational systems played roles in their children's academic achievement. They work hard to support their children; they preach their children to work hard at schools using their background as an example to inspire their children to excel at college and move up to possess a decent employment. However, there have been so many hurdles at home for the parents to show consistent and adequate support toward the education of their children (Thao, 2003c). Many of these are due to the poor educational backgrounds of Hmong/Mong parents. Sui (1996) found that only 8% of Hmong/Mong refugees had had school experience and were literate in their Hmong/Mong or Lao prior to their arrival in the United States; according to Hmong National Development and Hmong Cultural and Resources Center (2004), as high as 57% of enumerated Hmong/Mong female adults and 34% of Hmong/Mong male adults living across the United States had no formal

schooling. Many Hmong/Mong parents lacked school experience and confronted language barriers and were thus unlikely to participate in their children's school events (Golstein, 1985). On top of that Hmong/Mong parents don't seem to understand the differences in academic challenges for their foreign-born and their native-born children (Hmong Issues 2000 Conference, Fresno, CA, 2000). The absence of an educational background hinders the assimilation process as well as the acquisition of a second language (Reder, 1982 & 1985). Therefore, many Hmong/Mong children are left to fend for themselves in school since there is inadequate support system at home (Vang, 2001b). Luckily for some families, there are older educated siblings or relatives who have played a crucial role as role model, advocate, and mentors to guide these youngsters.

After four decades of resettlement, how do foreign-born and American-born Hmong/Mong students fare in schools? Lee (2001) asserts that 1.5 generation is considered to be traditional or old-fashioned students or foreign-born students and the second-generation to be American-born students. Lee (2001) further argues that there are two forces, internal and external, that play an important part in Hmong/Mong students' academic success or failure. The internal forces may be identified as lack of motivation, primary language deficiency, insufficient academic ability, and slow acculturation whereas the external forces include lack of a support system at home, the experience of being a new comer, a lack of learning experience, inadequate preparation, peer pressure, the level of family poverty, and the characteristics of the academic pedagogy that is encountered. Sui (1996) adds that foreign-born Asian-American students who came from poor families were 1.6 times more likely to be under-educated than those from more advantaged homes. The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) (1996) found that 52% of Asian-



American students were U.S.-born and 48% were foreign-born, three out of four came from bilingual homes. The Hmong California Times (1989) published an article that 80% of the Hmong/Mong students in the American public schools were born in other countries: Thailand, Laos, the Philippines, France, and Brazil. However, the Hmong Issues 2000 Conference (2000) in Fresno, California found that Americanized Hmong/Mong children seem to experience a greater complexity of problems in school compared to traditional Hmong/Mong children and at the same time these Hmong/Mong students born in America appear to fare better in school because they are more familiar with English language structure and have been exposed to academic at an early age.

Does primary language literacy predict English acquisition in Hmong/Mong children? The Hmong/Mong have had an oral culture and not until 1952 that the French and American missionaries used Roman alphabet to formalize a written Hmong/Mong language (McGinn, 1989). Morrow (1989) asserts that the native language literacy level influences refugee students' cognitive development in second language acquisition. Hmong/Mong children start schooling with other language throughout their life in every place where they live because of their minority status. After 1952, many Hmong/Mong children finally had the chance to read and write Hmong/Mong. Robson (1982) discovers that the ability to read a primary language is the key factor in secondary language acquisition and school performance. Therefore, Hmong/Mong kids who read their native Hmong acquire English as second language faster than those who could not and those who have proficiency in their primary language acquire English more easily. Both Reder (1982) and Cummins (1991) concur with Robson (1982) that literacy and competency in the native language facilitate the acquisition of English. Thus, those Hmong/Mong who could not read

the Hmong/Mong language make less progress than those who are literate in their Hmong/Mong language.

Does age matter in learning English as a second language? There are so many theories pertaining to this question. Hernandez (1994) claims that transferring from the Hmong/Mong language doesn't help second language acquisition when Hmong/Mong is a completely different language from English. One thing that is certain includes the academic background facilitating second language acquisition (Lessow-Hurley, 2000). Many Hmong/Mong students did not have complete educational experiences in Laos and in the refugee camp since they had constantly moved from place to place during the war. Many scholars including Collier (1987), Lenneberg (1967), and Bialystok & Hakuta (1994) agree that age is a factor in learning a second language and the younger the students are the faster they acquire the second language. Thus, the age at the time of their arrival is a key factor that predicts how well the Hmong/Mong children acquire English and perform in school (Ima & Rumbaut, 1989). The warfare in Laos, the refugee status in the refugee camps, and poor health certainly disrupted, if not damaged, Hmong/Mong students' schooling (Bliatout et. al. 1988; Siu 1996; & Vang, 1999a). The Hmong/Mong came to the United States and they were in a transitional process called "adaptation and conflict" (Hmong Issues 2000 Conference, Fresno, CA, 2000; Center for Applied Linguistics / Language and Orientation Resource Center, 1982). Yang (1995d) and Weslander & Stephany (1983) concur that length of time residing in the United States is an important factor influencing educational performance of the Southeast Asian students, including Hmong/Mong. Caplan (1985) adds that after three years in the United States, some refugee children do extremely well in the public schools and O'Reilly (1998) confirms that the ESL program helps Hmong/Mong

students to succeed and many leave the ESL program earlier. Finally, Ima and Rumbaut (1988) discover that the Hmong/Mong students' real challenges are the inability to read, write, and understand English proficiently regardless of the length of time residing in the United States and the real need is to design specific programs to help them in the earlier grades. Since Hmong/Mong students came to this country with very little or no school experience, the longer they stayed in the United States, the better they would perform in school (Walker, 1989).

Many Hmong/Mong students have experienced academic success including achieving high grades and high grade point average (GPA), attaining high scores on standardized achievement tests, and graduating on time (Caplan, Choy, & Whitmore, 1992; Ima & Rumbaut, 1989; Purdham, 1988; Wheeler, Schroeder, & Tafoya, 1982; Oreilly, 1998; Hmong Issues 2000 Conference, Fresno, CA, 2000). Many students possess great resilient skills to overcome their academic challenges (Mueller, 2001; Timm, 1994; Schulze, 2003; Thompson, 2001) as O'Reilly (1998) points out some characteristics of successful Hmong students include: (1) mutual relationship with their parents, the ability to discuss educational situations with parents who listen to their stories, (2) parents advise and guide their children, (3) have a goal and plan for their future after graduation, (4) access to resources such as teachers, technology, extra activities, school programs, and role models, (5) coping skills for dealing with academic, social, and economic problems, and (6) have positive self-esteem. Stacey Lee (2001) adds that the academic success of Hmong/Mong students comes from the practice of accommodation and acculturation without assimilation, which is the result of both cultural transformation and cultural preservation. Vang (2001b) gives tremendous credit to these Hmong/Mong students' ability to be sensitive to the dream and hope of their

parents and to take into account the poverty of their family as tools for motivation and energy to study hard and excel into better future.

On the other hand, many Hmong/Mong students experience failure in their college education. O'reilly (1998) has witnessed several academic problems among the Hmong /Mong students including poor attendance or truancy, failing grades, poor behaviors, credit deficiencies, violation of school rules, suspensions, and expulsions. In California, Hmong /Mong students in K-12 require more instruction in the oral and written language of the host culture because they lack language ability and study skills (Abramson & Lindberg, 1985; Reder, 1985). Certainly these Hmong/Mong students are at-risk of school failure since their deficiencies or differences in language, behaviors, or emotional competencies (Hess, 2000). Numerous factors contribute to the Hmong/Mong students' school failure including early marriage, early pregnancy, inadequate preparation for college, and roles and responsibilities at homes (Vang, 2001; Vang, 1992a; Golstein, 1985). Finally, many agree that Hmong /Mong students' real problems come from their academic skills being far below grade level (Ima & Rumbaut, 1989; Oreilly, 1998; Sui, 1996; Vang, 1999a).

The Hmong/Mong parents, community leaders, and K-12 authorities need to come together to address the need of their children's education. After three and half decades of resettlement in the United States, the Hmong/Mong community must form a political voice to bring real change to promote the academic success of their children. Certainly, there are many issues including best practices, class size, adequate funding, more after school programs and services, real parental involvement, and more choices to meet the needs of Hmong/Mong learners.

### **Problem Statement**

The Hmong/Mong came to the United States with little preparation to the life in this country. They had no transferable skills to enter the labor force in the United States, and many would have experienced culture shock (Thao, 1999b). Education is a primary means by which they and succeeding generations can overcome initial settling problems. Few studies have examined the educational challenges of the Hmong/Mong in the United States, especially with reference to the influences upon Hmong/Mong adolescents' educational attitudes and career aspirations.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions were addressed through this study:

- a. What is it like to be a Hmong/Mong student at home and in the Hmong/Mong community?
- b. What are the influences on the education of Hmong/Mong students?
- c. What are the attitudes of Hmong/Mong students toward their education?
- d. What are the educational aspirations of Hmong/Mong students?
- e. What are their career aspirations?

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This researcher has summarized the essence of the literature from prior researches in regard to the Hmong/Mong experience of literacy from China, to Laos, the refugee camp in Thailand, and eventually the United States. There are limited sources of literatures from China due to the language barrier of this researcher, who doesn't read and write Chinese.

The Hmong/Mong have been one of the most recent refugees to the United States since 1975, after the fall of Indochina to the communist regime. Like previous immigrants and refugees, they have had to adjust to new cultural and living conditions including finding employment, learning English and basic survival skills, and establishing their own community and support networks before they could make contributions to the large community. It is very obvious that the older generation of the Hmong/Mong refugees has experienced more challenges due to their language and culture barriers. The younger Hmong/Mong have much better chance to excel in the new homeland due to more educational opportunities, which lead to better career choice. Only the gifted and talented Hmong/Mong students in Laos had the opportunity to pursue their college education oversea in Europe, Canada, Australia, or the United States (Yang, 1993b; Thao, 1999b). Otherwise one had to be wealthy to be able afford to come to the United States or France for higher educational pursuit.

Even though Hmong/Mong students in the United States have had more chances than Hmong/Mong in other countries to attend college, many have faced barriers to complete their degree. After three and half decades of resettlement in the United States, there have been numerous factors to explain why many Hmong/Mong students have

encountered roadblock to earn a college degree and certainly how come many have achieved their college education even though their parents did not have any formal education.

Even though the United States is an affluent country with abundant educational resources, there have been many challenges to many Americans including the immigrants. The following sections consist of prior researches pertaining to the educational issues of the American people including both the ethnic minorities born here and immigrants. These researches include the theory and studies relating to adolescents' career aspirations, voluntary and involuntary minorities, the immigrant educational experiences, and the research evidence of the Hmong/Mong education. The following summaries are the findings of many prior researches pertaining to career aspiration and education of Hmong/Mong adolescents and others.

**a. The Studies relating to adolescents' career aspirations:**

Rojewski and Yang (1997) found that occupational aspirations are relatively established by the eighth grade and remained quite stable from early to late adolescence. They recommend that specific interventions should begin in the elementary school years and be sustained through secondary and postsecondary education. It is important to remember that aspiring to lower prestige occupation is not negative. Early adolescence is a critical time for identifying tentative future goals and establishing initial plans designed to attain these goals. Aspirations are not necessarily indicators of eventual attainment; however, they have considerable psychological meaning and predictive value to identify future educational and career options (Rojewski & Yang, 1997).

McNulty and Borgen (1988) studied the career expectations and aspirations of adolescents, finding that there were many other factors that were considered when students gave their ideal and real occupational aspirations; counselor had to help students to make wise choices of career. It may be useful to focus less on matching of students with specific occupations and more on assessing the needs a student may wish to meet through his or her occupation.

Mortimer, Zimmer-Gembeck, and Holmes (2002) studied the process of occupational decision making during the transition from adolescence to adulthood. They found that many young people delay their decision to choose an occupation because they need further experiences to choose their career; this delay actually benefits their vocational development; many youths need more times for clarity for what career may fit them better. Thus, family, friends, and significant adults, such as teachers or counselors, are important for adolescents to influence them on their career (Mortimer et al, 2002).

Le, Casillas, Robbins & Langley (2005) had studied on motivational and skills, social, and self-management predictors of college outcomes. They discovered that self-management factor might be an important predictor of the criteria of interest; motivation was conceptualized as psychological characteristics that drove students to engage in the pursuit of academic-related behaviors, whereas skills were generally defined as the proficiency to perform well academically. Those individuals who have the skills to succeed academically are more motivated to do well in academic environments, which are consistent with the expectancy theory (Le et al, 2005). They conclude that it is also possible that students who are motivated sufficiently have made necessary efforts to equip themselves with the skills



needed to succeed. Family participation is an essential factor in improving a student's educational performance (Matthews, 2000, p.101).

**b. Voluntary and Involuntary minorities:**

John U. Ogbu, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, studied minority education in the United States and other societies for almost 28 years. Ogbu classified minorities into two groups: voluntary minorities (Immigrants) and involuntary minorities (Ogbu & Simmons, 1998).

According to Ogbu voluntary minorities are those who have more or less willingly moved to the United States because they expect better opportunities (better jobs, more political or religious freedom) than they had in their homelands or places of origin. The people in this category voluntarily chose to move to U.S. society in the hope of a better future, and they do not interpret their presence in the United States as forced upon them by the U.S. government or by white Americans. Ogbu argued that refugees, migrant/guest workers, undocumented workers, and the combinations are voluntary minorities. Refugees in the United States include Cambodians, Ethiopians, Haitians, Hmong/Mong, and Vietnamese.

Involuntary minorities are people who have been conquered, colonized, or enslaved. Unlike immigrant minorities, the non-immigrants have been made to be a part of the U.S. society permanently against their will. They did not choose but were forced against their will to become a part of the United States, and they themselves usually interpret their presence in the United States as forced on them by white people. Involuntary minorities include black Americans, Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Alaska Natives.

Ogbu states that children of immigrant minorities are voluntary minorities like their foreign-born parents. For example, second-, third-, or fourth-generation U.S.-born Chinese are voluntary minorities. Ogbu found that the education of the descendants of immigrants continues to be influenced by the community forces of their forebears.

Ogbu suggests that voluntary and involuntary minorities develop different cultural models of U.S. society. Cultural models are the ways that members of a minority group understand or interpret their world and guide their actions in that world. He set forth four areas where voluntary and involuntary minorities differ: (1) frame of reference; (2) folk theories of “making it” (and role models); (3) degree of trust of white people and their institutions, and (4) beliefs about the effect of adopting white ways on minority identity.

Voluntary minorities have a positive dual frame of reference. One frame of reference is based on their situation in the United States. The second frame of reference is based on their situation “back home.” They became immigrant because they hoped to do better than they did previously in their home countries or places of origin. They see more opportunities for success in the United States than back home. As a result, they are willing to accommodate and to accept less than equal treatment in order to improve their chances for economic success. The children of immigrants may not have a first-hand experience of limited economic or other opportunities back home, they are likely to have heard of such experiences from their parents and other adults in their community. Consequently, they also tend to believe that there are more opportunities to succeed in the United States than back home. Voluntary minorities’ attitude toward schools is influenced by the “back home” comparison. The immigrants believe that they have more educational opportunity in the United States than back home.

Involuntary minorities also have a dual frame of reference. However, their comparison is

both different and negative, in contrast to that of voluntary minorities. Involuntary minorities see their economic and social condition, as well as their schools, as inferior to those of middle-class white Americans. They believe and resent the fact that whites have more opportunities. They don't believe strongly that the United States is a land of great opportunity where anyone who works hard and has a good education will succeed. Because discrimination against them has existed for many generations, involuntary minorities tend to believe that it appears to be a permanent feature of U.S. society. Involuntary minorities see that their schools are inferior to white suburban schools. They tend to be more critical of the school curriculum and mistrustful of teachers and the school than the immigrants.

Ogbu further concluded that voluntary minorities' folk theory of making it involves the belief that hard work, following the rules, and most important, getting good education will lead to good employment and success in U.S. society. They see school success as a major route to making it in the United States. The community, family, and students believe strongly that the same strategies that middle-class white Americans employ for success, namely, hard work, following the rules, and getting good grades, will also work for them in school and in the future job market. Ogbu found that involuntary minorities have an ambivalent folk theory of making it. They also believe that hard work and education are necessary to succeed but they have faced employment and wage discrimination as well as other barriers to making it in a white-controlled economy for many generations, they have come to believe that job and wage discrimination is more or less institutionalized and permanent, and individual

effort, education, and hard work are important but not enough to overcome racism and discrimination.

Immigrants have an optimistic and practical attitude when they arrive. This leads them to trust white-controlled institutions like the public schools. In the case of involuntary minorities, their long history of discrimination, racism, and conflict leads them to distrust white-controlled institutions. Voluntary minorities' communities and parents are strongly committed to their children succeeding in school. They form positive attitude toward U.S. society and institutions. They have high academic expectations of their children and tend to hold the children, rather than the schools, responsible for academic performance. Voluntary minority students share their parents' and community's positive attitudes and verbal commitment to school. They work hard, strive for high grades, pay attention in class, do their homework, and generally follow school rules. They respect teachers, are rarely disruptive in class, and are anxious to learn English. Their peers also support their school success. Involuntary minority communities and parents, on the other hand, have ambivalent attitude toward schools. They convey to their children contradictory messages about education: they tell their children to work hard in school, but then their own attitudes and comments show a mistrust of schools in terms of quality education and future economic rewards. Involuntary minority students are openly defiant as they challenge the teachers' authority. Moreover, there is strong negative peer group influence that more or less stigmatizes academic success and using standard English as "acting white."

**c. The Educational Experiences of the Immigrants**

According to Fuligni (1997), the adolescents from immigrant families evidenced a

strong focus on education that was supported by their parents and peers; these students consistently indicated higher values of schooling and educational success and expended substantially more time and effort on academic endeavors than their third generation peers; they study hard because their parents placed great expectations on their eventual educational attainment; they convert their parents' expectations into networking with their friends to help one another with homework, study together for tests, and generally encourage each other to do well; they have strong motivation that was supported by both their parents and peers.

Delgado-Gaitain (1994) discovered the “Consejos”, which was “The Power of Cultural Narratives.” This study reveals that Consejos (cultural domain of communication, imbued with emotional empathy, compassion, and familial expectation) connect the family even when the parents are unfamiliar with the operation of the schools; Consejos bond parents and their children as they share important experiences with each other. Through classroom visits, parents learn about the curriculum and are able to help their children more effectively (Delgado-Gaitain, 1994). There is evidence to suggest that by the third generation, immigrant children will speak English as their first language (Dugger, 1998). Previous studies confirmed that both first-and-second generation high school students have higher educational aspirations, earn higher grades, and receive higher math scores than do children of native-born parents (Kao & Tienda, 1995). Immigrant students learn in school – from peers as well as teachers (Gibson, 1998). Gibson (1998) found that immigrant parents encouraged their children to take advantage of the educational opportunities available here even they had faced hostilities and hardship. Duncan-Andrade’s (2005) study to promote rigorous and critical intellectual development among teachers and students in order to

educate Latinos and other poor youth of color includes: (1) strong administrative leadership, (2) high expectations from students, (3) safe and orderly environment, (4) emphasis on academic literacy skill development, (5) frequent monitoring of teacher and pupil progress, and (6) support for and implementation of a culturally relevant pedagogy.

Hebert and Reis (1999) conducted a study in an urban high school where there were culturally diverse high-achieving students. They found the following about the students:

(1) They had a strong belief in self and were resilient to negative aspects of their families and their urban environment; (2) They believed that the guidance of supportive adults had been essential to their academic success;

(3) They associated with a network of peers who wanted to achieve and they were helped by this network of peers; (4) They joined extracurricular and after-school programs, Saturday and summer programs; (5) They participated in various appropriate challenging learning experiences in schools; (6) They had personal characteristics that included strong motivation and inner will, appreciation of cultural diversity, heightened sensitivity to each other and the world around them, realistic aspirations, and independence; (7) They had resilience to overcome urban problems and adversity such as drug, gang activities, crimes, and other social ills; and finally (8) They had supportive families that nurtured them in a variety of ways.

d. **Minority Education in Minnesota**

Annually, 10,000 students leave Minnesota's schools without a high school diploma (Levin & Belfield, 2007). However, they find only a few K-12 education reforms that have demonstrated effectiveness in raising the graduation rate. These reforms are: (1) increasing

teacher salaries; (2) reducing class sizes in elementary school across all students; (3) reducing class sizes for free lunch students; (4) Success for All; (5) First Things First; and (6) Talent Development (Levin & Belfield, 2007). These are reform programs in Minnesota. They also cite other interventions with potential, but either their effectiveness is not fully demonstrated or there is inadequate information on costs and these programs are: Mentoring programs (Check & Connect, ALAS), College readiness programs (CAPS, TEACH, Talent Search), Employment readiness programs (Career Academies), Extended hours programs (After-school, summer school, and Specific programs: AVID, Project GRAD, KIPPS academies, ISA model), Teacher quality, and Family interventions.

Laura Perna (2007) added that Minnesota has high rates of educational attainment; but the state needs to do more to increase college access and success, especially for students from low-income families, Blacks, and Hispanics. Perna (2007) identified programs designed to promote college access and success: (1) Early College High Schools; (2) Quantum Opportunities Program, and (3) Admission Possible. Other programs that help Minnesota students to access and succeed college education include: (1) reduce the financial barriers to college access and success; (2) improve academic preparation for college; (3) improve college-related knowledge; and (4) improve data collection and analysis of college transition programs. In Minnesota, academic readiness for college should be a goal not just for white students but also for Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians and other students from low-income families (Perna, 2007). Perna identifies three forces that contribute to the lower levels of academic preparation for disadvantaged students: (1) the tendency of these students to be placed in non-academic curricular tracks and low-ability groups (Gamoran & Mare, 1989; Hallinan, 1996; Lucas, 1999; Oakes, 1995; Perna, 2005); (2) the relative absence of

rigorous courses at the schools these students attend (Adelman, 2006; Perma, 2005); and (3) the lack of alignment between K-12 and higher education systems (Kirst & Venezia, 2004; Martinez & Klopott, 2005; Venezia, Kirst, & Antonio, 2003). Lastly, Services that promote students' personal and social enrichment, as well as their academic preparation are beneficial to students' access and success in college education (Lerner & Brand, 2006; Schultz & Mueller, 2006). Even Minnesota used to have a high mark on education, the shortage of school counselors and the absence of sufficient information as a force that limits the success of some existing college transition programs, for example the PSEO program (Nathan et al., 2005 & NACAC, 2006).

**e. The Educational Experiences of other Southeast Asian Refugees**

Chuong (1989) found that Vietnamese students were reluctant to question teachers when they were confused because of the persistence of Confucian values, which emphasized self-cultivation while maintaining the order in society and family through the practice of proper social rites. Because many Vietnamese parents had no college education, they had little contact with the school system; many Vietnamese students received help from their peers who were advanced students. Many successful Vietnamese students would go as far as they could in education to honor and support their parents financially (Huynh, 1987 & Santoli, 1988). The school rules here were less strict and well defined than those that Vietnamese students were used to in Vietnam. Therefore, it was important to promote home activities between parents and students (Chuong, 1989). The most significant predictors of refugee students' academic achievement included: parents' education, years in the United States, and age of the students (Ima & Rumbaut, 1989). Bondioli (2000) discovered in his



study that the higher level of education of parents, the higher the student scores on standardized tests. Some barriers to educational advancement of Southeast Asian American youth include limited access to support, low expectations from educators, critical roles of paraprofessionals and teaching staff, racism, and absence of (1) language and history of Southeast Asian courses, (2) active Southeast Asian role models, and (3) Southeast Asian teachers (Um, 2003). Yang (2003c) adds that many Southeast Asian American parents and children also find difficulty to communicate because they each realize they have very different conceptions of healthy parent / child relationships. Moreover, many Southeast Asian American students often feel alienated from their schools: they don't feel as if they really belong in the schools because, in part, not enough of their schools tailor curricula specifically for them, and in part it is because there are not enough Southeast Asian American teachers and staff in educational institutions (Yang, 2003c). Tran, Lee, and Khoi (1996) and Thao (2003c) recommend that assisting Southeast Asian parents to overcome factors that influence the quality of their involvement in their children's education is crucially important to their children's success in school.

**f. The research evidence of the Hmong/Mong Education**

Golstein (1985) asserts that there are negative public schools' perceptions on Hmong /Mong students' academic needs including low expectation toward Hmong/Mong students such as "not college material", placing Hmong/Mong students in classes in which they would fulfill only minimum graduation requirements, and reacting negatively toward their language deficiency. Of course, Hmong/Mong students historically have always learned others' language since they have always been the minority even in China and Laos. Having

English deficiency doesn't mean that they are not college material. Learning English, in my view, is a lifelong process journey. To expect a quick fix and to place Hmong/Mong students in inappropriate program simply defeats the preparation for them to survive at college. Stacey Lee (2001) agrees that Hmong/Mong students don't receive the necessary assistance they need to survive academically. Those who succeeded have been those worked hard, remained optimistic, considered the challenges they faced in the United States as less than those that their parents or older siblings had experienced in Laos (Ogbu, 1993). They believe that they have much better chance to succeed in their current life thanks to the new educational opportunities available for them in the United States. They didn't have that chance in Laos or China. Still, education for the Hmong/Mong remains a challenge to overcome as Vang (2001b) concluded: (a) Academic skills of Hmong/Mong-American students remain superficial and are far from achieving their academic goals; (b) Successful Hmong/Mong students tend to think more about the future than their present situations; and (c) Successful Hmong/Mong students tend to focus on a long-term career than a short-term one because they have learned from past experience that a long-term career provides more stability. Vang (2005b) subsequently made further findings in his study of the Hmong/Mong adolescents' education: (1)The academic trend for Hmong/Mong students appears to be cloudy and unforeseeable because most of them are poorly prepared in grade schools; (2) Hmong/Mong students understand and appreciate the sacrifices and the aspirations of their parents and find ways to achieve the goals their parents have for them; (3) They take advantage of every academic opportunity; (4)They create motivation to do the hard work necessary to pursue the American dream; (5) Many Hmong/Mong students have left schools due to personal reasons such as early marriage, odd jobs, credit debts, family

obligations, and social temptations; (6) These impediments are preventable if Hmong/Mong students receive assistance early enough; (7) Parents get involved in their children's education if they want to see children succeed it; and (8) Once parents neglect their children's education, so do schools.

McNall, Dunnigan, and Mortimer (1994) conducted a study pertaining to the educational achievement of the St. Paul Hmong/Mong students, who were the third largest students in the St. Paul School District. They found that Hmong/Mong adolescents have high scores on standardized mathematic achievement test, above-average grades in school, and very low rates of delinquency and school suspension (Rumbaut & Ima, 1988). Hmong/Mong families, peers, and community provide a high degree of support for Hmong/Mong students' academic success. Parents exhort their children to work hard at school. Academic achievement of Hmong/Mong came from high educational aspiration of family and peers, high degree of control over the behavior of adolescents relevant to academic success, and hours spent on homework. Parents encourage students to go as far as they can after high school and acknowledge that early marriage works against aspiration of higher education. Hmong/Mong parents believe that the opportunities to move up are better for them in the United States than in their previous homelands. Hmong/Mong identify themselves more with the immigrant minorities, which more likely view cultural conflicts in their new societies as resolvable difficulties and the various obstacles they face in the United States as temporary problems that will eventually be overcome through the passage of hard work, or more education.

Swartz, Lee, & Mortimer (2003) conducted another study regarding the achievements of first-generation Hmong/Mong youth at the University of Minnesota and

they found that Hmong/Mong students had similar educational aspirations as their non-Hmong/Mong counterparts in high school, hoping that they would attain between a four-year bachelor's degree and a master's degree, despite their low socioeconomic status and absence of professional role models within their families. Hmong/Mong high school seniors spent more time on homework than non-Hmong/Mong seniors; and this hard work seems to have paid off for these Hmong/Mong youth. Part of the educational success of Hmong/Mong students may be linked to the abundant support and high academic expectations of their parents. Their Hmong/Mong parents' expectations and support positively influenced their school success. Hmong/Mong parental support for education is important in motivating the Hmong/Mong children's academic success. Hmong/Mong peers also influence Hmong /Mong students' academic success. Several Hmong/Mong young women who were married and had children in high school pursued postsecondary education. The cultural practice of early marriage appears to be resilient among the young Hmong/Mong people. Their continued school success is likely due to family and community support mechanisms that enable them to achieve academically. Because the financial stability of the entire extended family is often understood to rest on the educational and subsequent occupational attainment of the younger generation, there is a shared investment in the children's education and early work careers – experienced a cushion of practical and emotional support that enabled them to achieve academically and develop career paths. Yet in spite of coming to the United States with few economic resources, a different language, a unique culture, and carrying the harsh memories of war and loss, the investment of nuclear and extended family resources on the young within the context of a strong Hmong/Mong community, and the support of institutions such as schools and social services systems, have

promoted the academic achievement of Hmong/Mong children. The ESL/ELL program at public schools, the formal and informal programs and assistance for underrepresented minorities, such as recruiting, financial aid, and academic and social support, and the economic and cultural obligation of the Hmong/Mong kin system further motivate Hmong/Mong students to succeed in their education and career paths (O'Reilly, 1998). The advancement of the Hmong/Mong community as a whole also contributes to the success of these Hmong /Mong students' educational attainment. Hmong/Mong family, community, institutional, and public social supports can collaborate to promote positive results for young people.

**g. The Hmong/Mong Experience of Education in China**

In China, Hmong/Mong people are called Miao and the majority of the Hmong/Mong population remains in China. Trueba and Zou (1994) conducted a study pertaining to the Hmong/Mong's educational experience in China and their findings included: (1) The Miao people welcome the changes in education and technology because they bring about higher status, and that status is used to enhance their unity, political strength and the traditional family values of loyalty and sacrifice for the sake of the common good; (2) Knowledge of the past, a deeper understanding of the cultural traditions, the Miao languages, and national context, are an opportunity welcomed by Miao university students who are determined to succeed without rejecting their cultural values; (3) Miao students see education, in the final analysis, as the culmination of their parents' and community's dreams, as the realization of their own dreams and the public recognition for the sacrifices made; (4) Young Miao students are more marginal when they are away from their community and

families and compete with a more hostile world; these create motivation for them to survive and to achieve their dreams; (5) Miao university students have strong bond to their family and thrive their best to succeed in their study; (6) the bond goes beyond immediate family members but also toward their relatives and other fellow Miao; (7) They sacrifice to leave family for educational gain; (8) They suffer due to family poverty but this poverty transforms them to work hard and return to lift up the family situation; (9) The most satisfying experiences are hearing from home, getting good grades, being with friends of fellow Miao, feeling competent in one's own studies, and being recognized for academic achievement; (10) The bonding with family and the expression of love through academic achievement are a form of reciprocity; (11) Parents' support of children's studies is reciprocated with children's school achievement, and the benefits coming from success in education; (12) This bonding is continued throughout the years at distance, with relatively few visits; (13) Even in the university setting, the Miaos students were the underdogs, the low-status people, suffering poverty and always striving to compete with the richer and more sophisticated peers in an environment that was still somewhat unfamiliar and academically demanding; (14) It is impossible to imagine that these students could ever forget who they are, and abandon their personal commitment to achieve in order to pay back their debts of gratitude to their families, fellow community members, and the Miao people in general. That is why Miao students sacrifice so much in order to obtain an academic career; (15) These students feel that they have received so much support and love from their families, fellow community members, and the Miao people that she or he can't disappoint them, which will destroy the honor of the family; (16) Their personal experiences that promote their academic achievement include: motivation to achieve, to tolerate pain, to endure deprivation, to make

sacrifices, and ultimately to succeed in the attainment of personal goals; (17) The role of education has been an important tool in the empowerment of the Miao people because of oppression from other dominant groups; and (18) Parents of the Miao see education as the most congruent activity in the context of Confucian philosophy, as an effective instrument of empowerment for the entire family, and the hope for the future careers of these young men and women.

h. **The Hmong Experience of Education in Laos:**

In Laos, since the seventeenth century, King Setthathirath founded the first official Buddhist schools in Laos (Roberts, Carroll, Kaplan, Matthew, McMorris, & Townsedn, 1967). Through this Buddhist influence, pagoda schools were always centered in the village Buddhist temples (Thao, 1999b). Prior to the arrival of the French, monastic education was the sole system to provide education to Lao boys and the Buddhist monks were considered the best teachers at that time. Many Laotians received traditional training from their parents, relatives, and friends in regards to various skills (Lamoureux, 2000). Only those Lao boys and men who entered monkhood enrolled in the pagoda schools and had the opportunity to further their education. There is no historical evidence to suggest that the Hmong/Mong participated in the pagoda schools (Thao, 1999b). Under the French domination, starting around the middle of the nineteenth century, secular schooling began to grow and eventually predominated (Roberts et al., 1967).

According to Thao (1999b), the Hmong/Mong experienced the French education model in Laos, which was highly centralized, traditional, national, and teacher-centered; top-down approach, rote memorization with strong discipline and corporal punishment; no

compulsory education; competitive, selective, and limited; a “concoors” system; learn Lao and French languages; and limited opportunities for higher education.

Two Hmong/Mong families were the first ones to send their sons to school at a French elementary school in Xieng Khouang province in 1935 (Thao, 1999b). The USAID literally built schools and dispensaries to many Hmong/Mong villages as the C.I.A. recruited and trained Hmong/Mong to fight against the communist regime in the secret war and the number of Hmong/Mong students rose to 1,500 in 20 village schools in 1960 (Yang, 1993b; Hamilton-Merritt, 1993; Lyfoung, 1996; Bliatout, et al., 1988).

Therefore, the Hmong/Mong in Laos began to have the real opportunity to receive formal education in the 1960s thanks to the support of the USAID, a program funded by the United States to help poor countries oversea. Bliatout et al. (1988) asserted that the Hmong /Mong in Laos were a pre-literate people and Reder (1982) found that 73% of Hmong /Mong adults never attended schools in Laos and Walker (1989) concurred that before 1964, only a few wealthy Hmong/Mong attended the French high schools or the “Ecole Superieure de Pedagogie” in Vientiane, Laos.

Dao Yang (1993b), a Hmong/Mong scholar conducted a study in Laos regarding the Hmong/Mong educational experience and his findings include: (a) Families contributed to send their most gifted children to receive education in the plains, the only places where there were schools; (b) In 1939, the first school was set up in the Hmong/Mong highland at Nong Het, Xieng Khouang Province, for Hmong/Mong children. Only nine students initially attended this school; (c) The number of Hmong/Mong students rose to 1,500 in 20 villages schools in 1960; (d) By 1969, the figure had reached 10,000 in more than 100 village schools and staffed close to 450 Hmong/Mong teachers; (e) In 1971, 340 Hmong/Mong students



were enrolled in public and private secondary schools in Vientiane, and 37 more were matriculated at universities in France, the United States, Canada, Australia, Italy, the Soviet Union, and Japan; (f) The vast majority of Hmong/Mong students encountered a serious language barrier, which rendered their intellectual development and acquisition of new knowledge haphazard at best; (g) These Hmong/Mong educated individuals returned home and helped their people in securing their rights and got involved in the Laotian government to strengthen the welfare of their community.

i. **The Hmong/Mong Experience of Education in the Thailand Refugee Camp**

The Hmong/Mong children in the refugee camp in Thailand had access to public education but with limited materials and low quality (Welbes, 2005). Nearly 900 Hmong students from the refugee camp were recently admitted to Phalen Lake elementary, a St. Paul public school, with tremendous challenges in language skills (Welbes, 2005). Follows are summaries of prior researches done by Hmong/Mong and non-Hmong/Mong scholars:

Bliatout, Downing, Lewis and Yang (1988) conducted a study of Hmong/Mong's experience of education in the refugee camp and their work included the following findings: (a) Many educated young people organized educational programs to Hmong/Mong refugee children in the camp without any salary; they taught Hmong/Mong, Thai, English, and math to Hmong/Mong students. At Ban Vinai refugee camp, there were three school units and this program served 2,000 Hmong/Mong students from grades one to four in the Thai educational system. The teaching was only done in Thai; (b) The Royal Thai Government, World Vision and the United Nations financially contributed to the cost of the educational program at the refugee camp; (c) A French private organization also taught French language to these children; (d) There was also adult literacy program for refugee adults; (e) After being

accepted for resettlement to the United States, Hmong/Mong families were moved to a transitional camp near Bangkok; they stayed for another six months to attend English class and American cultural orientation; and (f) A special program, called the Preparation for American Secondary Schools, has been established for young refugees who enter junior or senior high schools in the United States. There were limited educational services to elementary children in the camp and the program was not compulsory for those who chose to attend it.

There have been many studies done pertaining to the Hmong/Mong education ranging from China, to Laos, the refugee camp in Thailand, and the United States. Most studies done in the United States have been rich. The study done with the Hmong/Mong in China was rich and conducted by an American Scholar; it is helpful to this investigation because its findings are relevant to the focus of this study. Other studies of immigrant, people of color, and other Southeast Asian minorities' education are also helpful and relevant to this study. This researcher also examines the theory and study of Voluntary and Involuntary Minority relating to education of Dr. Ogbu, which is the main study to discover whether the Hmong/Mong Americans' educational experience has any significant relationship with. In another word, does this study yield any findings similar or different to the Voluntary and Involuntary minority model of Ogbu? Finally, does this study yield any findings new or similar to previous studies of other minorities, namely immigrants and other people of color born here?

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter described the methods and procedures used to collect and analyze the data gathered for this study. The chapter is organized and divided into the following sections: (a) problem statement, (b) research questions, (c) ethnographic research, (d) research design, (e) preparation for conducting this study and approval process from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), (f) population and sample, (g) instrumentation, (h) recruitment of participants and conducting the interviews, (i) data collection procedures, (j) data analysis, (k) validity and reliability, (l) trustworthiness, (m) limitations, and (n) chapter summary.

#### **Problem Statement**

The Hmong/Mong came to the United States with little preparation to the life in this country. They had no transferable skills to enter the labor force in the United States, and many would have experienced culture shock (Thao, 1999b). Education is a primary means by which they and succeeding generations can overcome initial settling problems. Few studies have examined the educational challenges of the Hmong/Mong in the United States, especially with reference to the influences upon Hmong/Mong adolescents' educational attitudes and career aspirations.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is like to be a Hmong/Mong student at home and in the Hmong/Mong community?
2. What are the influences on the education of Hmong/Mong students?
3. What are the attitudes of Hmong/Mong students toward their education?
4. What are the educational aspirations of Hmong/Mong students?
5. What are the career aspirations of Hmong/Mong students?

### **Ethnographic Research**

What is a research methodology? Corbin and Strauss (2008) share that methodology is, “a way of thinking about and study social phenomena.” (p. 1). Next come the methods to pursue the study and Corbin and Strauss confirm that methods are techniques and procedure for gathering and analyzing data. This study used the ethnography method to examine the data as provided by the participants. Ethnography is a qualitative research methodology that is a description of a cultural or social group or system, typically through participant observation in which the researcher is immersed in the day-to-day lives of the people or through one-on-one interviews with members of the group (Creswell, 1998; Choi, 2006; Smith, 1999). This methodology resonates with this researcher and the population that is targeted for the following reasons: this researcher is a member of this cultural group and has been immersed in the day-to-day life’s experience similar to these participants and secondly, this researcher is conducting one-to-one in-depth interviews with the participants. Trueba and Zou (1994) also confirm that the ethnographic research approach allows the researcher to pursue diverse areas of inquiry through the use of written historical and

archival documents and personal interviews. Ethnography is defined as a picture of “people” or “other people” and can be characterized as being holistic, cross-cultural, comparative, based on firsthand experiences, basically descriptive, conducted in natural settings, specific or particular, and individualistic (Zou & Trueba, 2002). Qualitative research is descriptive and inductive, focusing on uncovering meaning from the perspective of participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990). Qualitative research, as a point of view, is to understand the perceived reality underlying individual and social behavior (Krathwohl, 1998). Several authors described a qualitative methodology as, not only appropriate, but more likely to provide insights into complex social phenomena (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Patton, 2002; Silverman, 2005). In addition, Stake (1995) describes qualitative case study research as an appropriate design for acquiring an in-depth understanding of the complex interactions and functions of people in the context of a specific situation. Thus, the characteristic of this study seems most appropriate to a qualitative ethnographic study research design.

### **Research Design**

This research was a qualitative ethnographic study design to determine the influences upon Hmong/Mong adolescents’ educational attitudes and career aspirations. Krathwohl (1998) states that people act according to the meaning of things and persons to them and their reality is socially constructed. Thus from this viewpoint, it is necessary to see the world through the eyes of the actor to reach a full understanding of the purpose of that person’s behavior (Krathwohl, 1998). The researcher conducted in-depth face-to-face interviews with each participant for at least an hour with the research instrument being the driving tool. The interviews were conducted in a comfortable and convenient environment for the participants

and were scheduled at their convenience (Davis, Dias-Bowie, Klukken, Pollio, & Thompson, 2004). In this study, the interviews took place at either the home of the participants, or at other places that she or he suggested to match her or his comfort. The interviews were conducted either in Hmong/Mong or English or both according to the need and preference of the participants. The interviews were audio taped and transcribed into themes. The investigator showed the research questions to the participants to make sure they understood them. The investigator also gave the participants opportunities to review the research questions, and to ask the investigator for clarification in the event that there were questions due either to language barriers or confusion about the content. Legard, Keegan, and Ward (2003) suggested that the key feature of the in-depth interview was the intention to combine structure with flexibility. Merriam (2002) concurred that most interviews fell somewhere in between the highly and less structured. The investigator spoke Hmong and Mong fluently and had the ability to explain the questions in details to mitigate confusion or language barrier. Jane Lewis (2003) agreed, “There is clearly also a strong argument for matching if interviews are not fluent in the chosen spoken language of participants – it is difficult to carry out effective in-depth field work without matching on language.” (p. 65).

### **Preparation for Conducting this Study and Approval Process from the IRB**

This section describes the preparations that this researcher made for conducting this study. Preparations included specifying the participants and size of the sample, developing the interview guide, obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and soliciting a Hmong/Mong organization to help identifying key clan leaders in the Hmong/Mong community to suggest the potential participants in this study. With approval from the

IRB to proceed, this researcher met with the Hmong/Mong 18 Clans Council to receive the list of the 18 clans' leaders in the Twin Cities in order to make the primary contacts with the clan leaders to help identifying potential participants. Next steps included meeting several times with my advisor, Dr. Theodore Lewis, revising the title of this study, finalizing the research methodology, designing the sample, designing the research questions, finalizing the interview questionnaires, and recruiting participants.

### **Population and Sample**

This research was a qualitative ethnographic study focusing on fifty-two male and female adolescents of Hmong and Mong descent from more than ten clans in the Twin Cities, whose families were refugees from Laos of three previous waves. The first wave of Hmong/Mong refugees came to the United States from 1975 to 1984; the second wave came from 1985 to 1999; and the last wave came from 2003 till the present time. The first wave included many U.S. government employees, politicians, military personnel, and relatives of American citizens. The second wave consisted of soldiers and peasants in addition to individuals similar to the first wave. The last wave included the Hmong/Mong refugees who were permitted by the Thai government to temporarily stay in the Buddhist temple because they had no other places to go. In 2003, President Bush accepted 15,000 Hmong refugees from this Buddhist temple to resettle in the United States as a humanitarian effort to end the Hmong/Mong refugees' plight in Thailand.

## **Instrumentation**

The interview instrument was divided into eight domains: (1) home questions, (2) community questions, (3) school questions, (4) peers questions, (5) educational aspiration, (6) career aspiration, (7) barriers / impediments, and (8) attitudes. The instrument is the research question, which is the specific query to be addressed by this research. Corbin and Strauss emphasize that: “the question(s) sets the perimeters of the project and suggests the methods to be used for data gathering and analyzing.” (p. 19).

### **(1). Home Questions:**

- How much education is emphasized in your home?
- In what ways is education emphasized?
- Can you provide examples of how education is emphasized?
- Who at home emphasizes education frequently?
- How much attention is given at home to your homework?
- How much attention is given to your study habit?

### **(2). Community Questions:**

- Do members of your Hmong/Mong community try to influence your education?

*(Hmong/Mong community means Hmong/Mong individuals, culture, history, language, experiences, institutions, and/or others whom or which participants can relate to.)*

- Do your neighbors influence your education?

*(People who live in your neighborhood.)*

- Do your relatives influence your education?



**(3). School Questions:**

- How much encouragement to study do you get at school?
- Please describe who encourages you and how they encourage you to study?

**(4). Peers Questions:**

- How much do your friends encourage / influence you to study?
- How would you describe your friendship group?

**(5). Educational Aspiration:**

- Do you want to continue schooling after graduating from high school?
- What kind of institutions would you like to attend after high school?
- What challenges or obstacles will you face in continuing your schooling after high school?
- Has anyone tried to influence you to continue your education?
- Who have influenced you to continue your education?
- Have any members of your immediate family continued their schooling after graduating high school?

**(6). Career Aspiration:**

- What career would you like to pursue as an adult?
- Why would you like to do this?
- Has anyone influenced you this decision?

**(7). Barriers / Impediments:**

- Do you think that there are factors that prevent you from being a better student?
- Can you identify factors that cause you not to study much?

**(8). Attitudes:**

- Is study a good thing?
- Is going to school exciting or boring?
- How important is school to you?
- Can you tell a story that influences you to go to school?
- When you are at home, do you frequently think and remind yourself to study?
- Does any one of your relatives influence you constantly to study?
- How about your peers, does any one of them influence you to study?
- Do you receive support toward your study at home?
- Did your teachers and counselors care about you?
- Are there any particular teachers or counselors care more about your welfare?

**Recruitment of Participants and Conducting the Interviews**

The researcher selected fifty-two (52) adolescents ages 14 to 23 from three different waves of Hmong/Mong refugees. There were nineteen (19) participants from the 1<sup>st</sup> wave, fifteen (15) from 2<sup>nd</sup> wave, and eighteen (18) from the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave. These participants were from eleven clans including Lee, Thao, Yang, Vang, Her, Kong, Chang, Vue, Xiong, Moua, and Kue, and of both Hmong and Mong individuals in the Twin Cities. The selection of fifty-two participants was based on previous qualitative studies, in which the variation of a

phenomenon reaches saturation at around 18 to 20 research participants, after which no new conception emerges (Sandberg, 2000; Merriam & Mohamad, 2000; Qin & Lykes, 2006; Charmaz, 1990). This researcher's rationale to select this number was based on the saturation concept when the number of participants reached nineteen. The first wave included adolescents who were born and raised in the United States; the second wave included adolescents who were born and raised in the refugee camp for less than ten years prior to coming to the United States; and the last wave included adolescents who were born and raised in Thailand or Laos till their teenage prior to coming to the United States. Participants also included members of Hmong (White Hmong) and Mong (Green Mong), Hmong/Mong from the northern part of Laos and southern part of Laos, Hmong/Mong animist, Christian, male and female. Below is the list of my participants and their demographic data.

The participants were listed with their pseudonyms in the following tables: Table 1, 2, and 3. Other data included their original residence in Laos, age, Hmong or Mong (Der or Leng), gender, and religious affiliation. The original residence was important because that residence indicated which Hmong/Mong residents had access to education in Laos. Notice that the public schools were available to the Hmong/Mong and other hill tribes at limited places. The French government in Laos built the first elementary school for the Hmong/Mong in 1939 in Nong Het, Xieng Khouang province where nine Hmong/Mong children started their schooling (Yang, 1993b). Prior to this school, only a few Hmong/Mong children from the elite Hmong/Mong families received their education with the elite Laotian families' children. Secondary education was only available to Hmong/Mong adolescents who lived near major cities. Those who lived in the remote areas did not have

access at all to any form of education (Yang, 1993b). The religious affiliation was another distinguished element because missionary people also brought some forms of education to Hmong/Mong villages and members who were converted to Christianity (Thao, 1999b).

Table 1 included the first wave participants. Table 2 was the second wave participants. Table 3 consisted of the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave participants. The researcher named these participants as wave subjects for each table.

## Demographics of Participants

**Table 1: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subjects**

No.	Participants	Original Residence	Age	L/D	Gender	Religion
1.	Tou Mao	Houei Sai, <i>Houa Khong</i>	17	D	M	Catholic
2.	Kevin	Tham Souane, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	17	D	M	Lutheran
3.	Mai Pa	Hong Nong, <i>Sam Nena</i>	20	D	F	Animist
4.	Phoua	Pha Khao, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	17	D	F	Animist
5.	Matt	Ban Na, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	15	D	M	Animist
6.	Plua	Khang Hong, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	16	L	F	CMA
7.	Karshia	Pha Phai, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	14	L	F	Animist
8.	Larshia	Muong Sui, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	17	D	M	Animist
9.	Zoua	Khang Hong, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	14	L	F	CMA
10.	Mai Kao	Nam Chan, <i>Vang Vieng</i>	19	L	F	Baptist
11.	Mee	Houei Khi Nin, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	16	D	F	Animist
12.	Zang	Nam Chan, <i>Vang Vieng</i>	15	L	M	Baptist
13.	Ricky	Pha Veng, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	15	D	M	Animist
14.	Tim	Muong Mok, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	17	D	M	Animist
15.	Lor	Phou He, <i>Sam Nena</i>	17	L	M	Animist
16.	Pakou	Bouam Long, <i>Sam Nena</i>	17	D	F	Animist
17.	Carrol	Khang Hong, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	17	L	F	CMA
18.	Anthony	Khang Hong, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	16	L	M	CMA
19.	Parshouablai	Nam Chong, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	17	D	F	Animist

**Table 2: 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Subjects**

No.	Participants	Original Residence	Age	L/D	Gender	Religion
1.	Dang Neng	Phou Fa, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	20	L	M	CMA

2.	Kalia	Nong Oun, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	17	L	F	Animist
3.	Jou	Pa Kha, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	17	L	F	Animist
4.	Bee	Houei Vai, <i>Louang Prabang</i>	17	L	M	CMA
5.	Pheng	Nong Oun, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	15	L	M	Animist
6.	Fue	Houei Kham Moun, <i>Sam Neua</i>	18	L	M	Animist
7.	Chue Kao	Muong Phoun, <i>Vang Vieng</i>	18	L	M	Animist
8.	Ma	Nam Chan, <i>Vang Vieng</i>	16	L	F	Animist
9.	Mai Doua	Sane Louang, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	17	D	F	Animist
10.	Neng	Sane Louang, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	17	D	M	Animist
11.	Seng	Hoeui Kham Moun, <i>Sam Neua</i>	14	L	M	Animist
12.	Xiong Pao	Phou Sane, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	15	D	M	Animist
13.	Sai	Pong Sane, <i>Sam Neua</i>	17	L	M	CMA
14.	Tang	Moung Phoun, <i>Vang Vieng</i>	19	L	F	Animist
15.	Kee	Kia Yai, <i>Vang Vieng</i>	15	L	M	Animist

**Table 3: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subjects**

No.	Participants	Original Residence	Age	L/D	Gender	Religion
1.	Mai Shoua	Nam Hia, <i>Sayabury</i>	16	L	F	Animist
2.	Chue Neng	Khang Hong, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	18	L	M	Animist
3.	Thai	Khang Hong, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	16	L	M	Animist
4.	Blia	Nam Pang, <i>Sayabury</i>	18	D	F	Animist
5.	Seng Sue	Sane Louang, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	21	D	M	Animist
6.	Chueyee	Pa Kha, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	18	L	M	Animist
7.	Mai See	Nam Lao, <i>Vang Vieng</i>	19	L	F	Animist
8.	Mai Sheng	Phou Thin, <i>Louang Prabang</i>	15	L	F	CMA
9.	Mai Yia	Muong Phoun, <i>Vang Vieng</i>	17	L	F	Animist
10.	Gaozouapa	Long Moune, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	17	D	F	Animist
11.	Tou Kao	Phou Chia, <i>Louang Prabang</i>	18	D	M	Animist
12.	Meng	Nam Long, <i>Vang Vieng</i>	18	L	M	Animist
13.	Tria	Na Sou, <i>Vang Vieng</i>	18	L	M	Animist
14.	Phong	Phou Mou, <i>Xieng Khouang</i>	21	D	M	Animist
15.	Bao Nhia	Phou Thin, <i>Louang Prabang</i>	18	L	F	CMA
16.	Teng	Muong Phoun, <i>Vang Vieng</i>	23	L	M	Animist
17.	Doua	Nam Chan, <i>Vang Vieng</i>	18	L	M	Animist
18.	Tou Tong	Phou Chia, <i>Louang Prabang</i>	18	D	M	Animist

L = Mong Leng (Green Mong)

D = Hmong Der (White Hmong)

CMA= Christian Missionary Alliance

After 1939, more and more elementary and secondary schools were expanded at many villages and refugee campsites to Hmong/Mong children. Moreover, Hmong/Mong parents began to send their children to schools. However, education was available and accessible to Hmong/Mong children whose families lived in Long Cheng or nearby the sites where schools were built. The elite Hmong/Mong families lived in Long Cheng and could afford to send their children to schools even to further their higher grades of education in the big cities, the capital of Laos or even overseas. The majority of Hmong/Mong families still lived in the remote or rural villages where only older boys would have the opportunities to attend school, either at the nearby site or lived with relatives or friends in the big cities, for example, Long Cheng.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

The data collection procedures used in this study were face-to-face individual in-depth interviews and following up phone or shorter face-to-face interviews according to the qualitative research (Legard et al., 2003). The researcher interpreted and analyzed the data with great cooperation of the participants. Janesick (1998) mentioned, “getting the participants’ interpretation of the findings” (p.48) to help with eliminating the researcher’s biases. Patton (2002) stated, “if participation means ‘walk a mile in my shoes’ in-depth interviewing means ‘walk a mile in my head.’” (p. 417).

The author made phone contacts with the clan leaders who then referred the author to their clan members. First of all, the researcher made a preliminary phone call to the parents of the adolescents and explained to them the rationale to conduct this study. The researcher took the initial time of the visit to go over the purpose of the study, read and explain in Hmong/Mong the consent form, encouraged the parents and the participants to

ask questions about the consent form and to clarify other confusion. The most important aspect that the researcher stressed was that they had the option not to participate in this study. Once they understood the purpose of this study, they quickly gave the researcher their consent for their adolescents to participate in this study. The most important issue was to be patient to make sure that the parents understood the purpose of this study since many parents were uneducated and traditionally didn't trust the outsiders. The advantage of the researcher's background also helped to mitigate the mistrust and facilitate the communication of the researcher to be productive (Lewis, 2003 & Del Bernal, 1998). Even though the adolescents turned 18, the encouragement and support of their parents inspired them to participate in this study.

The researcher made at least an initial phone contact to the parents and the participants about the study and arranged an interview session with the participants at a place where the participants felt comfortable, mostly at their home (Davis et al., 2004; Legard et al., 2003). Once, the researcher arrived at the participants' home, the researcher initially explained face-to-face, in Hmong/Mong language, with the parents regarding this study and also encouraged and allowed the parents to ask questions for clarification. Once the parents understood well of the purpose of this study, they then encouraged and supported their adolescents to join this study. Jane Lewis (2003) argued that, "it is difficult to carry out effective in-depth field work without matching on language." (p. 65).

The researcher also showed the participants the questionnaires and went over the list to make sure that the participants understood them. The researcher always encouraged the participants to stop the researcher at any time when they had any confusion during the interview regarding the questions or the contents of the questions and the researcher would

explain the questions to the participants. The researcher shared with the participants that it was a challenge for translating English into Hmong/Mong because there were limited words in Hmong/Mong. The interviews sessions were in English for most participants of the first wave since most of them spoke little Hmong/Mong. It was the opposite for the third wave since they had limited English proficient skills. The second wave tended to speak more English than Hmong/Mong. Thus, their sessions were a mixture of both English and Hmong/Mong.

The data collection was conducted in a combination of informal conversation interview, interview guide and standardized open-ended interview and recorded in an audiotape. Patton (2002) stated that this combined strategy offers the interview flexibility in probing and in determining when it is appropriate to explore certain subjects in greater depth, or even to pose questions about new areas of inquiry that were not originally anticipated in the interview instrument's development. If the researcher needed additional clarification regarding the contents of the interviews, the participants always gave permission for the researcher to call them or even have a shorter face-to-face session with them. Once having the permission and support from the parents, the participants always extended wonderful cooperation and subsequent cooperation with the researcher. Most participants were excited to participate in this study since education had been a hot topic and important subject for not only them but also their culture as well. Hmong/Mong people came from a preliterate culture and they viewed this study important to their community. The key to the success in having excellent participation was my initial contacts with the clan leaders and the parents of these adolescents. Once, receiving support from these leaders and parents then all participants willingly participated in this study.



During each interview, the researcher summarized what had been said after each questionnaire to make sure that those points were what participants said. This helped to get the meaning of the participants in his or her statements. At the end of each interview, participants were given the choice to review the information for accuracy. The researcher was prepared to summarize the major point or to review particular aspects of the questionnaire.

The audiotapes were transcribed into English with major themes from the interview sessions (Davis et al, 2004). The researcher hired a Hmong/Mong college student, who is competent in Hmong/Mong language to transcribe some tapes. Two other educated Hmong/Mong individuals transcribed some others, and the researcher also transcribed some. This researcher spent many hours listening and reviewing the transcriptions to make sure that all tapes had been translated properly and correctly since it was a daunting task to translate Hmong/Mong into English. Eventually the transcription's excerpts were carefully examined and clustered into emerging themes then further examined and clustered into major themes, which would become the eventual findings of this study.

### **Data Analysis**

According to Janesick (1998), McMillan and Schumaker (2001), qualitative data analyzes are done via an inductive analysis approach. McMillan and Schumaker stated that in this way “categories and patterns emerge from the data rather than being imposed on the data prior to the collection of the data.” (p. 462). Merriam (1998) suggested that the right way to analyze data in a qualitative study was to do it simultaneously with data collection. McMillan and Schumaker affirmed that “interim analysis serves two purposes: (1) to make

decisions in data collection and (2) to identify emerging topics and recurring patterns. Creswell (2003) recommended the following steps to analyze the data: (1) organize and prepare the data for analysis; (2) read all the data to obtain a general sense of the information and reflect on its overall meaning; (3) begin detailed analysis with a coding process; coding is the process of organizing the material into ‘chunks’ before bringing meaning to those chunks; (4) use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis; (5) advance how the description and themes will represent in the qualitative narrative-use a narrative passage of the excerpts to convey the findings of the analysis, and (6) making an interpretation or meaning of the data.” (p. 191-195). Corbin and Strauss (2008) added that qualitative analysis is a process of examining and interpreting data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge.

The data collected were analyzed through the recurring words, frequency of the words, meaning, patterns, and categories. The data were manually categorized and organized. All recurring words, meanings, patterns, and categories of every excerpt or quotation of participants in each wave were summarized. The researcher then analyzed all three waves’ excerpts or quotations to look for recurring words, meanings, patterns, and categories, which were the emerging themes. This was done through organizing the emerging themes in three different tables of each wave. Finally, the raw data were reduced into more manageable format of analysis. A final table was created to contain the excerpts of all the emerging themes of the three waves of participants. Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to “pattern theories” as an explanation that developed during naturalistic or qualitative research.” Creswell (2003) stated, “Pattern theories represent interconnected thoughts or parts linked

to a whole.” (p. 133). Through the use of this process of analysis, new concepts and understandings began to emerge, which were the eventual themes. W. L. Neuman (1991) explained that: “pattern theory uses metaphor or analogies so that relationship ‘makes sense’; pattern theories are systems of ideas that inform.” (p. 38). Corbin and Strauss (2008) offered, “analysis, analytic tools, dimensions, microanalysis, properties, and ‘feeling right’ ”, (p. 45), as approaches to data analysis. The analysis involved examining a substance and its component in order to determine their properties and functions, then using the acquired knowledge to make inferences about the whole. Analytic tools are thinking devices or procedures that if used correctly can facilitate coding. The investigator listened to all tapes attentively, transcribed all of them in a very organized fashion, the eight domains of the question. In another word, the coding system was to record the statements from the transcription into excerpts in the eight domains of the research questions. Concepts were words that stood for groups or classes of objects, events, and actions that shared some major common properties. Moreover, the “feeling right” meant that the researcher spent qualitative time collecting the data and the researcher understood exactly what participants attempted to convey through their own word. The detailed coding concept(s) helped the researcher to look for varied meanings of a word or phrase.

### **Validity and Reliability**

Merriam (2002) stated, “There is no simple answer as to what makes a ‘good’ qualitative study.” (p. 32). To enhance the trustworthiness of the research, these strategies were suggested to use in conjunction with an awareness of ethical issues, such as triangulation, member checks, use of rich, thick description, and so on (Merriam, 2002).

Silverman (2004) suggested, “The researcher needs to pay attention both to the technical quality and inclusiveness of recordings and to the interplay of spoken language with other modalities of communication and social action.” (p. 299). Creswell (2003) recommended that any research proposal should identify and discuss one or more of the following strategies to check the accuracy of the findings: triangulation, member-checking, use rich and thick description to convey findings, clarification of bias, presenting negative or discrepant information that runs counter to themes, prolonged time in the field, use peer debriefing, and use external auditor. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1998) and Merriam (1998), validity and reliability are problematic because human behavior is ever changing.

To address the issue of validity and reliability, this researcher utilized the triangulation, member-checking, rich and thick description to convey findings, clarification of bias, prolonged time in the field, and peer debriefing strategies.

**Triangulation:**

The participants were from different waves of Hmong/Mong refugees, Hmong/Mong high school students born and raised in Laos or Thailand till their teenage, born and raised in Thailand or Laos prior to their teenage, and those who were born here. The utilization of a multiple case studies of fifty-two participants from three different waves of Hmong/Mong refugees enhanced the external and internal validity of the findings (Merriam, 2002).

### **Member-Check:**

After each interview's domain, the researcher always repeated the major points that the participants expressed in their response. Moreover, at the end of each interview session, the researcher reviewed the major points of the participants pertaining to the eight domains of the instrument. On top of that, the researcher contacted the participants to follow up on points or statements that needed further clarification. Again during this follow up session, opportunities to review the major points of the interview were available and the participants were willingly comfortable to confirm or clarify his or her points or position. The researcher also made short face-to-face interview to clarify on some statements with the participants when this need arises. Both of these activities took place. Merriam (2002) identified member-check as, "taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking if the results are plausible." (p. 31). Thus, finally member checks were utilized to confirm the emerging findings with participants during and / or after the interviews.

### **Use rich and thick description to convey findings**

This investigator interviewed fifty-two participants. The data came from many informants and were richer and detailed since these participants came from different waves with different unique experiences and world-views. Merriam (2002) urged that, "providing rich, thick description is a major strategy to ensure for external validity or generalizability in the qualitative sense." (p. 29). All of the interviews' excerpts were organized and summarized according to the eight domains and illustrated in three tables of the three different waves.

### **Clarification of biases**

This investigator spent times at the beginning of the interview session to inform the participants and their parents that the researcher's main objective was to interview them and collect data. The researcher was there to listen and understand their story. It was the participants who needed to be honest and forthright in their responses to the instrument. In other words, the researcher asked them to speak from their heart according to their real perspective. The researcher also encouraged them to clarify any confusion that they had. Delgado Bernal's (1998) idea of cultural intuition provided powerful concept to validate researching with/in one's culture in terms of the benefit and purpose of research. Many scholars in research have argued that the primary purpose of qualitative research is to effect social change, arguing that the mission of research was to enlighten and empower one's own people (Fonow & Cook, 1991; Delgado-Gaitan, 1993; Fine, 1994; Lather & Smithies, 1997). Being an insider of the Hmong/Mong culture, my statement to the participants to be honest and forthright regarding their perspective would empower them to honestly share their rich perspective in this study.

### **Prolonged time in the field**

This researcher spent an hour and a half (1.5 hr) to two (2 hrs) for an in-depth interview with each participant. According to Lincoln and Guba (1984), what increases credibility is prolonged engagement, persistent observation spending enough times 'in becoming oriented to the situation, soaking in the culture through his/her pores, to be certain that the context is thoroughly appreciated and understood' (p. 302). Choi (2006) stated, "from this approach, researching one's own culture is taken to gain merit because a

researcher shares cultural codes with the people under study.” (p. 437). Although Lincoln and Guba also pointed out the caveat of ‘going native’, they warned that immersion in local culture might lead to professional judgment in jeopardy. However, Maxwell (1992), who put forth validities in qualitative research, defended the researcher’s nativeness was likely to lead to accurate descriptions and interpretations of a culture. The researcher had a lifelong experience in this area of study including student from adult high school to college, social worker for children services, juvenile probation officer, case manager for Indochinese refugee resettlement program, school board member of St. Paul School District, parents of four children, and social work faculty member at a state college. The researcher’s background, according to Maxwell (1992), was an advantage to have more accurate interpretation of the Hmong/Mong culture.

### **Peer Debriefing**

The researcher asked three different educated and competent individuals in both Hmong/Mong and English languages to transcribe the tapes and asked for their comments on the transcribing. The researcher went over all the transcribing materials, which reaffirmed similar point in their excerpts.

### **Trustworthiness**

Other types of rigor applied in this study were the principles underlying trustworthiness in qualitative research, as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985). These principles included credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. To achieve credibility, all interviews were conducted in the participants’ home or at a designated place of

their comfort, in both Hmong/Mong and English languages, having the support of their parents and / or clan leaders, and having a detailed explanation of the research procedure and purpose of this study, and patience and significant length of time to accommodate the participants' needs, ease of participation, and to ensure a feeling of safety. The support of parents and clan leaders was a cultural process. In the Hmong/Mong culture, even though the participants had turned eighteen, having support from the parents and clan leaders meant they had permission from the family and clan to join the study. The Hmong/Mong practiced a clan-oriented procedure in decision-making. This was an appropriate cultural permission to join the study. The interviews were powerful and smooth after the support from the parents and or from the clan leaders since the participants felt empowered to participate in the study.

The Twin Cities has one of the highest concentrations of Hmong/Mong population. One third of St. Paul Public School District students was Hmong/Mong (St. Paul Public Schools Pocket Facts, 2002). This indicated that the findings of this study could be transferred to others. The number of participants was not a question of size, instead, a question of all aspects of the phenomena being represented with variation by the participants (Mayan, 2001; Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002). When no more essence of the phenomenon showed in the interviews, it was taken as a sign of saturation. This indicated that the findings of this study could be transferred to other Hmong high school students (Esbensen, Swane, Hallberg, & Thome, 2008). To achieve confirmability, the researcher carefully read the entire quotations/excerpts, analyzed all the data to look for recurring words, meanings, patterns, and similarities and differences to ensure the findings were grounded in the interviews. Moreover, confirmability was obtained in an interaction between the texts presenting the findings and the quotations illustrating them (Esbensen et al., 2008).



## **Limitations**

This study was conducted with three different waves of Hmong/Mong refugees' adolescents, high school students, in the Twin Cities area. The researcher acknowledged well that the number of participants were limited and in no way this study could be generalized to all Hmong/Mong high school students. Therefore, the participants were not representative of the general Hmong/Mong adolescent population in the United States. Merriam (2002) stated that the researcher was the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis in qualitative study. Patton (2002) stated that qualitative inquiry meant going into the field-into the real world of neighborhood-and getting close enough to the people and circumstances there to capture what was happening. The researcher collected, analyzed, and interpreted the data. Obviously, my biases, assumptions, passions, world-view, and experiences influenced my data collection procedure, what data were collected, and what meanings were drawn from the data. Patton (2002) suggested that interview data limitations included possibly distorted responses due to personal bias, anger, anxiety, politics, and simple lack of awareness since interviews could be greatly affected by the emotional state of the interviewee at the time of the interview. Fully aware of this research bias, triangulation, member-check, having three peers transcribing the interviews, spending prolonged times in the field, and selecting interviews with rich and diverse excerpts from a large sample were the strategies used in this study. Moreover, participants came from three different waves of Hmong/Mong refugee adolescents with diverse demographic background. Cultural entry procedure was used to solicit support and permission from parents and clan leaders. The researcher's ability to speak the two dialects of Hmong and Mong helped to make the interviews at ease

and culturally appropriate. Data were collected from the individual interviews at participants' home or at a designated place of their choice with the full support of their parents and or clan leaders. Member checking occurred during and/or after the interview, after interview transcripts were completed, and during or after preliminary meanings/interpretations were drawn from the quotations/excerpts of the interviews.

Though findings could not be generalized, they could be used to help educators, administrators, community leaders, advocates, parents, and Hmong/Mong students to have insight of the challenges facing the Hmong/Mong community in the K-12 and higher education system. This research could help advocates and interested parties to understand the educational experiences of Hmong/Mong adolescents in this country.

### **Summary**

This chapter has described the methodology of the research study. This research generated richly descriptive information on the influences on the Hmong/Mong adolescents' aspiration and attitudes toward their education and career. The Hmong/Mong came from a war torn country with little educational background to facilitate their resettlement in this highly industrialized country. As the number of Hmong/Mong adolescents increased rapidly, there had been pressure for the educational system and the community to examine and understand those factors that influence Hmong/Mong high school students' pursuit of their education in the higher educational system and to have a better career for self-sufficiency. The next chapter, four, analyzes the data and reports the findings.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

#### Introduction

This chapter explores the findings of the data collected on the eight domains, which examine the influences toward Hmong/Mong adolescents' aspirations and attitudes on their education in the Twin Cities and the seven metropolitan county areas. These domains include: *Home, Community, School, Peers, Educational Aspirations, Career Aspirations, Barriers / Impediments, and Attitudes.*

The data collected from fifty-two (52) individual interviews with Hmong/Mong adolescents from three different waves of refugee background from Laos and Thailand has been analyzed and is reported here by the themes that led to the research questions. As the analysis unfolded, many subcategories emerged based on the data collected from the fifty-two (52) individual in-depth interviews. A summary of the findings of each wave is included in this chapter and the overall findings from the three waves are attached after the first summary of the findings. This researcher applies pseudonyms to protect the real identity of the participants. The analysis and summary of the interviews are organized and recorded in fifty-two tables containing the participants' excerpts; which are the analytic tools for this study – techniques used to facilitate the coding process. The excerpts of the participants are also the coding system because they derive and develop concepts from the interview. The excerpts contain the actual words of the participants. Corbin and Strauss (2008) call, “In-Vivo Codes.” (p. 65).

Excerpts of interviews from selected participants are presented below, according to the wave to which they belonged. Each wave subjects' excerpts show responses associated

with the eight domains of the interview protocol. As the researcher has stated earlier, the *first wave* of Hmong refugees came to the United States from 1975 to 1984 and their children are born here. All of the participants from this wave are born in the United States and some of these adolescents adopt Anglo name. The *second wave* of Hmong refugees came to this country from 1985 to 1999. The *third wave*, which is the last wave, was recently admitted by the Bush Administration to resettle in the United States in 2003. They began to arrive the Twin Cities in the early months of 2004. Both the participants of the second and third wave were born in Thailand or Laos. The participants of the second wave were born and raised in Thailand or Laos for a few months to close to ten years prior to coming to the United States. Those of the third wave were born and had lived in Thailand or Laos for at least a decade. In other words, they reached their teenage years when they came to the United States and had experienced attending the Thai or Laotian school system. The last wave's participants are fluent in Hmong/Mong and Lao or Thai languages.

## **Findings**

### **First wave**

Excerpts 1 to 9 present data for selected first wave subjects. The responses of selected subjects typify that of others from the wave.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subjects' Excerpts**

#### 1. Tou Mao (Male)

##### **Home:**

- I'd say a lot; my parents always tell me to study or do school work.
- Lectures about school, about how I have things those others don't have and how I need to use that. They don't want us to live a life like they did.

- I'm a senior in high school now and they always ask me what I'm going to do after high school. I'm pretty sure I'm going to go to college. Those are my top things we discuss when my relatives come over. They talk about when school conference will take place, or when my grades drop they push me to improve the grades; they want me to change my behavior such as respect.
- My dad always tells me to study, not to skip school, to focus on my study, and not to cheat.
- They leave to do my homework and not bother me. I am always patient and get my homework done on time.
- My parents don't compliment much because they don't know much about education. My parents feel that I know my way and I know what to do. They support me but they leave me to figure out what I have to do.

**Community:**

- I see lots of Hmong don't take their education seriously and this pushes me to do better because these guys don't think education is valuable and I guess that makes me value education more.
- Neighbors don't really influence me and I don't pay attention to them.
- Yeah, my relatives have a positive influence on me. A lot of my cousins went to college and they did pretty well in school so that influences me. That sets expectations high for me to be successful like them.

**School:**

- I don't think there's a lot of encouragement, I think it's the person, and if they work hard and are focused.
- The one thing I receive is the advice from teacher and counselor. The teachers try their best to guide me to go on the path to be successful.

**Peers:**

- Sometimes friends can help but not a big factor for success. Very few friends encourage me to study.
- Most of my friends are Hmong/Mong. My two close friends are my brother and two other friends.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, I want to go to college.
- I plan to go to 2-year college because I can get certified and start a career. Later, I may go to 4-year college.
- The biggest obstacle will be my decision about what I want to be, what career I want to pursue. I want to go into the health and medical field because I like being in a lab.
- My parents have tried to influence me to continue my education after high school.
- My older brother went to college and both my sisters did too.

**Career Aspirations:**

- Health and medical field.
- I enjoy this field and I enjoy helping people
- My science teacher influences me and I learned a lot about the human body, genetics, radiology, medical technology, and ultrasounds are really cool.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- I play sports so that takes away my times
- Such as basketball, soccer, and football.
- I have so much fun and social life.

**Attitudes:**

- Study is really good but study all night could be worn out by the time you get to school.
- It is something you have to do to get on with your life. It's a must. If it's boring you still have to do it. Little boring but more exciting.
- It is really important unless you're a giant athlete. You probably wouldn't need it because you're making six figures or something like that.
- My relatives are successful and they influence me to follow their path.
- Every now and then I do procrastinate my homework but I have to do it. My friends do support me. I receive lots of support at home to study.
- I've talked to my counselor a couple of times to guide me but mostly it is up to me to study.

2. Kevin (Male)

**Home:**

- Education is emphasized a lot at home.
- My parents and relatives encourage me a lot and to do most of my effort to learn at school.
- My sister emphasizes the most because she failed completely going to college and falling back and she wants me to succeed; she feels responsible to urge me to succeed my education.
- She is married and feels guilty of making a wrong choice.
- I appreciate my sister's encouragement a lot.
- Not much attention is given to my homework because my parents don't know about "homework" or mostly anything much so if I am the student from school, I know what I am doing and I just do it.
- My parents support me a lot and the most.
- My family thinks that I work hard and my parents don't know how to reward me.

**Community:**

- Mostly my relatives influence my education. They tell me to go to college and to support other Hmong/Mong people who have come here from Thailand and Laos. These Hmong/Mong from Laos and Thailand want to see what we Hmong, the new generation, can and can't do.

**School:**

- I have gotten a lot encouragement from school.
- When my parents went to Thailand and I kept going to school, the principal encouraged me in my middle school; he talked to me for 2 hours and said that mostly other students wouldn't come to school if their parents were out of state-they would stay home, but me, I came to school and he appreciated it. My principal knew me and we do keep in touch a lot.
- I kind of admire my homeroom teacher. Even I came to class late, she always gave me chances. She understands how you feel when you don't want to do things. She plays around, jokes around, too.

**Peers:**

- Not much encouragement to study I get from my friends. I have some friends who are Hmong/Mong and some are my relatives. I have friends of any race and any gender. I am compatible with anyone.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- I would go to college after high school.
- I would likely attend 2-year college then go to 4-year college and then to 6-year, one at a time.
- Probably, I won't have any challenge because I will do my best.
- Everyone that I know tries to influence me to go to college such as friends, relatives, and teachers.
- For sure, my sister does.
- None of my siblings graduated from college. My older brother even dropped out of high school.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I want to be a veterinarian because I like pets a lot.
- My sister does encourage me to do what I have passion about it.
- My sister is my role model.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- In the past my friends and girl friend caused me not to study much but now everyone is grown up.
- If I am a good enough student, I don't know what I can do to make it better.

**Attitudes:**

- Study is good and it helps trigger your mind and make progress at school
- It is exciting because during winter break, I kind of miss school.
- School is my life. I love school and nothing can stop me from going to school.
- If I go to school and I get everything done, I feel happy doing it. And if I get up every day at like 5 AM, I get used to waking up at that time. I don't get tired. It's like every day work.
- Every student in school has a plan to keep tracked of their stuff and homework. My sister helps me when I need her help. I always take care of my homework.
- My counselor and one teacher help me a lot and I am an optimistic person.



### 3. Mai Pa (Female)

#### **Home:**

- Education is not much and not too little emphasized at home.
- We talk about education. They encourage me.
- They check on my schoolwork and try to help me if I struggle. If I do well, they praise me and encourage me to keep up the good work.
- I always do my homework first. After the homework, I help my mom if she needs help.
- During exams, my mom encourages me to focus on my exam and she takes care of all the home chores.
- Since my dad died, I didn't receive much reward like new clothes and plus, I didn't want to go to school much; I had lost motivation. I pretty much gave it up. I missed lots of homework and didn't do them. I just sort of stopped school and didn't see it as important anymore.
- I didn't believe in myself no matter how hard I try nothing has any progress.
- My dad passed away; I miss him very much and I lose my interest in school.
- There are five daughters and seven brothers in my family, I am the middle child; I was close to my dad; I got discouraged easily and still find no momentum yet to start over my education.
- My mom and older brother emphasize a lot on my education.

#### **Community:**

- The community doesn't make any difference in influencing my education.
- My relatives still talk to me a lot about education but my family stops talking to me about it.

#### **School:**

- There are a couple of teachers close to me.
- These teachers encourage me a lot to study.

#### **Peers:**

- Most of my peers do but since my dad died, I have distanced from them.
- My siblings do, too.

- I have girl friends that did well at school. Since I feel that I don't do as well as they do, I feel I don't fit in, so, I don't hang out with them much but I know they study hard. They sometimes say something to me but I lost contact with them over the summer.
- My sister is my positive role model. She graduated from college but my other sister who is older than me didn't finish school; she dropped out. They both influence me to continue my schooling. My sister in North Carolina wants me to move to live with her and continue schooling. She doesn't want me to waste my time here.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, I think so that I will continue school after high school but the most difficult is that I don't have any money.
- At first, I want to go to a 2-year college.
- At first, I wanted St. Olaf College because I was interested in journalism, but after I found out that the school is a private college and it's very expensive. Now I think about St. Paul Technical College or Century Community College and these schools have the areas I was interested in.
- My sister was married early; she has kids now and she only went to school 2 years and got her degree; she doesn't want me to repeat her mistakes; she encourages me to postpone early marriage and go back to finish at least 2-year college or move to live with her family in North Carolina
- Challenges for me include the death of my dad, money, and transportation because I don't plan to live in the dorm.
- My sister, brother and mother have tried to influence me to continue my education.

**Career Aspirations:**

- Journalism or art areas like music and singing; also drawing is interested to me.
- I write a lot, sing, dance, and draw too. They are my hobbies as well.
- Now, I am thinking about to pursue bakery training in vocational institution for no more than 2-year institution because I want to make sure that I can find a job.
- My sister influences my decision of dancing. She likes to dance and she encourages me to pursue it. For music, Kou, my brother is giving me these drawing sessions

where he wants us to help. He wants us to do that we don't have to go by mom's rules all the time.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- I have low self-esteem
- I don't feel like I am good. I do get encouragement but I don't get as much.
- Because I am a girl and they say that girls have a lot of other expectations. I can't meet all of them and that makes me feel bad.

**Attitudes:**

- Studying is good thing.
- Sometimes it's exciting; sometimes boring.
- It's very important
- Yes, I think about my homework at home.
- My teachers and counselor support and encourage me a lot.
- I'm very scared about what happened after education, like in the fields I'm interested in. Like what if after I'm done, I can't do anything like making a career out of it. So that makes me not want to think about school. I know people who go to school and finish it, and at first it's like you can make a career out of it, but then they just go back to working wherever they can find jobs. That might happen to me and I don't want it to happen to me.

4. Phoua (Female)

**Home:**

- Education matters a lot in my family. My sister is a role model to me; she is older than me; and she is in college.
- My older brother tells me all the time that I have to go to college and they make sure I know what I'm doing right now. So does my uncle, my mom's brother. Recently he just gave me a lecture about education and makes sure I'm doing well.
- They lecture me a lot; they talk to me all the time.
- Just seeing how my sister works and how hard she tries to finish, it influences me. Seeing how good they're doing and how difficult it is for my family now makes me

look at education, makes me want to do it better. My dad passed away four years ago and I still have memory of him.

- My dad is pretty good at English and what my uncle told me when my dad passed away is that I should use my dad's experiences with life to be a teaching tool for my own.
- It is sad for me to only have my mom whereas others have two parents to support them. When you think about things like graduation, you always want both parents to be there but I know he's not.
- My mom thinks a lot about my dad and she's still mourning.
- Well, it makes me see that since my mom is so stressed out, I want to be able to support her.
- My mom does; there have been days when you get so tired and you just want to give up, but my mom, she's always lecturing and telling us to go to school and do this and do that. She says your dad is not here, so I'm half your dad and half your mom now.
- My oldest brother talks to me a lot about this because he goes to college too. He graduates from college he says that's the best thing you can do right now. My other brothers graduated from high school and they don't go to college so they know the hard life they have. They tell the younger ones and us that since they didn't go to college, they have the hard life. They don't want us to do the same thing.
- My family gives us a lot of time when they know we're back at school. During the summer, it doesn't matter but during the school time, my brothers and my mom, they will give us full time. If they want us to cook dinner but they know that we have a lot of homework then they won't let us cook dinner, they'll send us to do our homework. There are a lot of kids in the house sometimes and so usually when we can't do it at home, we go to the library to finish it up.
- My mom is the one who mostly supports my study. Younger kids in elementary school, their parents will say okay, go and read a book. I mean, I'm a junior but I still tell them to do that that day. Whenever I'm going to take a test or a final, I always have my mom there. She always gives me good luck.

**Community:**

- So far, not really, not that much.

- The parents got their children here and the parents suffered a lot. Their kids are the lucky ones who got here. I used to tutor at New Millennium School and teaching the newcomers that just came from Thailand. This experience has influenced me that I love doing it. I see them going to a higher level. That influences me to work harder and harder.
- When I used to live in North Minneapolis, it's pretty much a ghetto. There's not a lot of education around there, not a lot of schools, either. That's why my brothers didn't want me to go to school there; they were able to send me to a Robbinsdale school. When we moved here to Brooklyn Center, there were lots of Hmong/Mong kids and that made you want to compete with other Hmong/Mong students.
- My uncle makes sure that I take care of my education. He won't let the kids do anything until they finish their homework. He has a daughter and his daughter is my age, too. If he tells his daughter to do her homework and she does, it gets a bad grade, he happens to care so much about her so he lectures her a lot to improve the grades. I don't have a dad, so I consider him as my father and I want to make him proud of me.
- My other relatives of my dad's side, tell me to be a good daughter whenever they see me and remind me not to get married and just finish school because that will be the best thing for me and my mom.
- I am really happy and proud that they care about me and give me the attention where they know I can do well.
- I have friends who get married young. First, they're okay with it, but as the marriage goes on, they tell me they wish they hadn't got married yet. They have a lot of responsibilities; they don't get along with their in-laws, it causes them to want to give up other things.

**School:**

- There is a program called Cornerstone that I was involved in and you go there and they help you with
- At my high school, we get 45 minutes to ourselves to study or catch up on things we don't have. I like this program a lot because it gives us more times to prepare or catch up what I am behind.

### **Peers:**

- My peers influence me a lot to study such as we study together.
- My friends are everybody. I don't have any particular group. I get along well with girls who are serious about school and hang out with these.

### **Educational Aspirations:**

- Definitely 4-year institution degree
- Challenges include schoolwork, time management in balancing social life, life with family and school.
- My sister influences me to go to college; she explains the process of getting into college-good grades will get you into a good college.
- Older brother graduated from 4-year college and sister is now enrolling in college. My uncle also encourages me too.

### **Career Aspirations:**

- Want to be a teacher; I enjoy being a teacher because of my passion of helping kids getting to the next level; I was a TA before.
- My sister-in-law, who is an ESL teacher, influences me a lot to be a teacher plus of previous experience of a teacher assistant

### **Barriers / Impediments:**

- The death of my father, family conflict, and my depression made me giving up in the past but my counselor gave me hope and new energy
- Spend too much times on the internet and doing too much babysitting for nieces and nephews also become barrier for me to become better student.

### **Attitudes:**

- Going to school is always good, exciting, and education is the best choice compared to other choices you have.
- My mom wanted to go to school all her life but she didn't have that opportunity. So, I have to fulfill her dream.
- I procrastinate my homework but my mom and my sister Neng remind me to do my homework. My friend Sarina also supports me a lot too.
- My counselor at school inspires me a lot to go to college because she knows what I am going through.

5. Matt (Male)

**Home:**

- Education is emphasized a lot at home.
- Mom and dad always talk about it to me
- I don't like it because they get on my nerves. But I think it's good idea that mom and dad do that. They lecture me all the times. My mom does the most. They give me enough attention to my homework then leave me alone. They always praise me a lot.

**Community:**

- Yes, my grandmother influences me because she raised me when I was little boy
- My neighbors don't influence me at all. Because I don't really talk to them. I do feel bad for people who are less fortunate than me.
- My relatives help me with schoolwork and remind me to go to school and not go out all the time.
- At times, I like it, but at times I don't. Yeah, I think their reminds are good for me.

**School:**

- I got a lot encouragement to study at school.
- Friends and teachers do encourage me to study. My White friends do because they want to see me succeed. They aren't my good friends, though.

**Peers:**

- My friends influence me to study all the times; they care about me and I care about them, too. I like my friends. We trust each other and we just click.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- Yeah, I do want to continue schooling after high school
- Century community college because I feel it's close to home
- I don't know about the challenges because never been to college and haven't thought about it yet.
- Parents influence me to go to college
- Parents have influenced
- My older brother has continued schooling after high school.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I'm thinking about going for surgical technician because it has good pay. Also schooling is shorter. I think I may not be able to study to be a doctor. I don't want to study to be a doctor. My mom supports my decision of this career choice.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- No. Yeah, I'm on the phone a lot. Sometimes peer pressures.

**Attitudes:**

- Good thing
- Boring, but sometimes exciting. It's more boring because you go every day.
- It's important
- Yes, I do. My parents mostly influence me to study. My peers usually don't influence me to study. I receive support toward my study at home.
- Yes, I think my English teacher does. I don't like my school because it's boring. English is fun.
- I want to be better than my parents. I don't want to go back, I want to move forward. (What else motivate you, your parents?)

6. Plua (Female)

**Home:**

- Well, my dad encourages us to go to school and to finish high school at least, then college and so forth. It is emphasized a lot.
- My dad encouraged us verbally and he encouraged sports or any extracurricular activities.
- My parents let me do my homework/
- They give me compliments, especially through my report cards.

**Community:**

- The Hmong/Mong community makes me want to achieve more.
- Neighbors don't because I don't talk to them much.
- My aunt on my dad's side and my mom's relatives in North Carolina remind me to do well at school.

**School:**

- All the times, especially from my teachers



- My geography and math teachers do.

#### **Peers:**

- Sometimes my peers do. I have a best friend; she is Hmong/Mong and my boy friend; both of them do encourage me to study. Most of my friends are Hmong/Mong but I do have some white, black, and Mexican friends.

#### **Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, I am in MEP so basically I have a full ride to the U of MN; So, I am looking forward towards the U of MN.
- Probably managing my time because college life will be busy and exhaustive.
- My dad, boyfriend, friends, and teachers influence me to continue education.
- My older sister tried to go to college but she stopped because she said college wasn't for her. My other sister is in college now, a junior. She has just got married.

#### **Career Aspirations:**

- I would like to do something in the children field or the medical field; something working for kids.
- I took a child development class in high school and it was really interesting and I really like it. It was something I want to continue learning about.

#### **Barriers / Impediments:**

- I guess my social life is a barrier
- Maybe my boyfriend a little bit. I, sometimes spend too much time with him. But we don't spend as much time together as we used to. Also there is watching TV and just doing stuff, typical teenager stuff. These are the factors that cause me not to study much.

#### **Attitudes**

- Yes. It's exciting sometimes but I want to say boring or tiring because you do it every day. It's very important
- Succeeding in life.... And watching my parents go through the struggle of raising us and getting to know the American way. That influences me to go to school.
- I remind myself to study when I need to, but I know I have to do it. When I get home, I usually eat something and then study right away. Sometimes I will take some times to myself but then I get right on studying. My aunt influences me to study. My

peers influence me on test days and my boyfriend influences me, too. I do receive support for my studying.

- Math and geography teachers do care a lot about me.

#### 7. Karshia (Female)

##### Home:

- Education around here is really emphasized. Everyday there are different words said about it for us to succeed.
- There's a lot of encouragement for us to have a bright future. That pushes us to be the best we can to just, I guess, have a bright future ahead of us.
- A lot of talking about it.
- Yes, I'm in a lot of **clubs** so they (my parents) support me a lot. That's kind of how it's emphasized-they take us around so we can go to after school programs.
- My parents always do emphasize education frequently at home. Both of them do equally.
- Usually when don't understand something and then we ask my parents always try and help us. Anything, we don't understand or anything we need help with or are overdoing. They help.
- They try to make sure that we balance our life. I mean, homework is really emphasized but, you know, not just the homework, we need to know about everything in our lives, too, you know. But they want me to finish my homework first.

##### Community:

- The Hmong/Mong community pushes me to want to learn so I can be more involved with my community and learn things so I know it so I can pass it onto my own community so they can succeed as well.
- The Hmong/Mong community is poor and disadvantaged and that also influences my education.
- My neighbors do such as there are good students / smart students who push me to want to do really good, too.

- My relatives do influence my study because I think they want to see me succeed. I want them to know that I learn and know stuff and tell them that I want to help the community.
- My relatives ask me about school. I am usually pretty good so I don't mind telling them.

**School:**

- School gives us encouragement, like in classes and stuff, because the teachers give us long-term projects to do and sometimes it helps us plan up by having school time set aside to help us study and have them there as a resource.

**Peers:**

- I am friend with people, like those who are really smart or those who are not. But usually I hang out with people who can challenge me. It is not the bad kind of challenge, but more like the challenge when they can talk about it with you and you both can go through it together, or like studying together.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, definitely, I do want to continue schooling after high school.
- I want for sure 4-year college.
- The challenges are probably the stress and just trying to plan out how I will accomplish it, like goal setting. I'm trying to balance everything in my life, from friends to family, I think that will be kind of hard. Also worrying about how well you'll do in school, that's kind of a challenge for me.
- Definitely my family tried to influence me to continue my education. A lot of my friends do, especially the ones who want to succeed, because I know that we all want to succeed together. The community's people, I feel with school and staff that they want all of their students to succeed. They have stuff to help us. I think they do want us to succeed.
- My parents have continued their education after graduating from high school. Both sides of my families.

**Career Aspirations:**

- A profession that involves a lot with writing such as writer, history, novelist, journalism, or lawyer

- I enjoy writing a lot especially creative writing.
- My parents always support me if this is what I want / enjoy and am good at.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Balancing and planning out my time and organizing my study habits
- The computer causes me not to study much because I talk to friends thru Internet a lot.

**Attitudes:**

- Yes, it is a really good thing. Studying really helps me get in the mode; it takes a while for me to get in the zone to study, but it really helps me concentrate.
- Usually, it's really exciting, but I think it really depends on the teacher, too.
- School is very important. It's one of my higher priorities.
- Probably my parents. To me, they cherish me and everything I do. Seeing them and seeing how successful they are, coming here-they weren't even born here. They couldn't speak English. I am accustomed to everything here. Even Hmong/Mong people in general, seeing the entire hardship that they went thru and seeing where we are now, seeing us climbing up, it really makes me want to have an impact.
- When I get home, usually I kind of want to relax a little bit and sometimes I can get a little carried away with that. But usually I am able to snap out of it and remind myself that there still is schoolwork. School is very important to me. My relatives do remind me constantly I think they know that school is important to me so I think they're there to relieve me. My mom and dad do constantly remind me-when they get home, they ask about homework or something about school. My peers influence me because we come home, we call up each other and we usually end up talking about how our day went and how school was and talk about what happened during school. I receive a lot of support.
- Usually the more outgoing teachers who have particular teaching style that most students like it care more about my study
- Teachers who assign us group project that I put my mind into it also help me because they see my effort and they know I am a good person so they like me and help me out.

8. Larshia (Male)

**Home:**

- Lots of emphases on education at home; my parents always tell me to do homework. My teachers also emphasize about my education.
- My parents once in a while talk to me about what I want to do in the future, talk to me about how I'm doing in school, ways I can better and so on.
- My parents do emphasize much more.
- If I can show them that I can do my homework then less emphasis but if I do bad then they give me more attention.
- They reward me with compliments when I do well at school and perhaps a little bit of pocket money.

**Community:**

- During Hmong/Mong New Year, I saw stand from U of MN displaying doctors coming to talk about your further education.
- The Hmong/Mong community influences me by telling me that you have a second chance since your parents come from Thailand to the US, you have a second chance, you know? When I see Hmong/Mong being poor, it really motivates me to study hard.
- I don't talk to my neighbors; school has more influence on my education than my neighbors.
- My family has meeting about education and how we're doing once in a while and the last one with my dad's side of the family at my uncle Chong's house and we were talking about how and what we could do better and what we can do in the future and for people.. Like this year, I will graduate; what do I want to become and what school should I go. My relatives help me with advice to apply the right college.

**School:**

- I get a lot just depending on the teacher or basically yourself.
- If the class is interesting then you are going to study more. If the class is boring then you're going to lock yourself down. I get more encouragement from the teachers when I show much encouragement into the class.

- At home my parents encourage and at school the teachers do because I try to show effort to study.
- Some classes are boring like English because you have to read and write.
- I am interested in math, physics, sciences, and gym, which appeal to me more than just reading and writing.
- Physics and math teachers influence me more to learn.

**Peers:**

- I have friends from everywhere: poor neighborhood, middle class, higher class; it doesn't matter. You all go to school for one thing and that's to study. It is your choice whether you want to do good in school or bad in school. So, basically, it is up to me to influence myself and not my friends influence me.
- My friends are white, black, Asian, all races.
- I associate with kids who do well or do bad things. I encourage myself not do bad things. I tell them and they tell me so we both encourage each other so we both can pass and have a better future.
- My friends encourage me. We all have our ups and downs. We try to do better upon each other's mistakes to grow better at what we're doing.
- The majority of my friends are Hmong/Mong.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, I do want to continue my schooling after high school
- Yeah, I want to go to a community college or technical college. I want to find out what I'm interested in.
- Challenges include tuition; cannot fail because you will waste money, higher education is much harder. So, I need more preparation for college.
- Both my parents and my counselor have influenced me to go to community college.
- My older siblings have gone to college.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I am looking for dental hygiene or pharmacy technician or chemistry technician.
- Want to help people's health for them to live longer, just helping people.
- My parents influence this decision but my mom really supports the pharmacy technician.

- My mom said the pharmacy technician will take 2 years to complete and the job will pay well.
- I will help people including my parents; they don't have health insurance, I can provide them with prescription drug.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Getting older and need to move on.
- Work-split your times between work and school.
- Work, help family with chores, and schooling make me tired. These are factors cause me not to study much.

**Attitudes:**

- It is good thing for me.
- It is both exciting and boring
- School is very important
- My grandparents can't even write their names and this influence me to go to school and do better at school.
- My parents came to the US after they got married at young age and have children. My dad went to college and left my mom at home to raise the children. My dad would come to visit us once every other weekend. These stories influence me to go to school.
- I remind myself to study or even set up time to study when I left my school to work prior to coming home. When I get home, I take shower then go right away to my book and complete my homework.
- My aunts and uncles periodically remind me to study: "I want to see you doing better in this and that." They influence me a lot. My peers and I compete against each other a lot. This helps my GPA in competing with my friends.
- I go to see my counselor at least once every 2-3 weeks to talk about my education and what classes I can take to support my education in what I want to concentrate on.
- I am proud of my parents. I want to live like my parents do in the suburb and not public housing project in Mt. Airy or McDonough. I want to be a middle class person.

9. Zoua (Female)

**Home:**

- Education is emphasized a lot at home
- Lots of lectures from my mom to make sure I understand.
- It is good stuff but too much lecture bores me.
- When mom gives me a ride, she always lectures me.
- My older brothers didn't go to college so they want me to fulfill parents' expectation and dream.
- I am overwhelmed of their expectations because the expectation is too much and I may not fulfill it. So, I am scared of the expectations of my parents and older siblings.
- They gave me 2 hours to stay after school to do homework.
- I have an hour doing homework at home.
- There are kids here of my brothers so I watch the kids too. That is why I stay 2 hours after school.
- I get attention from my family such as give me ride, taking me to library.
- I receive compliments from them but the expectation is unrealistic because they expect too much from me to be superb girl.

**Community:**

- My relatives like uncles, aunts, and grandparents always lecture me to study hard.
- My neighbors are working classes and their expectations are high so they influence my education. This is the suburb

**School:**

- A math teacher who is strict but helps me a lot; she motivates me a lot even though this teacher is strict. I am proud of this teacher to make positive impact on my study

**Peers:**

- I associate with peers who take their study seriously.
- There are Asian students in this group who are in this group and I associate more with these Asian peers.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- I will go to college after high school.



- I want to go to 4-year or more college.
- All my family members influence me to go to college.
- None of my immediate family members have gone to college but my cousins did graduate from college.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I like to be a therapist or psychologist or counselor. My mom supports that I become a counselor, working with people. So do my friends.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- I fear of failure because my learning style is visual. I am afraid of encountering teaching styles that not meet my needs.
- Too much parental pressure causes me not study much and is a better student.
- I prefer something that comes from me

**Attitudes:**

- School is good and at times boring but school is very important.
- I saw homeless people in downtown Minneapolis and this motivates me to study hard because I don't want to be like these homeless people.
- I remind myself to study otherwise I will be behind my school.
- My parents remind me to study.
- My mom was an orphan and did not have the opportunity to receive education so she wants to make sure that I get education to fulfill her dream. I am scared not to fulfill her dream.
- Peers don't influence much on my education.
- My chorus teacher always encourages me to practice my vocalist because she wants me to learn more.

Second wave

Excerpts 10 to 19 present data for selected second wave subjects. The responses of selected subjects typify that of others from this wave.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

10. Dang Neng (Male)

### **Home :**

- My parents talk a lot to me about education. But my dad did the most
- Helps my mom writing out checks; fills form for my mom; my mom says that when you don't have education like me you can't even fill form or write out check.
- My parents support me a lot. When I did well at school, they gave me money. I got lots of attention to do my homework but sometimes, I did not take advantage of their support much

### **Community:**

- Hmong/Mong people are poor and that makes me want to do better than what I have seen. I want to compete with others who are not minorities.
- I want to be like my relatives who succeed to become rich and middle class.

### **School:**

- Teachers do encourage you to study but in America there is too much freedom and this freedom also sacks you out.
- My old counselor, Mr. Baggs, really makes a difference in my life. He was there all the times for me. He really cares a lot about me. He tells me to stay in school. He gave me choices on how to get up there faster.
- This counselor loves me and other Hmong/Mong students. I still stop by to see him.

### **Peers:**

- My friends are mostly Hmong/Mong because of our commonality. We talk a lot about education and we really go deep about it.

### **Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, I am planning to finish my GED and should go to college
- Ever since 8<sup>th</sup> grade, I have thought about 2-year college, which gives me a decent job. With 2-year college, you probably won't become rich after it but you have an OK life. I would like to go 4-year college after that.
- My parents and older brother influence me to go to college.

### **Career Aspirations**

- Fixing car like being a mechanic
- My older brother influences me to be a mechanic
- My father wants me to be a social worker but I am not interested in it.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Math, which I am not good at. I am good at English and writing
- Family problem
- Money for gasoline
- Tuition
- My friends gave me bad choices; I have so much fun with my friends
- My friends are my main obstacles; I have a girl friend but she is in college.
- I play too much game with my friends

**Attitudes:**

- It is a good thing to go to school but sometimes it is boring because I want to go to have fun with my friends. I skip classes that I don't like in order to have fun with my friends.
- In the past, I didn't see that education was important but now I do
- My relatives are successful and I want to be like them
- I want to do better than my parents. Now I get upset because I didn't finish high school
- I did not take my schooling seriously and that is why I didn't graduate from high school yet. I need to go back and talk to Mr. Baggs.

11. Kalia (Female)

**Home:**

- It's kind of daily thing for my family.
- My dad likes to talk about it every day
- It's mostly verbal; my parents tell us to do homework and why it is important to do homework, usually during dinnertime.
- I am the older girl so I also tell my younger brothers to do homework and help them
- We turn off TV during study time; parents never bother us; they support our study a lot.

- They give us verbal compliment when we do well at school

**Community:**

- My friends whom I hang around with are smart. So, they influence my education.
- I also see old Hmong/Mong lady who don't speak English at the grocery store, I help her out and it makes me feel bad that inspires me to study hard so I won't be like this Hmong/Mong lady.
- We live with a white neighborhood; they think we are not smart; this makes me wanting to be like them-the same level
- My uncle's children graduated from college and have good job. We want to be like them.

**School:**

- My English Teacher, Ms Nelson, influences me a lot and my counselor makes sure I am keeping up with school and going to college.

**Peers:**

- I hang out with my Hmong/Mong friends who also inspire me to study hard. I tend to choose good friends to be with.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, I will go to college.
- At least 4-year college.
- Financial and academic difficulty are the challenge
- My parents and my positive friends influence to go to college.
- My older siblings graduated from 4-year and 2-year college and they influence me to follow them.

**Career Aspirations:**

- Business management, secret agent, or lawyer like CSI movie.
- Need good money to help my family and my dad influences me about this.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Attitude and time management
- Not like doing homework

**Attitudes:**

- Study is good but sometimes boring because of teacher not knows to teach. I need challenging classes otherwise I get bored easily.
- My counselor influences me a lot to study
- My Hmong/Mong language and cultural classes help me a lot to inspire my education.
- I will go to South America during the summer and it helps me a lot to motivate my learning.
- My parents support us a lot to study.

12. Jou (Female)

**Home :**

- Education has not been emphasized that much; sometimes, we talk about it but not that much too.
- They lecture me every day; they say it is important to go to school every day
- My parents do emphasize about it.
- Our siblings talk and help each other with our homework; our dad sits and lectures us.
- I appreciate and love my dad of sharing his past to me to motivate me to study that education is important.
- They gave us attention to our study habit and they are very happy when we do well at school.

**Community:**

- The Hmong/Mong community influences me a lot about my education because others may treat our community bad because we are poor and uneducated
- My neighbors have no influence on my education.
- My relatives have higher education. Their success motivates me to follow their footstep.

**School:**

- I got lots of encouragements from my teachers to study.
- My English and Math teachers and advisor like me.
- They encourage me to study because I am a good person with good attitude.

**Peers:**

- Some friends encourage / influence me to study but I help my friends a lot
- Most of my friends are Hmong/Mong; some are Spanish, and anyone with good attitude. I don't like people who are cocky and bad attitude.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, 4-year college
- Challenge in college will be English and researching
- My parents, advisor, and teachers influenced me to go to college.
- My older brother went to college 2 years then dropped out because he was getting married

**Career Aspirations:**

- I want to pursue art or medical field
- I love music and dancing; I also love singing; I like R&B and country music and I play the flute. I also love taking care of people, people who need help and stuff.
- My mom told me I should be a nurse and my brother told me I should be a singer or an actress.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Talking too much on the phone causes me to not be a better student as I could be.
- I don't pay attention and forget to focus. Sometimes, they go 'oh my gosh, I forgot to study'
- Basically, I am not good at time management

**Attitudes:**

- Study is good
- School was boring when I was young but now I love it
- School is very important
- My sister called someone and talked to them but I understood what she was saying. So, I wanted to learn to know what she was talking about. She had good communication and that influenced me to go to school
- I remind myself to study.
- My parents do remind me but I am not upset to them; they love me and give me their support

- Yes, my English and Math teachers and my advisor care a lot about me.

13. Bee (Male)

**Home:**

- We talk about it once every two weeks. We get together and share information about what we know and don't know and share our views and learn from each other.
- We mean my family and siblings.
- My father does emphasize about it.
- I have lots of homework and try to do homework at school then come home
- I have bad study habit but I try to get my homework done
- When I get good grades, my dad gives me compliments and sometimes gives me money; he tries to push us to work hard.

**Community:**

- Yes, my community does influence me especially our church does.
- My sister, nursing student, influences me a lot to study
- My relatives also do influence me a lot too.

**School:**

- Not a lot encouragement from school. School is not like your parents; they will repeat once but not again

**Peers:**

- I have Hmong/Mong friends whom I trust more and get help from my Hmong/Mong friends.

**Educational Aspiration:**

- I am thinking to join the army after high school
- Go to the army to get financial help and I don't want to be a burden to my parents after I turn 18
- After the army, it's 50-50 for me to go to college; I like independence
- Money is a challenge for college such as transportation
- I am confident that I can do college work

- My dad influences me to go to college and he also supports my decision to join the army after high school.
- Go the army like training.
- My sister-in-law is in college and my older brother is planning to go to college.

**Career Aspiration:**

- I want to be a lawyer. I want to learn about the laws because I was harassed by cop for something that I didn't do it.
- This is my own idea and none influences me about it.

**Barriers/Impediments:**

- Drug can turn you from good to bad
- I worry to have access to drugs
- At home, I do thing my way and not my parents'. But mostly my way is always wrong
- Playing football and basketball causes me not to study much
- I work part-time and it causes me not study hard

**Attitudes:**

- Study is very good, exciting because learn new things, and very important because knowledge comes
- I want to be richer than my older brothers and this motivates me to go to school and work hard.
- My dad reminds me to study; I remind myself to study when I have tests; my peers also remind me. Have support at home.
- My ESL teacher cares a lot about me and picks me up if I miss the bus.
- Minneapolis is a ghetto so I like here in North Branch.

14. Pheng (Male)

**Home:**

- We talk about it but not too much



- My dad tells us that if we become who we want to become, then we must do what we have to do in order to achieve that and we should learn more new stuff. I believe what my dad has told us.
- My dad gives us attention at home; my parents give me compliment for doing well at school.

**Community:**

- The Hmong/Mong community influences my education and I want to do well in this country to be proud of being Hmong/Mong.
- My relatives influence my education
- Not influenced by my neighbors who are mostly white people.

**School:**

- School people don't really say much
- My peers encourage me to study but not much from my teachers.

**Peers:**

- We support each other among our peers.
- I associate only with good people, mostly Hmong/Mong because Hmong/Mong peers accept me more than others.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- I plan to go to college, 2-year to 4-year college
- I want to go to music major because I really like music or drawing if music not worked out.
- Challenges include finding job to pay college tuition and becoming familiar with college work
- My dad tries to influence me to go to college.

**Career Aspirations:**

- Be a musician because I would like to sing and sell my music
- I will play piano and guitar in my band
- I have played piano since junior high; I play guitar just this year
- I am confident that I will get job in the future.
- No one influences this career decision but myself. There is a singer that I like so much, who influences my decision; I love his songs.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- I play video games and watch TV, which may cause me not to study much

**Attitudes:**

- Going to school is good thing and sometimes boring and sometimes exciting
- Go to school is important
- I want to pursue my dream so I go to school.
- At home, I don't think much about study because too much TV or play video games unless dad reminds me.
- My peers don't say much for me to study
- Yes, my teachers want me to get good grades
- I have attended Hmong/Mong Institute to learn Hmong/Mong ABC, Hmong/Mong music, culture Kung Fu, and Hmong/Mong designed uniform for 2 years. My teachers at this Hmong/Mong Institute encourage me to do well in my studies there. They encourage us to learn and to become leaders some days. My peers there help me and I help them.

15. Fue (Male)

**Home:**

- We do talk about it some times
- We talk about whether we're done with our schoolwork or what we want to be when we finish school.
- My father wants us to be able to do our work and ask us how we're doing all the times. My father usually checks in on us.
- Both my parents do emphasize about education. My older brothers do emphasize about our education as well.
- My parents support me to do my homework and not bother me till my homework is done.
- When I do well, they compliment me and sometimes, they will reward me with things that I want.

**Community:**

- Some Hmong/Mong people do well such as having their own pharmacy and that inspires me to do well as they do, to make enough money as they do. Moreover, my parents don't have education and don't speak English well does push me more to do well at school.
- My neighbors influence me because I see Hmong/Mong people becoming gangsters and going out to be bad. It doesn't give us a good name. I don't want to be like them, so it pushes me to be different from them.
- My mother's relatives have kids gone to college; it does make me want to go to school and learn too. I am not upset when my parents tell me to study because what they say helps me a lot.

#### **School:**

- Lots of people encourage me to study at school.
- At 6<sup>th</sup> grade, one teacher taught me a lot about to study hard and do my best at school. He taught us about good study habit, but also, to make sure we learned, he would make us practice these habits in front of him. In high school and college, I think, these skills will help me a lot.
- My ESL teachers help me a lot with learning English, reading and writing English. I came here when I was 8 and knew no English at all. The first year was difficult but we were lucky to have a Hmong/Mong teacher who spoke Hmong/Mong to us while he taught us. This made things much more understandable. This Hmong/Mong teacher helped me and had a teaching style that was easier for me to learn from.

#### **Peers:**

- My peers influence me a lot to study.
- My friends are all Hmong/Mong. I have friends who are good students and study a lot and others who don't think school is as good; they go out and be bad sometimes, but they're good to me because they support me. Both groups of friends always support me. In the group's project, I join my friends to take the project.

#### **Educational Aspirations:**

- In my heart, I want to go to the University

- English is the hardest thing at college for me. I don't know if I know enough English words to be able to do well
- I'm also scared there might not be any other Hmong/Mong there to support me.
- Everyone in my family influences me to go to college.
- My older brother graduated from St. Mary University and he is a role model for me.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I would like to be a doctor but I could be a politician
- Be a doctor will be hard, but in the end, after the hard work comes the rewards. The work is good and the money is good, too.
- My dad supports my decision for this field.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Maybe I am not smart enough, maybe my high school is not a good school, maybe I have not enough preparation to go to college.
- No factor that causes me not to study much.

**Attitudes:**

- Go to school is very good; mostly, school is exciting but some classes might be boring because I don't like the subject or not interested in it. I like English, History, and Math. School is very important.
- My older brother started school with difficulty but now he had succeeded and that influences me to go to school.
- My dad is smart but did not have a chance to go to school does hurt me and I have to take advantage of it.
- I only sometimes remind me to do homework or do study because I have other obligations like funerals to go and helping my relatives.
- My relatives influence me to study.
- My peers don't influence me much.
- My teachers do care about me but one particular teacher cares me the most, my 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher who taught me to also study hard and do my best.

### **Home**

- Education is emphasized at home but not a lot.
- We sit down and talk
- We also go to library and we, the siblings, encourage each other like older brothers and sisters encourage us the younger ones.
- My mom does emphasize a lot because she nurtures us and wants us to succeed it.
- Mother tells me to do homework and doesn't bother me during homework
- I gain confidence from doing homework even when I don't do well on tests.

### **Community:**

- See many Hmong/Mong, especially older Hmong/Mong, gives me a sense of connection and makes me want to study harder. I see my parents and the elders suffer so I feel hurt and would like to push myself harder to do well in school.
- No influence from our neighbors because we don't talk to them
- My relatives influence me a lot because I help them reading their letters from the welfare department I feel good to be helpful so I am motivated to study. They also encourage us to study hard.

### **School:**

- Yes, some teachers encourage me; some don't. I have an English teacher, and he helps me and takes the times to explain to me something that I don't understand in class.

### **Peers:**

- My closest friends are Hmong/Mong and some are my relatives and cousins. Most of my friends are males and we feel close because we are all Hmong/Mong and we can talk to each other.
- Yes, we all compete against each other at school. So that's one way to help us focus and do well in school.

### **Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, 4-year college
- Tuition; tough courses – harder than high school; and being away from home.
- My parents and siblings encourage me to go to college.
- My sister has gone to college.

**Career Aspirations:**

- Something like social work because I want to help people. Many Hmong/Mong need help and many just came from Thailand recently.
- Hmong/Mong social workers in the field are my role model

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Peer pressure and family problems prevent me from being a better student. Peer pressure means having fun after school.
- Video Games and girl friend to kill times cause me not to study much.

**Attitudes:**

- Study is a good thing, can be both exciting and boring but it is very important and also an expectation from my parents to me.
- My parents motivate me to study and they are the ones with my older brother to constantly remind me to study
- They buy me computer and Internet.
- There is a Hmong/Mong counselor who cares about me. This counselor understands me more and has given me a great hope.

17. Ma (Female)

**Home:**

- Education is emphasized at home a lot.
- My parents say your dad and I didn't have a chance and the opportunity to go to school and now you have the chance you must do it. I appreciate what they say a lot
- Lecture from parents and relatives, talking about it amongst us. For the most parts, my mom does emphasize it.
- When I do my homework, my parents usually don't ask me to do any household work until my homework is finished.

**Community:**

- Yes, the Hmong/Mong community does influence our education because I see the gap between the Hmong/Mong and the White people and I feel motivated to study harder.
- Yes, in our area, seeing all the poverty around makes you want to study harder.

- Our relatives constantly remind us when we just came that education is important for better job and better living condition.

**School:**

- Most teachers encourage us to study; they told me to read, to pay attention, and to not be behind in class.

**Peers:**

- Most of my peers are Hmong/Mong and few Americans.
- I get support from my Hmong/Mong friends.
- I have competition with White friends and they make study harder, like AP classes.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, I want to go to 4-year college
- Challenges will be my family's needs, big classes in college, difficult professors, dealing with the workload in college.
- My parents, relatives, and siblings influence me to go to college.
- My sister-in-law graduated from college.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I want to enter the field of social work psychology because I want to help people in need.
- My teachers and relatives influence to go to social work field.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Peer pressure and too much fun make you lose focus in your homework.
- TV, computer games, video prevent me from doing my homework.

**Attitudes:**

- Study is a good thing, is both exciting and boring because you learn new things daily or you go to the same class again and again.
- My parents influence me to go to school every day because they didn't have a chance to go to school, and now I want to do it for them.
- My parents, peers, and teachers remind me and give me support to do homework and to study.
- My English and Math teachers help me a lot and care a lot about my welfare as a student.

18. Mai Doua (Female)

**Home :**

- Education is emphasized a lot at home.
- My parents always lecture us of the importance of education.
- My mom does emphasize about education.
- I have attention for my study and my parents jump in when I don't do well.

**Community:**

- No influence from neighbors
- Relatives influence my education.

**School:**

- I get a lot of attention to study at school from my English teacher.
- My friends, mostly Hmong/Mong, encourage me to study

**Peers:**

- IB class and peers encourage me to go to school mostly girls. I associate with IB peers a lot.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, 4-year college.
- Challenges include independence and time management.
- Family, teacher and counselor influence you to go to college.
- Two brothers and two sisters go to college

**Career Aspirations:**

- Social Work
- Help other people
- I make my own decision
- My sister influences me to be a social work and her major is psychology/family counseling.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Motivation and poor time management
- Too much stress might disrupt my study at home

**Attitudes:**



- Study is good, exciting and boring, more exciting if you are passionate about the subject and very important.
- My friend sacrifices a lot to help people and that inspires you to want to help others; this motivates me to study to be a social worker.
- To initiate is a challenge but once I can do it then I am on my way. Maybe I depend too much on my family and don't have much initiative. Hopefully, in college, I will learn to be more independent and take more responsibilities for my own. My parents always remind me.
- Relatives indirectly influence me.
- My peers influence me
- The English and drama teachers care a lot about my welfare.

19. Neng (Male)

**Home:**

- Education is emphasized a lot; we talk about it every day; it's a big part of the family.
- We talk about it; I help my mom completing forms; I translate English to Hmong /Mong for my mom to understand the letters / forms.
- My mom does emphasize more; sometimes, my dad does too. My mom is close to us.
- When we were younger, we had lots of attention but now not much as we grow older and supposed to have responsibility.
- My parents give me compliments when we did well at school and make me feel good.

**Community:**

- Hmong/Mong community people influence my education a lot.
- There is a Hmong/Mong teacher in the MEP encourages me a lot to study hard.
- A neighbor broke into my house, which makes think that this person did this because he has no education. So, this motivates me to study hard in order to avoid this kind of behavior.

- Relatives from my mom's side influence me to study; I see my relatives making good progress in education and this motivates me to study harder.

**School:**

- The MEP, AP, Upper Bound program motivate me a lot to study more because I can't get into AP and Upper Bound programs but MEP. So, I need to rely on myself to study more to improve my learning.
- The Hmong/Mong MEP teacher and Homeroom teacher encourage me a lot to study.

**Peers:**

- My close friends encourage me but my really smart friends encourage me to go deeper because sometimes I am lazy.
- I hang out with smart people because they are willing to help me when it comes to learning

**Educational Aspirations:**

- I want to get my Master's Degree
- Career choice because I am not clear of my major yet.
- My counselor and my MEP teacher, my friends, and my parents encourage me to go to college.
- My older sister is a freshman at UMD.
- My older brother went one year to St. Paul Tech.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I want to do something in communication
- Or be a film director
- Many Hmong/Mong movies are not up-to-date and I want to take Hmong/Mong movies to another level.
- My acting club motivates me to go into communication field.
- My crewmembers, my older brother and my dad want me to film making.
- The Hmong /Mong Art Program also influences me to go into the filmmaking field.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Competition sometimes takes away my energy

- Too much free times such as are on the Internet and time management is not consistent. I am a sociable guy and this takes away my times from my study.

**Attitude:**

- Study is a good thing, an exciting thing because learn new thing and meet new people but at times boring because lack of interest for wrong teacher.
- School is really important to me; it is the top thing for me.
- When I first got here, our house got burnt and we lived with someone else for a year; this incident motivates me to study hard so we won't experience this kind of incident. I want

Third wave

Excerpts 20 to 27 present data for selected third wave subjects. The responses of selected subjects typify that of others from the third wave.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

20. Mai Shoua (Female)

**Home:**

- We talk a lot about education
- We talk a lot about homework, what our teacher taught us today
- My mother emphasizes a lot about our education because my father is working.
- We must finish homework first before watching any TV and go to bed early in order to be able to school in the morning.
- Our parents support us a lot about our homework; they are happy when we do our homework and come from school every day.

**Community:**

- Our relatives care a lot about our education and welfare; they always remind us to work hard.
- When I see Hmong/Mong people who are poor, it motivates me to study hard.

- Even, we just came here recently, if I work hard, I can improve my life and I can catch up those who are born here and came here earlier than my family.
- Americans and other Hmong/Mong have better job, home, and cars , which motivate me to study hard in order to catch them up.
- My uncle always reminds us to study hard.

**School:**

- My teachers encourage me to study all the time.
- Those ELL teachers care a lot about my education and they encourage me all the times to study to improve my education. They are nicer than my previous teachers in Thailand and they truly dedicate to help us. I am so pleased to be here to have these teachers who are so dedicated to our learning. They respect and love us so much and I am not afraid of them but I am motivated to learn more from them. They love us as our parents.

**Peers:**

- My friends and I help one another. My friends are those who are dedicated to study, mostly, those who just came to the US because we lived in the refugee camp and we understand each other more than others. So, we support one another.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, I plan to go to college in order to get a good job.
- I plan to go to 4-year college.
- English is one challenge to my college
- College is different than high school because there may not be Hmong/Mong students and I won't have the same support as I do in high school
- Money is another challenge
- What type of college will fit my need is another challenge.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I want to be a banker or math teacher
- My dad wants me to be an architect because of my skills of drawing
- I enjoy drawing and I am good in this; my teacher also supports my drawing too; so does my aunt because I have this skill.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- My parents' marital issue discourages my education.
- English is another barrier

**Attitudes:**

- Going to school is a great thing for me.
- School is excited and important to me
- My aunt family came here first; their kids speak English well and they have nice home – this motivates me to follow their foot step
- I remind myself to study hard
- My ELL teachers influence me a lot and help me a lot to study hard.

21. Chue Neng (Male)

**Home:**

- We talk a lot about it every now and then
- We come late so we need to study hard to gain English skills and we need to have good job for a good life in the future.
- My dad emphasizes a lot about education
- I do my homework all the time and my parents support me a lot.
- My parents are happy when I attend school every day, do my homework, and take my education seriously.

**Community:**

- Many Hmong/Mong came here earlier and have become successful and their success influences me a lot because I want to be like them
- My father's sister and my clan members talk a lot about the importance of education. They encourage me to study hard to catch those who are born here such as go as far as I can to get a doctoral degree.

**School:**

- Teachers encourage me a lot to study
- School conferences also remind me to study hard
- My ELL teachers are very nice and they encourage me a lot to study hard.

- My teachers here are more willing to help me and they have better teaching art compared to those in Laos. I have no fear of my teachers here whereas in Laos I did.
- There are tutors to help me pass the BST test and Mission Possible also helps me to prepare for my ACT test.

**Peers:**

- My Hmong/Mong friends always help me, especially with Math. For English my American friends help me most because it is their language.
- Most of my close friends are Hmong/Mong students who recently immigrated to the U.S. We are close to each other because we share similar experiences and easily understand one another. I don't associate with those who smoke; I associate with those who think and behave like me.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- After high school, I plan to go to college.
- In Laos, I had thought about becoming a police officer; now, I am thinking about pursuing this career also. I am not sure if I could since my English is not quite good.
- First, I try 4-year college; if I can't then I'll go for 2-year college
- Speaking and writing English are most challenging to me.
- My father influences me to pursue college; my aunt also does; my brothers do influence me as well. My father always encourages that I pursue college as far as I can; when I can't go on then I can find any employment that I could reach.
- My older brother graduated medical doctor from Russia so he influenced me a lot. His wife is a nurse as well. My father wants us to succeed in college like my older brother.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I want to be a police officer because people respect police officer a lot; police officer has power.
- My dad supports me to pursue to become a police officer.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- English proficient skills are my barriers.
- Because of English barriers, I got discouraged not to study

**Attitudes:**

- Study is excited because it makes you more intelligent and makes you feel good.
- Education will make my life better in the future. My second older brother did not take education seriously and now he is having lots of remorse and reminds me not to repeat his mistakes.
- I always do my homework first before anything else.
- My parents always support my study and remind me all the times to study.
- My teachers, especially ELL teachers help me a lot and I like them very much

22. Thai (Male)

**Home:**

- We talk a lot about education.
- My dad, my aunt, and my Yang relatives (clan).
- They give me advice what to do and what not to do.
- My dad was the one to talk a lot about education. My brothers also talk to me to study hard; my older brother got his MD in Russia.
- I got support to do homework at home; homework always came first before anything else. My parents always remind me to do homework before watching any TV.
- When my report card came and my grades were As and Bs, my parents, even they don't know much about the system, always feel good and are happy of my good grades.

**Community:**

- When I see successful Hmong/Mong professionals, I am motivated to follow their footsteps; when I see poor Hmong/Mong, I work hard because I don't want to be poor like them.
- I also see poverty, gangs, and dysfunctional community and I am motivated to study hard because I don't want to experience these in my future. I see poor people of color and I am motivated to work hard because I want to move out to a better neighborhood in the future. My relatives always encourage and influence me to go to college.

**School:**

- My teachers encourage me as much as my parents to study hard.
- At school, there are tutors helping me in Math and other subjects. I recently join the Mission Possible program and it helps me a lot to prepare my ACT and college preparation and study. I like this program a lot.
- My teachers influence me a lot, not the counselor; counselor answers me the questions but teachers help me the most with my academic work. Teachers here are competent in teaching and do better job than those in Laos.
- Teachers here look like my parents; teachers in Laos are too rigid and they scared me off.

**Peers:**

- I have 2 Hmong/Mong friends and we support one another a lot.
- I am bonded more to Hmong/Mong kids from Laos and Thailand than Hmong/Mong kids born here because we have common issue. However, there are Hmong/Mong kids born here whom I get along with, i.e. I help a Hmong/Mong girl with chemistry and she helps me with English; it depends on the personality but usually, it is easy to associate with recent arrival students because we share common issues and understand each other better.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- I will go to college and will go as far as I can; I want to be a chiropractor, a doctor, a nurse, or a navy officer. My mother supports that I become a nurse.
- My # 1 challenge is English skill.
- Secondly, in college, I may compete with non-Hmong/Mong students
- Third, transportation may be another problem and money is a big challenge as well.
- My father influences me to go to college; he wants us to complete college education.
- My older brother also influences me to go to college.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I want to be nurse, doctor, chiropractor, or navy officer
- I am interested in bones and want to help people
- I went to a job shadow and someone told me of a nurse, a doctor, or chiropractor career; one of my peer also suggested that I become a chiropractor.



**Barriers / Impediments:**

- English skills are the main barrier; laziness is also another barrier.
- Working while going to school makes me too tired to study.

**Attitudes:**

- Education will help me to get good job; no education, I will do heavy work, like lifting heavy machines.
- I am excited to go to school because I learn new knowledge.
- My dad reminds me to do my homework; my friends remind and I remind them to study
- Out of all my teachers, none of them dislike me. They help me a lot. In Laos, teachers didn't help me much like American teachers do.
- The job shadow and the Mission Possible have been helpful to me to my college education.
- I met a nurse, Judy, and she told me her success and her story inspires me a lot.

23. Blia (Female)

**Home:**

- There are lots of emphases at home about education but I am a new comer and my academic foundation is low.
- However, I have lots of hope that my education will lift me up in the future so, I don't mind to suffer now because I believe in my opportunity to go to school to improve my life.
- My parents and all my teachers encourage me a lot.
- All my teachers are great and have done their best to help me. I am so proud of all my American teachers.
- I have 2 kids at home and I am busy between family chores and my study. I have to be strong because my life is tough at home but my spouse and in-laws help me a lot.
- My spouse and in-laws give me compliments when I do well at school.

**Community:**

- The success of the first Hmong/Mong wave motivates to study hard in order to catch them up.
- I live in public housing and receive public assistance and this inspires me to study hard to get out of this situation and move to a better place.
- My relatives encourage me a lot to study hard and I am happy to their encouragement.

**School:**

- All the teachers and the program encourage and help me a lot.
- I feel that the six teachers care a lot about my education and my refugee peers at school.
- In the U.S. the school system is much better than the one in Thailand, even there are students with poor behavior but the school system treats everyone the same.
- There is a Chinese teacher who empathizes our situation because this teacher has gone through what we are experiencing now.
- There is a Hmong/Mong tutor who comes to our home twice per week to help us with our homework

**Peers:**

- We, the Hmong/Mong students from Thailand, are close to each other and have similar experiences, so we help each other a lot.
- We trust each other and encourage each other a lot to study hard.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- I plan to go to college.
- Want to pursue as high as I can. I plan to go higher than 2-year college (mean 4-year college) but at first, I will start 2-year college first then move up because I have to be careful with my academic ability. My English is limited.
- My challenges will be Limited English skills, choosing major, academic ability, and tuition fee, and my kids' welfare. Who will help me babysitting my kids while attending college?
- I receive lots of encouragements and support from my relatives that with efforts, you will achieve college education.
- My spouse encourages me to attend college.

- My spouse and I will be the first to go to college.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I want to work as the airplane flight coordinator to check passengers' flight at the terminal or someone like at the lobby of a hotel to do check-in and checkout for travelers.
- I enjoy working with people.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- If I were single I would be a better student
- Having kids is harder for me to study.

**Attitudes:**

- Study is always good, exciting a lot, and very important because it will help me to get a better job in the future.
- I want to speak English fluently, want to have better job, and want to be successful like the first group of early Hmong/Mong refugees here.
- I always remind myself to study and do homework
- My relatives always help me such as babysitting my kids so I can study
- My Hmong/Mong tutor always encourages me to study hard.

24. Seng Sue (Male)

**Home:**

- We have lots of talks about education and find ways to help each other take place at home.
- During homework, we help each other a lot among our siblings.
- My parents are the ones to remind and tell everyone to focus on our study.
- During homework, my parents always take care of my kids so I can study and do my homework.
- Yes, I receive support and compliments from my parents because I have made progress such as depending on others less when forms from different agencies were received.

**Community:**

- Any time, I met friends or relatives, they always talk to me about my education and encourage me to study hard.
- When I see Hmong/Mong people who do well, I am motivated to study hard to catch them up.
- The suffering of the Hmong/Mong community also inspires me to study hard so, one day, I will buy home and move out of this neighborhood.
- My relatives support me a lot and praise me of being humble and responsible young man. They encourage me a lot to study hard.
- My parents are 100% behind my study.

**School:**

- Most of my teachers help me a lot. I am grateful to all teachers. I am not afraid and shy to my teachers because they care a lot about my learning even I have accent but these teachers have 100% passion to teach us. The American teachers and school system are more student-centered than the Thai system. In Thailand, the school punishes you, hits you, and is very rigid. In Thailand, the students are afraid of the teachers. If you are poor, you won't have access to education.
- In the U.S., there is free public school, transportation, and food to low-income students.
- In Thailand, there are no jobs even you have education. Very few job opportunities are available in Thailand.
- Our program at school is for all immigrant students from around the world. This is the best program because I am competing with those students of similar English level as mine.

**Peers:**

- My friends are Hmong/Mong and we help each other a lot.
- We have similar experience and support one another a lot.
- We communicate to each other a lot to share views and strategies about our education.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- I would like to go to college after high school. However, I have accent and limited English skills.

- I plan to attend 2-year technical college and find work.
- After that I will plan to attend 4-year college.
- Lots of encouragements from relatives for me to attend college to get a better job in the future. They are my uncles, aunts, and brother-in-laws.
- I will be the first in my family to go to college.
- Challenges in college include inadequate academic preparation, limited English skills, and low vocabulary. I don't worry about tuition.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I want to be a medical assistant.
- I want to help people, work with people.
- My dad is a shaman and his shaman career influences mine a lot.
- My career class at school helps me to arrive to this choice

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Having kids become stressful for me to study because of my responsibility of both my education and my kids' welfare.
- I have social responsibility such as my funeral expertise when Hmong families ask me to participate in these cultural ceremonies.

**Attitudes:**

- Going to school is a good thing, exciting, and very important to me.
- I want to be educated, intellectual, and talented in special skills.
- I remind myself all the times to study such as organizing my times wisely.
- My parents always remind me all the times to study. I am grateful to my parents' support and reminding.
- All of my teachers care and help me a lot.

25. Chueyee (Male)

**Home:**

- My parents talk to me a lot about education, especially my dad.
- My parents and my older brother had no education.
- My dad wants me to get married but I refuse to do.

- I fight to go to school. I disagree with my dad for me to get married so I insist that I continue my schooling. I need a better future, so I pursue this route. In Thailand, witnessing others wearing nice clothes; that was the original reason for me to beg my parents to let me going to school in Thailand influenced me.
- So, I am the one to influence me to go to school. I internalize a lot to go to school.
- In the U.S., my parents also influence me to go to school.
- My parents don't know how to support me and at times they ask me too much to help them with home chores.
- I also help babysitting my nieces and nephews after school.

**Community:**

- I met many Hmong/Mong who encouraged me to study hard.
- The Hmong/Mong kids born here look down on us, those who recently came here.
- My friends who came recently to the U.S. encourage me to study hard
- My relatives always encourage me to study hard and urge me to become the leader for my family.
- I am the most educated in my family and my responsibility is heavy

**School:**

- I receive lots of encouragement from my Hmong/Mong friends who just came from Thailand to study hard.
- Hmong/Mong students born here are arrogant and ridicule my English accent. I feel of being rejected by them.
- I associate more with my Hmong/Mong friends recently arrived from Thailand.
- I receive lots of help from two Hmong/Mong tutors.
- My ELL teacher helps us a lot. He is rigid but his teaching technique is helpful to my learning.
- Some teachers don't know how to teach ELL students.

**Peers:**

- I associate with most Hmong/Mong friends from Thailand because we support each other.
- I play soccer at school and have established friendship with some Hmong/Mong kids born here.

- Hmong/Mong girls born here even rejected me more.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- I plan to go to college.
- I would like to go to medical school or Ph.D. degree.
- My English is limited and I worry about this.
- I don't worry about tuition.
- I join Upper Bound program, which helps me a lot.
- I am strong in math and sciences
- I always influence me to attend college.
- My family hardship, coming late to the U.S. and current struggle inspire me to study hard.
- I worry that I may be trapped in social issue and fail my schooling such as pressure from my girl friend for marriage.
- I am very confident of my math ability.
- I am so grateful to be in this country and finally can go to school.
- Even my family is poor here but we are still better than our life in Thailand. I have better chance to succeed here compared to my chance in Thailand. I have more hope here that I will move up the social ladder here.
- My cousins still live in Laos and suffer a lot; their condition inspires me to study hard so I could help my cousins in Laos in the future.
- I am confident that one day I will be able to catch up those who came here before us.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I would like to major in engineering.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Poverty
- Limited English skills

**Attitudes:**

- Go to school is a good thing, exciting, and very important.
- I want to help my cousins in Laos because they are facing hardship and oppression.
- I always remind me and manage my times to study.

- My relatives encourage me to study a lot.
- My ELL teacher inspires me to study hard.

26. Mai See (Female)

**Home:**

- We talk a lot about it every now and then; we do our homework; we talk about what we should do to get more helps of our homework.
- I emphasize a lot of my education. My parents also emphasize about my education also. Since my parents don't know much about education and I am the oldest child so, I take the role to emphasize more about it. My parents also say a lot that this country is a country where one must have education to have good job. One can't just do sewing for living like in Thailand. I believe what my parents say.
- My parents don't bother me when I am doing my homework. After homework, I usually help my mother because I am the older child. My parents praise me a lot when I do well at school. They know that if I do well in school, in the end, I will be able to help this family a lot. So, they are very happy about my progress.

**Community:**

- The Hmong/Mong community influences my education because most Hmong/Mong believe that even I came late to this country, I still can catch up if I work hard to succeed it.
- When I see many poor people in my neighborhood, I work harder because I don't want to be poor like them. My aunt and uncle call me to encourage me to go to school and I appreciate and believe what they told me because their life has improved more and I want to follow their footstep. I attend Hmong/Mong Academy charter school and the teachers there help me a lot. Those teachers really help us, the new students. I like my charter school because the pace fits my needs; I can't survive at regular public school because the pace is too fast.

**School:**

- The teachers here help me a lot. Teachers answer my questions; give me many more examples to make me understand the subject. I like American teachers who are nice, helpful, care a lot about us, the students.



- My ELL teachers are my best ones; they help my classmates and me. They are always there for us.

**Peers:**

- I have many good friends and we help each other a lot at school.
- My friends are mostly Hmong/Mong girls who just came from Thailand with me; we have many common things and we support each other. Hmong/Mong girls born here don't know where we are coming from.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- I would like to go to college if I can
- I plan to go to 2-year college then 4-year college after
- English is my challenge because my English is poor
- I don't worry about financial issue because there is financial aid to help poor students
- My parents influence me to attend college because they brought us here for college and after college, I will get good job then I will be able to help our family.

**Career Aspirations:**

- Nurse or pharmacist because nurse and pharmacist help people and I like to help people.
- This is my own idea to be a nurse or pharmacist.

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Maybe I am shy and might be a little scared
- My English may not be good.
- I am the older daughter and I need to help my parents more even they don't ask much and this may become a barrier for my education.

**Attitudes:**

- Study is a good thing, excited thing, and very important.
- I learn new things and have more and more new knowledge.
- In Thailand, I did not have a chance to go to school and now I do so I must take advantage of this opportunity
- My parents, relatives, and friends from Thailand influence me to study
- My ELL teachers influence me a lot to study

27. Mai Sheng (Female)

**Home:**

- We talk a lot about education at home.
- We talk about what happens at school.
- Our parents talk to us to study hard and don't be lazy.
- We share our experiences at school to each other.
- My dad says that we just come from Laos and we are poor so we must study hard.
- My dad talks a lot and we are grateful to him and his wisdom.
- Our parents leave us alone to do homework and my mother takes care of all the house chores during our homework time.
- My parents are happy for us and buy things to us because our effort at school.
- We came here late and we are poor and this motivates me to study hard. We need to work hard to catch up those Hmong/Mong who came here earlier.
- My older sister gets married and she is struggling now and my dad says we must not repeat her mistake

**Community:**

- The Hmong/Mong are recent refugees and we are poor and this motivates us to study hard.
- Hmong/Mong elderly people are poor and still work hard to earn a living whereas white elderly have social security; this hurts us so we are motivated to study hard in order to help our people and not become poor in the future.
- Our neighbors are working class and we don't want to live in inner city; every morning, they go to work and their children are well fed and clothed and we want to be like them; yes, they influence our education.
- Our relatives encourage us to study and we appreciate their encouragement.

**School:**

- The teachers here help us a lot.
- We like American teachers more than Laotian teachers because the teachers here are passionate and willing to help but in Laos, the teachers are rigid and we are afraid of them.

- Our ELL teachers help us the most. We have learned a lot from them.
- I always want to go to school.

**Peers:**

- I don't associate with Hmong/Mong kids born here because they reject me due to my limited English skills and my accent.
- I associate more with a Lao student who just came to this country. She and I have similar experience and we help each other a lot.

**Educational Aspirations:**

- Yes, I want to go to college after H.S.
- I want to go as far as I could
- My challenge is my limited English skills in reading and writing
- I don't worry much of tuition because I will be qualified for grant and scholarship.
- My teacher and my dad encourage me to go to college.
- None of my family is in college yet.

**Career Aspirations:**

- I want to get a degree from a 10- year college (meaning doctoral degree).

**Barriers / Impediments:**

- Should I know more English, I will do better in school.
- Study is stressful for me

**Attitudes:**

- Go to school is good, exciting, and very important.
- I want to have a good job.
- My parents remind me all the times to study.
- My friend is always ambitious to learn so she and I compete against each other a lot.
- They leave me alone during homework.
- My ELL teacher and Educational Assistant help me a lot because they want me to learn.

**Emerging Themes**

This investigator searched for recurring words, pattern, meanings, and frequency of

pattern and meanings. Then these excerpts of each wave were condensed into a new table of each different wave contained meaning of previous excerpts from previous tables of different participants. This was done through open coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), in which the researcher carefully looks for words, concepts, patterns, categories, and meaning to arrive the emerging themes. Categories are higher-level concepts under which the investigator groups lower-level concepts according to shared properties. Strauss and Corbin suggest, “Categories are sometimes referred to as themes” (p. 159). These categories represent relevant phenomena and enable the investigator to reduce and combine data. Corbin and Strauss elaborate that: “coding is the extracting concepts from the raw data and develop them in terms of their properties and dimensions; concepts are words that stand for ideas contained in data. Concepts are interpretations, the products of the analysis; dimensions are the variations within properties that give specificity and range to concepts; and properties are the characteristics that define and describe concepts.” (p. 159).

Moreover, there are both similarities and differences amongst the three different waves pertaining to each domain, as shown in the next three tables. Corbin and Strauss assert that: “constant comparisons are the analytic process of comparing different pieces of data for similarities and differences.” (p. 65). The investigator constantly applies this process to arrive the emerging themes.

Tables 4 to 6 present data for first, second, and third wave subjects, which are the emerging themes of the study.

#### First wave

#### **Table 4: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subjects’ Emerging Themes**

Questions	Emerging Themes
<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lots of emphases at home</li> <li>▪ Parents lecture, talk to them</li> <li>▪ Appreciate what parents/siblings/relatives talk, wish, encourage, and support them even though I dislike the way and the frequency of their lecture. Those lectures help me.</li> <li>▪ Poverty, parents struggle, past experiences, and hardship influence their education</li> </ul>
<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parents' past and current struggles influence their education</li> <li>▪ Moving up socially influences their education.</li> <li>▪ Neighbors don't have any influence on their education.</li> </ul>
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ After school program influences their education</li> <li>▪ The one thing I receive is the advice from teacher and counselor.</li> <li>▪ The teachers try their best to guide me to go on the path to be successful.</li> </ul>
<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sometimes friends can help but not a big factor for success. Very few friends encourage me to study.</li> <li>▪ Most of my friends are Hmong/Mong. My two close friends are my brother and two other friends.</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I want to go to college.</li> <li>▪ I plan to go to 2-year college.</li> <li>▪ I may go to 4-year college.</li> <li>▪ The biggest obstacle will be my decision about what I want to be, what career I want to pursue? I want to go into the health and medical field because I like being in a lab.</li> <li>▪ My parents have tried to influence me to continue my education after high school.</li> <li>▪ My older brothers went to college and both my sisters did too.</li> <li>▪ My parents, or my siblings, or my relatives and cousins have graduated from college.</li> </ul>

<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Technicians</li> <li>▪ Lawyer, doctor, dentist, writer, politician, engineer.</li> <li>▪ I enjoy this field and I enjoy helping people</li> <li>▪ My science teacher influences me and I learned a lot about the human body, genetics, radiology, medical technology, and ultrasounds are really cool.</li> </ul>
<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I play sports so that takes away my times</li> <li>▪ Such as basketball, soccer, and football.</li> <li>▪ I have so much fun and social life.</li> <li>▪ Poor time management / Laziness</li> <li>▪ Too many games, phones, Internets, peer pressure negatively impact my grades.</li> </ul>
<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study is really good but study all night could be worn out by the time you get to school.</li> <li>▪ It is something you have to do to get on with your life. It's a must. If it's boring you still have to do it. Little boring but more exciting.</li> <li>▪ It is really important unless you're a giant athlete. You probably wouldn't need it because you're making six figures or something like that.</li> <li>▪ My relatives are successful and they influence me to follow their path.</li> <li>▪ Every now and then I do procrastinate my homework but I have to do it. My friends do support me. I receive lots of support at home to study.</li> <li>▪ I've talked to my counselor a couple of times to guide me but mostly it is up to me to study.</li> <li>▪ Success of my family, relatives, and other Hmong/Mong people inspires me to continue my education.</li> </ul>

**Table 5: 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Subjects' Emerging Themes**

Questions	Emerging Themes
<b>Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A lot of emphases of education at home</li> <li>▪ My parents lecture me a lot</li> <li>▪ Helps parents fill forms</li> <li>▪ No education no good job</li> <li>▪ My dad supports me and reminds me a lot</li> <li>▪ My parents care a lot of my homework</li> <li>▪ I receive compliments when I did well at school.</li> </ul>
<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to do well because my relatives came here before us and we are poor because we came to US late.</li> <li>▪ My cousins influence me a lot about my education. Some of my relatives do influence me too.</li> <li>▪ Peer influence</li> <li>▪ Hmong/Mong people are poor and this motivates me to study</li> <li>▪ Other look down on us because we are poor and uneducated, this motivates me to study hard</li> <li>▪ Want to move up socially</li> <li>▪ Competition with Whites (Move up socially)</li> <li>▪ Relatives are successful and their success motivates me</li> <li>▪ Successful and smart Hmong/Mong professionals influence my education</li> <li>▪ My church influences my education</li> <li>▪ Used to live in ghetto in MPLS or St. Paul, now I like our home in the suburb (Moving up)</li> <li>▪ Suffering of parents and my people (including relatives) influences my education.</li> </ul>
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teachers do help me</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My counselor, Mr. B. makes a difference in me. / My English Teacher/History Teacher and Spanish Teacher/ Math teacher</li> <li>▪ School has programs and those programs motivate me sometimes.</li> <li>▪ My friends mostly encourage me to study</li> <li>▪ My counselor</li> <li>▪ My ESL teacher in 1<sup>st</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grades.</li> <li>▪ Hmong/Mong culture teachers.</li> <li>▪ Hmong/Mong Institute of Hmong/Mong culture and Hmong/Mong literacy, and language.</li> </ul>
<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My friends are both Hmong/Mong and non-Hmong/Mong and they do help me when I don't know stuff. However, the Hmong/Mong friends help me more. Associate more with boys at high school and we help each other.</li> <li>▪ Most good friends are Hmong/Mong.</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I plan to attend 4-year and more after that</li> <li>▪ Attend 2-year college</li> <li>▪ Have siblings in college.</li> <li>▪ Hardship of my family /relatives and their love toward me inspires me to study hard and continue my education</li> <li>▪ Reading is more challenging because my reading scores aren't that high.</li> <li>▪ Meeting new friends are also challenging</li> <li>▪ Money is also a challenge Money is more challenging than English skills.</li> <li>▪ I fear of not doing well at college and not knowing many friends there at college.</li> <li>▪ My parents influence me to go to college and I will be the first one in my family.</li> <li>▪ I only want to work hard enough to get what I need</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I plan to join the army for financial benefit</li> <li>▪ I want to be a politician.</li> </ul>
<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Computer engineering or auto mechanics</li> <li>▪ I am good in math; I enjoy engineering and fixing car</li> <li>▪ Mechanic</li> <li>▪ Fire fighter or Police Officer</li> <li>▪ Join the army or work then part-time college</li> <li>▪ Lawyer or Business Management, Doctor</li> <li>▪ Graphic design</li> <li>▪ Pursue Art, music, and vocalist</li> <li>▪ Want to be lawyer or police officer because cops harassed me in the past.</li> </ul>
<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Play too much games, watch too much TV and may not be consistent in doing homework are the factors that prevent me to be a better student than I am now.</li> <li>▪ I have plenty family support at home.</li> <li>▪ Academic problem</li> <li>▪ Family issues</li> <li>▪ Financial hardship</li> <li>▪ Too much phone</li> <li>▪ Bad time management.</li> </ul>
<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Going to school is important, excited and good thing.</li> <li>▪ My father was a soldier and he inspires me to do well in school.</li> <li>▪ I sometimes remind myself to study; sometimes my parents do; my peers do too.</li> <li>▪ My study skill helps me the most.</li> <li>▪ I have one older brother and sister still living in Thailand; my parents are working to bring them here. They are the ones to influence me to study hard because they are far away and suffer a lot.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do better than my parents</li> <li>▪ Not take school seriously</li> <li>▪ Summer program in South America</li> <li>▪ Want to be smart so people recognize me</li> <li>▪ Parents came from Thailand, are poor, don't speak English, and work so hard, I want to succeed so I can help my family.</li> <li>▪ My specific teacher or counselor or home school cares a lot about my welfare.</li> </ul>
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Third wave

**Table 6: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subjects' Emerging Themes**

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Emerging Themes</b>
<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emphasize a lot at home such as do homework/finish High School / Lecture</li> <li>▪ Sibling/Parents emphasize frequently/relatives</li> <li>▪ Receive Support/Attention at home for education</li> <li>▪ Education is key to better future/better job</li> </ul>
<b><u>Community</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hmong/Mong community influences my education; relatives support my education; appreciate support and guide of parents and relatives; poverty; parents/relatives were not educated/ catch up others who have done well and have hope; success of Hmong/Mong professionals; gang activities motivate me; moving up motivates me, poverty in my neighborhood influences my education.</li> </ul>
<b><u>School</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My school and teachers encourage me to study.</li> <li>▪ Excellent school system in the US.</li> <li>▪ My specific English teacher does help me</li> <li>▪ My Hmong/Mong teacher / Hmong/Mong EA (educational</li> </ul>

	<p>assistant)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ After school program</li> </ul>
<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My friends influence my education</li> <li>▪ My friends are Hmong/Mong born in Thailand and came to US in my wave; similar experience leads to stronger support.</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Plan to attend college</li> <li>▪ Aim for 2-year college because of my limited English and poor foundation of education.</li> <li>▪ Aim for 4-year college and more.</li> <li>▪ English is my challenge, start school late/ poor academic foundation</li> <li>▪ No Hmong/Mong classmates at college is a challenge</li> <li>▪ Teachers influence my decision to attend college</li> <li>▪ Parents no education</li> <li>▪ Poverty</li> <li>▪ Siblings influence</li> <li>▪ Better job in the future.</li> <li>▪ I will be the first one in my family to go to college.</li> </ul>
<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Computer Engineering, Teacher, banker or math teacher, police officer, nurse / pharmacist, doctor, carpenter, computer technician</li> <li>▪ Relatives support this decision</li> </ul>
<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited English, Poor academic background/ Start school late, parental discord; work while going to school, family obligation; death of my father; illness of father; older daughter and obligation to help family</li> </ul>
<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School is great</li> <li>▪ Exciting and very important</li> <li>▪ Teachers here have excellent teaching skills and passionate about teaching compared to teachers in Thailand/Laos</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ School system is excellent here (available and accessible) compared to Thailand and Laos (teachers and systems were rigid and incompetent in Laos &amp; Thailand).</li><li>▪ Ambition about schooling</li><li>▪ American teachers always helpful and passionate and competent.</li><li>▪ ELL program and ELL teachers are great and passionate to give me education</li><li>▪ Remorse of older siblings of not having the opportunity for education in Laos or here inspires me to study hard.</li></ul>
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Chapter 5 presents the emergent themes of the findings, conclusion drawn, reflection, implications for practice, and recommendations for future study.

## CHAPTER 5

### THEMES, CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

Van Manen (2006) states, “It is in the act of reading and writing that insights emerge. The work of writing involves textual material that possesses hermeneutic and interpretive significance. It is precisely in the process of writing that the data of the research are gained as well as interpreted and that the fundamental nature of the research question is perceived.” (p. 715). After reviewing the above data from the three different waves, this researcher searched for underlying themes. I looked for recurring words, frequency of words or meaning, and compared and contrasted the different waves relative to different domains. From here on, I looked for similarities and differences of different waves relative to each domain. Once the themes are identified then relevant quotations of participants are illustrated underneath the themes to justify how the researcher arrives at these themes. Table 7 is helpful for the researcher to examine horizontally across the three waves pertaining to each domain to confirm and search for the final themes. This table is the summary of the findings matrix of the three waves relative to the eight domains.

**Table 7: Summary Findings Matrix of the first, second, and third wave**

Domain	1 <sup>st</sup> Wave	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wave	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wave
<b>Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of emphases at home about education</li> <li>• Lecture from parents/older siblings/relatives.</li> <li>• Receive lots of attentions and supports from parents and relatives.</li> <li>• I dislike their</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of emphases at home about education</li> <li>• Lecture from parents/older siblings/ relatives.</li> <li>• Receive lots of attention and supports at home from parents and relatives</li> <li>• I understand why</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of emphases at home about education</li> <li>• Lecture from parents/older siblings/ relatives.</li> <li>• Receive lots of attention and support at home from my family and relatives.</li> <li>• I take my parents</li> </ul>

	lectures but I realize that those lectures help me a lot because I am more wrong.	they lecture me but I am bored by the frequency of their lecture.	and relatives' lecture seriously because I believe what they tell me.
<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatives education their education</li> <li>• Hardship of relatives and community influences their education</li> <li>• Success of my family, relatives, and overall Hmong/Mong community influences their education.</li> <li>• Living in the suburb influences their education. Don't want to go back to the inner city area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatives encourage their education</li> <li>• Hardship of relatives and community influences their education</li> <li>• Success of relatives and overall Hmong/Mong community influences their education.</li> <li>• Not much direct influence from my neighbors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatives encourage their education</li> <li>• Hardship of relatives and community influences their education</li> <li>• Success of relatives and overall of Hmong/Mong community influences their education.</li> <li>• Hmong/Mong juvenile gang activities and other negative activities in the Hmong/Mong community influence their education</li> <li>• Have ambition to catch up the success of previous waves of Hmong/Mong refugees.</li> </ul>
<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have positive connection with specific teacher, or counselor, or administrator, or coach at school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have positive connection with specific teacher, or counselor, or coach at school.</li> <li>• Positive experience with after school program or community program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have positive relationship and experiences with the K-12 system here.</li> <li>• Opportunity to have access to education in this country gives me hope and presents me a honeymoon stage in my life here.</li> <li>• Have positive experiences and influences from key teachers at school such as my ESL /ELL teacher,</li> </ul>

			<p>Educational Assistant or Tutor; have high regard to the school system here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have positive experience with after school programs such as tutoring, homebound, Test preparation or academic support project.</li> <li>• View the U.S. K-12 system more effective and efficient, student-centered, and conducive to students' learning than their previous educational experiences in Laos or Thailand.</li> </ul>
<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associate with all kinds of students but close friends are Hmong / Mong</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associate with all kinds of students but close friends are Hmong/Mong</li> <li>• Receive encouragement from peers who share similar interests either academically or socially.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associate more with peers who just came from Thailand or Laos recently (from 3<sup>rd</sup> wave) because of mutual understanding and strong support.</li> <li>• Experienced rejection by Hmong/Mong students born here or came here before their wave (Kids from 2<sup>nd</sup> wave and 1<sup>st</sup> wave).</li> <li>• Receive lots of encouragement to study from close friends who are Hmong/Mong.</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most want to go to college after high school</li> <li>• 37% plan to attend</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all can go to college after high school because their academic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone wants to go to college after high school</li> <li>• 25 % plan to</li> </ul>

	<p>2-year college institution and the other 63% plan to attend 4-year or more college institution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their challenges in college will be tuition, challenging academic work, independent living condition, time management, and away from home.</li> <li>• Going to college is my individualistic affair (More individualism such as look for my personal interest first).</li> <li>• Parents and relatives influence me to continue my education after high school.</li> <li>• I plan to attend college not because I want to but I need it for my future living.</li> <li>• My parents and relatives have graduated from college.</li> <li>• Have no problem in English skills.</li> </ul>	<p>difficulty in high school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 43% plan to attend 2-year college institution and the other 53% plan to attend 4-year or plus college institution.</li> <li>• Their challenges in college will be tuition, overcoming academic challenges, competition with others, and time management.</li> <li>• Going to college is more from my own decision</li> <li>• Sometimes, I am not sure I will be ready for college so, I need to explore other avenues first.</li> <li>• My older siblings or relatives are in college now.</li> <li>• Pretty confident of my English skills</li> </ul>	<p>attend 2-year college institution and the other 75% plan to attend 4-year or more college institution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their challenges in college will be limited English skills, be with non-Hmong/Mong peers, and uncertainty of their academic readiness for college.</li> <li>• None worry about tuition cost</li> <li>• Ambition and great excitement to obtain college education to lift their life up from poverty and hardship.</li> <li>• Lots of energy and effort to be ready for college education and challenges.</li> <li>• Going to college is a family mission and also a mission for my Hmong/Mong people (More collectiveness such as fulfill family wish and dream).</li> <li>• College education is the key to better job, brighter future, lifting up the life of my family, my community.</li> <li>• I have a better chance to succeed college education here than my parents, relatives in their previous</li> </ul>
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			<p>life in Laos and Thailand and I will do it for them as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty, oppression, and previous hardship influence me to continue my education after high school.</li> <li>• I will be the first in my family to attend college</li> </ul>
<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surgical technician</li> <li>• Bakery technician</li> <li>• Computer technician</li> <li>• Social worker</li> <li>• Dental hygiene technician</li> <li>• Teacher</li> <li>• Engineer</li> <li>• Writer</li> <li>• Dentist</li> <li>• Chiropractor</li> <li>• Lawyer</li> <li>• Radiologist</li> <li>• Medical technologist</li> <li>• Doctor / Nurse</li> <li>• Engineer</li> <li>• Law enforcement/Army</li> <li>• Architect/Civil engineer</li> <li>• Accounting</li> <li>• Therapist</li> <li>• Health field</li> <li>• Veterinarian technician</li> <li>• Work with people.</li> </ul> <p>Overall 37% aim for 2-year college professional and 63% aim for 4-year college professional</p> <p>-Reasons for this career:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help people / society</li> <li>Good in math</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanic</li> <li>• Graphic designer</li> <li>• Artist</li> <li>• Fire fighter</li> <li>• Police Officer</li> <li>• Vocalist / Musician</li> <li>• Acting / Film maker</li> <li>• Hygiene technician</li> <li>• Drawer</li> <li>• Teacher</li> <li>• Social Worker</li> <li>• Business Management</li> <li>• Lawyer</li> <li>• Politician</li> <li>• Doctor</li> </ul> <p>Overall 43% aim for 2-year college professional and 57% aim for 4-year college professional.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I need to be self-sufficient and to help my family.</li> </ul> <p>-Reasons for this career include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I enjoy it</li> <li>I am good at it/It is my passion</li> <li>Want to help people</li> <li>Financial benefit</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer Engineer</li> <li>• Banker or math teacher</li> <li>• Teacher</li> <li>• Police officer</li> <li>• Pharmacist</li> <li>• Doctor</li> <li>• Lawyer</li> <li>• Chiropractor</li> <li>• Teacher for small kids</li> <li>• Computer designer</li> <li>• Nurse or pharmacist</li> <li>• Flight Ticket coordinator</li> <li>• Medical assistant</li> <li>• Professional with graduate degree.</li> <li>• Computer technician</li> <li>• Carpenter</li> </ul> <p>Overall 25% for technician And 75% for more 4-year college and plus professional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My obligations to lift up my family, my relatives, and my people from poverty, misery, and oppression influence to this career.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Enjoy it/Have passion</li> <li>d. Can find job</li> <li>e. Enjoy kids</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e. Inspired by a significant person in the past</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have a better chance to move up socially than my parents and relatives because of their situation in previous country or their circumstance in the past.</li> <li>-Reasons for this career: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Good in math</li> <li>b. Help people</li> <li>c. Dad is a shaman</li> <li>d. Enjoy computer</li> <li>e. Have power</li> <li>f. Influenced by a relative</li> <li>g. I experienced this in the past</li> </ul> </li> <li>It is my strong suit</li> </ul>
<b>Barriers &amp; Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• So much fun</li> <li>• Poor time management</li> <li>• Lay back / Laziness</li> <li>• Phones, Internets, and peer pressures (drug).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too much games, TV, Phones, Internets, and fun</li> <li>• Poor time management</li> <li>• Laziness / no motivation</li> <li>• Peer pressure and immaturity (drug)</li> <li>• Family issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited English skills</li> <li>• Inadequate educational preparation</li> <li>• Family obligations /crisis</li> <li>• Poverty</li> </ul>
<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study is a good thing, both boring and exciting, and important</li> <li>• Parent remind me to study</li> <li>• Have specific teacher or school staff cares of my welfare</li> <li>• My family or relatives' success influence me to go to school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study is a good thing, half exciting and half boring, but important; however more exciting because met new people and had new knowledge.</li> <li>• My family or relatives influence me to go to school.</li> <li>• Have specific teacher or school staff encourages me to study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study is good thing, exciting, and very important.</li> <li>• Want to go to school every day</li> <li>• The school system is great.</li> <li>• All teachers are excellent and really encourage me to learn</li> <li>• Great school programs and after school programs</li> <li>• Parents and relative encourage</li> </ul>

			<p>me to study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Either ELL/ESL teacher or other key staff at school care a lot about my welfare</li> <li>• Both the past and present hardship/misery of my family and my community influence me to go to school</li> <li>• Moreover, the success of relatives, a cousin or friend, or a Hmong/Mong person influences me to go to school.</li> </ul>
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W1 = Born here and parents came to the United States between 1975 and 1984.

W2 = Born in Thailand or Laos and came here before the age of 10 years old (1985-1999).

W3 = Born in Thailand or Laos and came to the United States from 2003 to the present; they came to the United States at the age of 10 years old or more.

ELL = English Language Learners

ESL = English as Second Language

E.A. = Educational Assistant

Hmong = White Hmong pronounce their own people with an “H” nasal.

Mong = Green Mong or Mong Leng pronounce their own people with no “H” nasal.

There are some similarities in the emerging themes as well as differences amongst the three different waves. Both similarities and differences of the emerging themes are illustrated as follows:

**a. Similarities:**

All waves have themes that include the following statements:

- There is much emphasis at home about education
- There are lots of lectures from parents, mostly the father, to influence the participants to focus on their education seriously.
- Parents, siblings, and relatives influence their education
- The family's past hardship, current struggle, poverty, and oppression influence their education.
- Hmong/Mong community influences their education
- Moving up motivates them to study
- All receive support and attention at home for their homework and study.
- Across all waves, family influence persists
- Supportive peers influence their education
- Pride / Positive Self-Esteem / Strong Character influences them to succeed
- After school programs, supportive programs, extracurricular programs improve their learning.

**b. Differences:**

The following themes are the differences between the three waves. In general, subjects for the third wave appeared to have more positive experiences about their education in the United States, than those from the other two waves. These differences are highlighted below.

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> wave group has hope, ambition, and energy about their education in the United States.

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> wave group doesn't worry much about the tuition expenditure at college even though they have limited English skills and inadequate preparation for college education.
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> wave group is motivated by their parents or relatives' past hardship, unavailable and inaccessible opportunities, and overall negative plight of their relatives and fellow Hmong/Mong in previous countries.
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> wave group appears to have a collective mentality to strive for their education for the sake of their family, community, and Hmong/Mong society's benefit, name recognition, and self-sufficiency. In another word, the 1<sup>st</sup> wave tends to break away from their family whereas the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave sticks more with their family/relatives.
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> wave group aims very high for college education and career in the future despite of the many disadvantages that they are encountering; they have hope, optimism, and energy.
- The third wave groups has a high aspiration to emphasize a lot of being educated and intellectual versus the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> waves emphasize more of having a livable career first.
- The third wave acknowledges that job is important but being educated is their number one priority and aspiration.
- The changing influences factors for the 1<sup>st</sup> wave range: (1) influenced by self; (2) then influenced by family / relatives come next; (3) Hmong/Mong community influences me last; whereas the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave is that (1) self and or family have equal influence on them and (2) the community is the last to have influence on them; and

the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave emphasizes that influence comes from this order to them: (1) family, (2) clan, (3) community, and last (4) self has influence on them.

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> wave group gives tremendous credits to the educational system and the teaching force for meeting the students' needs compared to a poor and inflexible educational system in Laos and Thailand.

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> wave group will be the first of their family to attend college in the near future.

- Finally, this 3<sup>rd</sup> wave group appreciates the support, attention, and lectures from their parents, siblings, and relatives; this 3<sup>rd</sup> wave group always acknowledges and believes that the constant lectures from their parents or relatives have been an effective and helpful tool to motivate them to achieve their education and elevate them to a more prosperous social status.

- The 2<sup>nd</sup> wave group and the 1<sup>st</sup> wave have no major English problem but they express worry about the financial cost to cover their college tuition.

- Both 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> waves dislike the constant lectures of their parents but admit that the lectures have been helpful to their education.

- Both 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> wave groups don't praise much of the educational system of this country but give credit to specific key teacher or counselor who has made positive impact on their life regarding their education.

- The 2<sup>nd</sup> wave group has older siblings in college whereas the 1<sup>st</sup> wave group has both parents and siblings graduated from college or still in college.

- Both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> waves mention of fun, playing games, phone calls, Internets, peer pressure like drug, poor time management and laziness are factors that prevent them to be better student.
- Both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> waves tend to be more individualistic in terms making the decision to attend college and explore career whereas the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave group seems to be a bit naïve and unrealistic of their aspiration to go to college and reach out for a future career. Their goal is too high and unrealistic.
- The difference between the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave and (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>) waves is that the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave considers the wish, dream, and interest of their families as the primary goal to attain their education whereas the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> waves take their personal interest ahead of others. In another word, they are more assimilated to the American culture.
- All of the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave and some of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> waves talk about having strong character to resist against pressure and social ills help them to succeed in their education.

The following questions have been addressed through this study:

- a. What is like to be a Hmong/Mong student at home and in the Hmong/Mong community?
- b. What are the influences on the education of Hmong/Mong students?
- c. What are the attitudes of Hmong/Mong students toward their education?
- d. What are the educational aspirations of Hmong/Mong students?
- e. What are the career aspirations of these Hmong/Mong adolescents?

This research is a qualitative ethnographic study to determine the influences toward Hmong/Mong adolescents' attitudes and aspiration on their education. Krathwohl (1998) stated that people act according to the meaning of things and persons to them and their reality is socially constructed. Thus, from this viewpoint, it is necessary to see the world through the eyes of the actor to reach a full understanding of the purpose of that person's behavior (Krathwohl, 1998).

**a. What is like to be a Hmong/Mong student at their home and in their community?**

**1. Constant lecture is a means of communicating expectation**

In the Hmong/Mong culture, oral communication is the main means of communicating your points or views to others. Moreover, the elders, grandparents, aunts, uncles, parents, and older siblings are culturally obligated to nurture and trained the younger members of their clan or family members. Oral lecture is a value in the Hmong/Mong culture. Those who fail to lecture their children or family members will be condemned as irresponsible individuals and will receive negative reputation. In fact, when Hmong/Mong parents died or during cultural ceremonial rituals, oral communication in the form of chanting, negotiating, and lecturing is used and most interested parties listen or take it seriously. Notice that participants from the 3<sup>rd</sup> wave appreciate the lectures from their parents or relatives tremendously because they understand their cultural value well. However, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> waves' participants sometimes dislike the lectures but then acknowledge that these lectures help them. Follows are excerpts from the participants regarding the above theme:



**Phoua (W1):** “Recently, my uncle gave me a lecture about education to make sure I am doing well; I don’t have a dad, so I consider him as my dad and I want to make him proud of me.”

**Sengsue (W3):** “My parents always remind me all the times to study. I am grateful to my parents’ support and reminding.”

**Sai (W2):** “My parents lecture me a lot. My parents care a lot of my homework. I received compliments when I did well at school.”

## **2. Family continues to be the main source of influence on Hmong/Mong**

### **Students’ Education**

The following excerpts or quotations reflect the above theme:

**Phoua (W1):** “Recently, my uncle gave me a lecture about education and make sure I am doing well; I don’t have a dad, so I consider him as my dad and I want to make him proud of me.”

**Matt (W1):** “Mom and dad always talk about my education to me; I don’t like it because they get onto my nerves. But I think it’s good idea that mom and dad do that.”

**Sengsue (W3):** “My parents always remind me all the times to study. I am grateful to my parents’ support and reminding.”

**Sai (W2):** “My parents lecture me a lot. My parents care a lot of my homework. I received compliments when I did well at school.”

**Dang Neng (W2):** “My parents talk a lot to me about education. I got lots of attention to do my homework but sometimes, I did not take advantage of their support much.”

**Chue Kao (W2):** “My parents motivate me to study and they are the ones with my older brother to constantly remind me to study.”

### **3. Their family past /current hardship is a tool to influence Hmong/Mong students’ education**

In the Hmong/Mong culture, the family’s hardship becomes an influential factor for members to learn to inspire their success in the future. Hardship is a concrete lesson to be shared and learned in order to avoid it in the future. Hmong/Mong family members or relatives use hardship to lecture their children. This hardship is touchy and inspires the individuals to avoid it because it was real and it hurt his or her loved one(s) in the past. For example:

**Chue Kao (W2):** “I see my parents and the elders suffer so I feel hurt and would like to push myself harder to do well in school.”

### **4. The Hmong/Mong Community Hardship and their Underdog Status are a tool to influence Hmong/Mong students’ education.**

Participants constantly echo that the past struggle, the oppression, the underdog status of the Hmong/Mong people, community, and relatives have influenced on their education. These excerpts reflect the above theme:

**Tou Kao (W3):** “My parents told me their story of having no opportunity to go to school in Laos; they want me to have a better chance than them.”

**Ma (W2):** “The Hmong/Mong community does influence our education because I see the gap between the Hmong/Mong and the White people and I feel motivated to study harder.”

**Parshouablai (W1):** “Yeah, the refugees, as you know, that have come here, have tried very hard. It makes me want to do well. They remind me of being here and needing a good education. My grand mom scolds me, but it doesn’t make me sad or angry but I know it’s good for me.”

**Chue Kao (W2):** “I see many Hmong/Mong, especially older Hmong/Mong gives me a sense of connection and makes me want to study hard.”

**b. What are the influences on the education of Hmong/Mong students?**

**1. Have positive connection with specific key teacher or counselor or administrator or staff at school has positive influence on their education.**

The Hmong/Mong people have been a minority of the minority; they have no country of their own. They have been a clan-oriented and autonomous group of people. They do well within their clan and their village because they feel safe and comfortable. This situation also applies to every human being. A Hmong/Mong person traditionally always goes to his or her relative or clan members for help. There is natural trust in his or her clan system. Thus, when Hmong/Mong students have positive connection with a specific teacher or counselor or coach, he or she trusts this individual and his actions influence them tremendously. For instance:

**Mai Sheng (W3)** “My ELL teacher and Educational Assistant help me a lot; they want me to learn.”

**Dang Neng (W2):** “Mr. Bagg cares a lot about me; I still stop by to see him for encouragement and advice. He was good to us, Hmong kids.”

**Kevin (W1):** “When my parents went to Thailand and I kept going to school, the principal encouraged me in my middle school; he talked to me for 2 hours and said that mostly other students wouldn’t come to school if their parents were out-of-state; they would stay home, but me, I came to school and he appreciated it. My principal knew me and we do keep in touch a lot.”

## **2. Having a Positive Support Network of Peers influences and increases**

### **Hmong/Mong students’ success in education:**

The W3 participants constantly stated that they associated more with Hmong/Mong peer(s) who recently came from Thailand because they have common background and support one another more. They associate less with Hmong/Mong students born here who tend to look down on them because of their English accent and different style of conduct, more traditional. Across all waves, peer support is positive and impacts their study positively. Most of them express concern of being with non-Hmong/Mong classmates at college and this might be a fear factor to pull them down from their college education. They state that they need to learn in an environment with their familiar peers in order to receive support from one another.

**ChueKao (W2):** “Most of my friends are males and we feel close because we are all Hmong/Mong and we can talk to each other. Yes, we all compete against each other at school. So that’s one way to help us focus and do well in school.”

**Mai Sheng (W3):** “I don’t associate with Hmong/Mong kids born here because they reject me due to my limited English skills and my accent. I associate with a Lao girl, who has just

recently come from Laos. I speak Lao and we share much commonality and help each other a lot.”

**Parshouablai (W1):** “Sometimes, I don’t want to go to school and my friend Amanda says, ‘oh, just go to school, because you need school.’ My friends do support me. We get along well and we have a lot of common issues.”

**Mai Shoua (W3):** “College is different than high school because there may not be Hmong/Mong students and I won’t have the same support as I do in high school.”

### **3. Excellent U.S. educational system influences and increases Hmong/Mong Students’ academic success**

The United States is a powerful country with public education available to every citizen. Moreover, the American education is a mandatory program for every child to have high school education. There are laws to govern and require the system to find excellence to respond to the American students’ needs. This system influences Hmong/Mong students who came from Laos or Thailand where public education is neither available nor accessible to every child. The following excerpts reflect the above them:

**Thai (W3):** “I’m more afraid of the teachers in Laos. Some teachers there punish you by hitting you. I like the system over here much better. Teachers here look like my parents. In Laos, teachers are rigid.”

### **4. Positive self-esteem, pride, and strong character influence Hmong/Mong Students’ education**

Many participants shared their view in career and educational aspirations. The recent wave talks a lot about wanting to be educated and becoming intellectual, gain status, and feel good of themselves and their Hmongness/Mongness. Moreover, many talk about wanting to serve people such as being a servant leader. The following excerpts reflect the above theme.

**Sengsue (W3):** “I want to be a medical assistant to help people. My dad is a shaman and being a medical assistant is closely related to the role of my dad.”

**Larshia (W1):** “Want to help people’s health for them to live longer, just helping people. I want to live in the suburb and not public housing project in Mt. Airy or McDonough. I want to be a middle class person.”

**Kalia (W2):** “My Hmong/Mong language and cultural classes help me a lot to inspire my education.”

**Seng (W2):** “I want to become a doctor because it is an honorable job such as help people and I get paid well.”

**Chue Kao (W2):** “I see many Hmong/Mong, especially older Hmong/Mong, gives me a sense of connection and makes me want to study hard.”

##### **5. After school programs/Supportive programs increase the Hmong/Mong students success in education:**

Many participants share that they benefit a lot from the after school program, weekend program, and/or community program. They identify these programs like Upward Bound, ESL, Mentoring services, Mission Possible, Basic Standard Test Preparation, Summer Program, Community Program, College Visit, etc. The following excerpts reflect the above theme.

**Peng (W2):** “I have attended the Hmong/Mong Institute to learn of Hmong/Mong literacy, culture, and Hmong/Mong martial arts. They teach us to learn to become leaders.”

**Ricky (W1):** “Upward Bound, MEP, and Fresh Force are after school programs and they help minority students a lot to succeed our education. I joined the Fresh Force to tutor the young kids.”

**Phong (W3):** “The ELL program is very helpful to me.”

**Thai (W3):** “At school, there are tutors helping me in math and other subjects. I recently joined the Mission Possible program and it helps me a lot to prepare my ACT and college preparation and study. I like this program a lot. I went to a job shadow and someone told me of a nurse, a doctor, or chiropractor career. Actually, I want to pursue the chiropractor career thanks to this program because I am interested in bones.”

**c. What are the attitudes of Hmong/Mong students toward their education?**

**1. School is important to Hmong/Mong students**

The first school in a Hmong/Mong village in Laos was built in 1939 for nine Hmong students (Yang, 1993). Subsequently, in the 1960s, more schools were built with the American funding at many Hmong/Mong villages. As a result, many Hmong/Mong had received education (Yang ,1993 & Thao, 1999). Obviously, every Hmong/Mong family realizes that their children’s education is the most important priority. Thus, all Hmong/Mong students acknowledge that education is very important to them, especially in this state-of-the art and technological country and voila the following excerpts reflect this.

**Tim (W1):** “Education is very important because Oakdale neighborhood has a newspaper that shows who’s doing well. Our neighbors are working class people and they compete a lot so I don’t want to fall behind.”

**Bee (W2):** “Study is very good, exciting because learn new things, and very important because knowledge comes. I want to be richer than my older brother and this motivates me to go to school and work hard.”

**Mai Shoua (W3):** “Going to school is a great thing for me; school is excited and important to me; my aunt family came here first; their kids speak English well and they have nice home and this motivates me to follow their foot step.”

## **2. Success of others influences Hmong/Mong students’ education.**

The Hmong/Mong refugees came from a war torn country and they came here to seek a better life. This country has offered abundant opportunities to them. More specifically, the success of others would further influence their children’s education.

**Dang Neng (W2):** “I see my relatives becoming successful professionals in many areas and their success inspires me to study hard to catch them up.”

### **d. What are the educational aspirations of the Hmong/Mong students?**

#### **1. Hmong/Mong students have aspiration to move up their socio-economic status**

The Hmong/Mong refugees came from a war torn country and horrible life experience. Coming to the United, they always bring their horrible memory of the war,



trauma, and hardship. Obviously, they continue to experience adjustment difficulty, discrimination, and other forms of oppression. However, there are abundant opportunities here compared to their original country. They bring their aspiration with them, which is a great survival skill.

**Ricky (W1):** “When my dad was back in Laos, he went to school from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade to 6<sup>th</sup> grade then he had to take an entrance examination to get accepted to seventh grade. His experience encourages me to go to school and makes me focus on my study here.”

**Larshia (W1):** “My dad told me about how he came here and went to college and my mom had to baby-sit six of us. He would come home every other weekend to come to check up on my mom and us. His story influences me to study hard.”

**Bee (W2):** “Minneapolis is a ghetto and we lived there before. So, I like here in North Branch.”

**Chueyee (W3):** “My cousins still live in Laos and suffer a lot; their condition inspires me to study hard so I could help my cousins in Laos in the future. I am confident that one day I will be able to catch up those who came here before us.”

## **2. Hmong/Mong U.S.- born adolescents assimilate faster and become more individualistic**

The Hmong/Mong families have experienced a new life style in the United States where they have learned English, associated with other non-Hmong/Mong individuals. They had experienced previous changes in Laos and Thailand when their ancestors migrated from China to Thailand and Laos. Likewise, many Hmong/Mong adolescents born in the United States have assimilated fast and have become Americanized.

**Matt (W1):** “I don’t like my parents’ lecture. They get on my nerves but I think it’s a good idea that my mom and dad emphasize about my education to me at home.”

**Chueyee (W3):** “Hmong/Mong students born here tend to reject me because I have accent.”

**Bao Nhia (W3):** “I associate more with a Lao girl, who recently came to this country; other Hmong/Mong girls born here choose not to talk to me because of my limited English and style; I am a new comer.”

**Meng (W3):** “Hmong/Mong students born here call us Hmong/Mong Thailand. So, I associate more with Hmong/Mong students who just came from Thailand; we understand each other and support one another.”

### **3. Hmong/Mong culture is a source of resilience to Hmong/Mong adolescents**

*(The Hmong/Mong culture has natural resilience to offer to their adolescents).*

The Hmong/Mong people have been known as a group of people who keep and carry their tradition for years. They are proud of their cultural heritage. They have resilient skills. They are a clan and group-oriented people. They love children and don’t mind to live in a crowded household. They help one another. This is their strength.

**Sengsue (W3):** “My parents tell me that they would take care of my children so my wife and I can study. I am my kids’ father but my parents raise them. I want to be a medical assistant because my father is a shaman. His shamanism influences me to attempt to become a medical assistant in the future.”

**Pheng (W2):** “My dad tells us that if we want to become who we want to become, then we must do what we have to do in order to achieve that.”

**Pheng (W2):** “I join the Hmong/Mong Institute, a community program, and I have learned a lot about Hmong Mong culture, customs, and values. This program makes me feel good of who I am and makes me wanting to be a leader for the Hmong/Mong.”

**Matt (W1):** “I dislike the lecture of my parents because it gets into my nerves but I realize that it is helpful to me.”

#### **4. Recent arrival Hmong/Mong students have high aspiration to continue College education after high school**

The recent arrival Hmong/Mong refugee students have high aspiration to attend college after completing their high school education. They are at a high stage of honeymoon to pursue their college education. They are excited to be in school; they praise the school system and the teaching force for a magnificent teaching service. They experienced a more oppressive educational experience at their country of origin. They are thrilled to see their ESL/ELL teachers welcoming them, helping them, and referring them to supportive services such as tutoring, mentoring, and after school programs. They share that many Hmong/Mong didn't have such opportunities in Laos and Thailand.

**Phong (W3):** “I plan to attend college and finish college after high school. I plan to attend 2-yearscollege first then I may go on to 4-year college because English is my challenge. I don't worry much of financial expense but my limited English skills.”

**Meng (W3):** “Yes, I will go to 4-year college or even 7-year college if I could. My family influences me to go to college. None in my family is in college yet. My relatives who came here long time ago always influence me to go to college. My teachers also influence me to go to college. My challenge will be English skills.”

**Sai (W2):** “Yes, I plan to attend 4-year and more after that. Reading is more challenging because my reading scores aren’t that high.”

**Kalia (W2):** “Yes, I will go to college; at least 4-year college. Financial and academic difficulty are the challenge for me.”

**Jou (W2):** “Yes, 4-year college is my goal. Challenge in college will be English and research. My older brother went to college 2 years then dropped out because he was getting married.”

**e. What are the career aspirations of these Hmong/Mong adolescents?**

**1. First generation Hmong/Mong adolescent migrants have high aspiration**

The Hmong/Mong came from an under-developed country. They used to live in the mountains of Laos practicing slash and burn agriculture. Many had lived for more than three decades in the refugee camp in Thailand prior to coming to the United States. Once arriving this country, many work hard to become successful.

**Kalia (W2):** “I am taking IB courses and join after school program. I will travel this summer to South America for two months. I plan to attend 4-year and more college and I want to be a lawyer or a business management.”

**Chueyee (W3):** “My parents persuade me to get married early but I refuse and I am working hard on my study. I plan to attend 4-year college and become an engineer. I am strong in math.”

**Mai Sheng (W3):** “I plan to go to college for 10 years and become a professional.”

**2. Parental Involvement has positive impact on Hmong/Mong adolescents’ education and career choice.**

Many Hmong/Mong parents continue to lecture their children and highly involve in their children's life. In the Hmong/Mong culture, the father is the one, who is traditionally responsible to guide their children toward a positive life and future; they are the one, who constantly emphasizes the importance of life to their children.

**Matt (W1):** "I dislike my parents' lecture but now I realize their lecture helps me a lot."

**Phoua (W1):** "My dad passed away and my mom has become both my mom and my dad. She always supports me and I want to study hard to fulfill her dream."

**Blia (W3):** "My parents-in-laws take care of my children to free me up for my study. I don't know what to do if they are not around."

### **Ogbu Theory and Hmong/Mong Education**

Ogbu classified minorities into two groups: voluntary minorities (Immigrants) and involuntary minorities (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). According to Ogbu, voluntary minorities are those who have more or less willingly moved to the United States because they expect better opportunities (better jobs, more political or religious freedom) than they had in their homelands or places of origin. The people in this category voluntarily chose to move to U.S. society in the hope of a better future, and they don't interpret their presence in the United States as forced upon them by the U.S. government or by white Americans. Ogbu argued that refugees, migrant/guest workers, undocumented workers, and binations are voluntary minorities. This includes refugees in the United States who are Cambodians, Ethiopians, Haitians, Hmong/Mong, Lao, and Vietnamese.

Involuntary minorities are people who have been conquered, colonized, or enslaved. Unlike immigrant minorities, the non-immigrants have been made to be part of the U.S. society permanently against their will. They didn't choose but were forced against their will

to become a part of the United States, and they themselves usually interpret their presence in the United States as forced on them by white people. Involuntary minorities include black Americans, Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, Alaska Natives, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans.

Ogbu states that children of immigrant minorities are voluntary minorities like their foreign-born parents. For example, second-, third-, or fourth-generation U.S.-born Chinese are voluntary minorities. Ogbu found that the education of the descendants of immigrants continues to be influenced by the community forces of their forebears.

Ogbu suggests that voluntary and involuntary minorities develop different cultural models of U.S. society. Cultural models are the ways that members of a minority group understand or interpret their world and guide their actions in that world. He comes out with four types of understanding that voluntary and involuntary minorities differ: (1) frame of reference; (2) folk theories of “making it” (and role models); (3) degree of trust of white people and their institutions, and (4) beliefs about the effect of adopting white ways on minority identity.

Voluntary minorities have a positive dual frame of reference. One frame of reference is based on their situation in the United States. The second frame of reference is based on their situation “back home.” They became immigrant because they hoped to do better than they did previously in their home countries or places of origin. They see more opportunities for success in the United States than back home. As a result, they are willing to accommodate and to accept less than equal treatment in order to improve their chances for economic success. The children of immigrants may not have a first-hand experience of limited economic or other opportunities back home; they are likely to have heard of such

experiences from their parents and other adults in their community. Consequently, they also tend to believe that there are more opportunities to succeed in the United States than back home. Voluntary minorities' attitude toward schools is influenced by the "back home" comparison. The immigrants believe that they have more educational opportunity in the United States than back home.

Involuntary minorities also have a dual frame of reference. However, their comparison is both different and negative, in contrast to that of voluntary minorities. Involuntary minorities see their economic and social condition, as well as their schools, as inferior to those of middle-class white Americans. They believe and resent the fact that whites have more opportunities. They don't believe strongly that the United States is a land of great opportunity where anyone who works hard and has a good education will succeed. Because discrimination against them has existed for many generations, involuntary minorities tend to believe that it appears to be a permanent feature of U.S. society. Involuntary minorities see their schools inferior to white suburban schools. They tend to be more critical of the school curriculum and mistrustful of teachers and the school than the immigrants.

Ogbu further concluded that voluntary minorities' folk theory of making it involves the belief that hard work, following the rules, and most important, getting good education will lead to good employment and success in U.S. society. They see school success as a major route to making it in the United States. The community, family, and students believe strongly that the same strategies that middle-class white Americans employ for success, namely, hard work, following the rules, and getting good grades, will also work for them in school and in the future job market. Ogbu found that involuntary minorities have an ambivalent folk theory of making it. They also believe that hard work and education are necessary to succeed

but they have faced employment and wage discrimination as well as other barriers to making it in a white-controlled economy for many generations, they have come to believe that job and wage discrimination is more or less institutionalized and permanent, and individual effort, education, and hard work are important but not enough to overcome racism and discrimination.

Immigrants have an optimistic, practical attitude when they arrive. This leads them to trust white-controlled institutions like the public schools. In the case of involuntary minorities, their long history of discrimination, racism, and conflict leads them to distrust white-controlled institutions.

Voluntary minorities' communities and parents are strongly committed to their children succeeding in school. They form positive attitude toward U.S. society and institutions. They have high academic expectations of their children and tend to hold the children, rather than the schools, responsible for academic performance. Voluntary minority students share their parents' and community's positive attitudes and verbal commitment to school. They work hard, strive for high grades, pay attention in class, do their homework, and generally follow school rules. They respect teachers, are rarely disruptive in class, and are anxious to learn English. Their peers also support their school success. Involuntary minorities' communities and parents, on the other hand, have ambivalent attitude toward schools. They convey to their children contradictory messages about education: they tell their children to work hard in school, but then their own attitudes and comments show a mistrust of schools in terms of quality education and future economic rewards. Involuntary minority students are openly defiant as they challenge the teachers' authority. Moreover,



there is strong negative peer group influence that more or less stigmatizes academic success and using Standard English as “acting white.”

**Conclusion about the Hmong/Mong Americans’ educational experiences and the Voluntary and Involuntary Minorities Theory:**

After careful review and analysis many of the themes from the study and the Voluntary and Involuntary minorities’ theory, this researcher agrees with Ogbu that the Hmong/Mong Americans’ educational experiences concur with this Voluntary and Involuntary Minorities’ model. This study yields these finding themes: (1) constant lecture of parents and relatives are a means of communicating expectations to Hmong/Mong children; (2) family hardship whether in the past or current serves as a tool to motivate the children to work hard and focus on succeeding their education in this country; (3) Hmong/Mong students’ positive connection with specific key teacher or counselor or staff at school influences their success academically or socially; (4) many Hmong/Mong American students, especially the third wave consistently praise that the U.S. educational system is excellent because they had negative experience with previous system in their place of origin. Even some of the second wave and none of the first wave have never experienced any education from their parents’ native homeland, they have constantly been reminded of their parents negative experiences in their native homeland; (5) every participant states that school is important to them even some admit that it was boring. The rationale is that their parents and the experiences of their parents back home have positive impact on them; (6) Success of others influence the Hmong/Mong American students’ education; and (7) recent arrival as well as Hmong/Mong U.S. – born students have more aspiration to move up in their socio-

economic status. All waves indicate that moving up socially influences their education. These two themes correspond to the voluntary minorities' folk theory of Ogbu. However, Hmong/Mong U.S.-born students have assimilated faster and they have become more individualistic. So, the degree of folk theory influences them less than the recent arrival students. The Hmong/Mong traditional values offer resilience to Hmong/Mong students. The Hmong/Mong cultural heritage, traditions, customs, and languages help them to maintain a strong sense of identity. Ogbu's theory of Voluntary and Involuntary minorities talk about folk theory of making it and the beliefs about the effect of adopting white ways on minority identity. For instance, in a relative short time of resettlement, the Hmong/Mong community in the Twin Cities has elected officials, business, organizations, entertainment business-like such as Hmong/Mong movies with famous Hmong/Mong celebrities to transform their pain into joyfulness. However, the first generation of Hmong/Mong adolescents has high aspiration on their education. This corresponds to the folk theory again and what Ogbu says, "Immigrants have an optimistic and practical attitude in the United States." Lastly, the last theme of the finding is that Hmong/Mong parental involvement has positive impact on their adolescents' career choice. The Voluntary and Involuntary Minorities model talks about voluntary minorities' communities and parents are strongly committed to the children succeeding in school. They form positive attitude toward the U.S. society and institutions. They have high academic expectations of their children and tend to hold the children, rather than the schools, responsible for academic performance. Voluntary minority students share their parents' and community's positive attitudes and verbal commitment to school. They work hard, strive for high grades, pay attention in class, do their homework, and generally follow school rules; they respect teachers, are rarely disruptive

in class, and are anxious to learn English; their peers also support their school success. The final theme of this study also concurs the Voluntary and Involuntary Minorities' model. Many participants shared that their peers influence their education; their community, especially the Hmong/Mong community, influences their education. Many of them associated with their peers, namely those whom they trust and share many commonalities.

Overall, this study confirms that the Voluntary and Involuntary Minorities model applies to the Hmong/Mong American students' educational experiences. The approach to education for the recent wave (W3) fits absolutely with the Voluntary and Involuntary Minorities model. However, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> waves appear to break away a bit from the family. Even they distance away from their family and community, all of them consistently confirm that their parents and relatives continue to be the major influences on their education. The 1<sup>st</sup> wave indicates that their primary influence on their education comes from themselves; the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave indicates that they and their family have equal influence on them. The recent wave (W3) continues to assert that their influence emanates first from their family, second from their clan, third from their community, and last from themselves.

There are also previous studies that are relevant to the educational experience of the Hmong/Mong American students. Hebert and Reis (1999) conducted a study in an urban high school where there were culturally diverse high-achieving students. They found the factors contributing to these students' success: (1) students had a strong belief in self and were resilient to negative aspects of families and their urban environment; (2) the availability of guidance of supportive adults has been essential to their academic success; (3) they had associated with a network of peers who wanted to achieve and they were helped by this network of peers; (4) they joined extracurricular and after-school programs, Saturday and

summer programs; (5) they participated in various appropriate challenging learning experiences in schools; (6) they had personal characteristics that included strong motivation and inner will, appreciation of cultural diversity, heightened sensitivity to each other and the world around them, aspirations, and independence; (7) they had resilience to overcome urban problems and adversity such as drugs, gangs, and social ills; and (8) they had supportive families that nurtured them in a variety of ways. This researcher examines and analyzes the eight above factors of Herbert and Reis' finding, which look similar to the many findings of this study. The only difference is that not every Hmong / Mong student had participated in rigorous and challenging learning experiences.

Kao and Tiendra (1995) confirmed that both the first-and-second generation high school students have higher educational aspirations. In this study, the students in all waves have high educational aspirations but W3 and W2 appear to have higher aspiration than W1. During my interviews, W1 spoke more English than Hmong/Mong, which is the finding of Dugger (1998) that the third generation immigration children will speak English as their first language.

Lastly, Perna (2007) asserted that after school, summer school, and college preparation and readiness programs have been effective programs to promote low-income students' academic success. The participants in my study concurred Perna's points. Levin and Belfield (2007) also asserted that many reforms in Minnesota's intervention efforts and programs have been proved effective. They credited programs like Success for All, First Thing First, reducing class size for elementary schools and low-income students' schools, college readiness, after school and summer school programs. My participants concurred that those programs have helped their academic work.

This researcher has questions regarding the different approaches to education between different waves of Hmong/Mong refugee students. First, many concerns emerge regarding: (1) the degree of aspiration between the Hmong/Mong U.S.-born students and the recent arrivals, meaning wave 3 and wave 2; (2) it is great that the wave 3 and wave 2 students have high aspiration in pursuing their education; what about at what time or point will their aspiration saturate? What are the programs available to serve these students who demonstrate energy, aspiration, and motivation? The aspiration is their strength and these students will become productive members of society; (3) what are the interventions that can address to sustain the aspiration issue of U.S.-born Hmong/Mong adolescents? In the United States, many middle class parents are active in involving in their children education since they know the system. The challenge is how to address the issue of consistent parental involvement regardless of their educational level and English skills. Parents are the primary stakeholders and their presence in the equation of education of their children is crucial.

Finally, this study, which was targeted toward the Hmong/Mong students in the Twin Cities, also confirms many similar findings from previous studies. This study, at least, helps to reaffirm the best practice and innovative reforms in Minnesota and perhaps across the nation that the system is moving in the right direction to ensure more academic success for Hmong/Mong children as well as all children in the United States.

### **Implications for Practice**

This study was conducted and developed in response to the different factors that influence and aspire Hmong/Mong adolescents to pursue their college and explore their career path. Refugees and immigrants came to the United States with high hope and energy

to improve their life in transitioning from a war torn country or an oppressive environment. The Hmong/Mong community have suffered enough and dreamed for a peaceful and secured future. There have been many efforts and services to improve the educational attainment and better job opportunities for the Hmong/Mong in the Twin Cities, yet little has been investigated to understand the influences toward the Hmong/Mong high school students' aspiration and attitudes on their education?

This study has confirmed previous studies done by Ogbu's theory of Voluntary and Involuntary minorities model, other studies of students of color and low-income, especially, Hebert and Reis (1999), and more recently the studies of Perna (2007) and Levin & Belfield (2007). The Hmong/Mong culture has resilience and the educational system continues to provide innovative programs responsive to the needs of Hmong/Mong and other minority students. There are areas where the Hmong /Mong community can contribute such as their cultural heritage to strengthen Hmong/Mong students' social and emotional needs, community programs that emphasize on Hmong/Mong culture and values, parental program such as parent education to strengthen and support Hmong/Mong students' education consistently, and many others.

The study of the Miao, Hmong/Mong in China by Trueba and Zou (1994) confirmed many important issues relevant to this study. The hardship of the villagers, families, and Miao people influenced and inspired the Miao students to concentrate in their education. The underdog status of the Miao people became a tool to motivate Miao students to work hard in their education in order for them to return to the Miao villages to improve their people's lives. The findings of the study of the Miao in China also reaffirm the

Voluntary and Involuntary minorities' model of Ogbu. In the China, the Hmong/Mong are known as Miao.

The previous studies of the Hmong/Mong experiences in education in Laos and the refugee camp in Thailand convey messages that the Hmong/Mong experienced hardship, oppression, and marginality in Laos and Thailand. In their new life in the U.S., they have a better chance to move up socially. This is the reaffirmation of the folk theory of the Voluntary and Involuntary minorities' model. This study confirms that Hmong/Mong students appreciate the opportunities given to them here; they have high honeymoon stage regarding the availability and accessibility of the U.S. public education to all children. The students in all waves, more of waves 3 and 2, appreciate the U.S. educational system, highly praise their teachers and counselors, and inspire to learn and move up socially. They viewed the educational system of their place of origin as incompetent and inadequate. They believe that the U.S. system is more student-centered and their American teachers have shown superior pedagogical skills to help them succeeding their high school education.

### **Research Limitations**

This study was conducted with three different waves of Hmong/Mong refugees' adolescents, high school students, in the Twin Cities area. The researcher acknowledged well that the number of participants were limited and in no way this study could be generalized to all Hmong/Mong high school students. Therefore, the participants were not representative of the general Hmong adolescent population in the United States. Merriam (2002) stated that the researcher was the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis in qualitative study. Patton (2002) stated that qualitative inquiry meant going into the field-into the real

world of neighborhood-and getting close enough to the people and circumstances there to capture what was happening. The researcher collected, analyzed, and interpreted the data. Obviously, my biases, assumptions, passions, world-view, and experiences influenced my data collection procedure, what data were collected, and what meanings were drawn from the data. Patton (2002) suggested that interview data limitations included possibly distorted responses due to personal bias, anger, anxiety, politics, and simple lack of awareness since interviews could be greatly affected by the emotional state of the interviewee at the time of the interview. Fully aware of this research bias, triangulation, member-check, having three peers transcribing the interviews, spending prolonged times in the field, and selecting interviews with rich and diverse excerpts from a large sample were the strategies used in this study. Moreover, participants came from three different waves of Hmong/Mong refugee adolescents with diverse demographic background. Cultural entry procedure was used to solicit support and permission from parents and clan leaders. The researcher's ability to speak the two dialects of Hmong and Mong helped to make the interviews at ease and culturally appropriate. Data were collected from the individual interviews at participants' home or at a designated place of their choice with the full support of their parents and or clan leader. Member checking occurred during and/or after the interview, after interview transcripts were completed, and during or after preliminary meanings/interpretations were drawn from the quotations/excerpts of the interviews.

Be as it may, the findings could not be generalized, they could be used to help educators, administrators, community leaders, advocates, parents, and Hmong/Mong students to have insight of the challenges facing the Hmong/ Mong community in the K-12



and higher education system. This research would help advocates and interested parties to understand the experiences in education of Hmong/Mong adolescents in this country.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Additional research is recommended to examine and follow the Hmong/Mong wave 3 students' aspiration to pursue their education. This wave seems to have high aspiration to pursue their college education after their high school. At what point their aspiration will saturate. Moreover, wave 3 appears to have motivation and success at the high school. Additional research is invited to examine college education program similarly to the high school ESL/ELL model for immigrant and refugee students. More research to study the resilience of Hmong/Mong culture and how to foster their culture to remain an effective tool to influence and support their children's education. Finally, there is a need of research initiated by the Hmong/Mong community and parents to explore effective parent academy model for Hmong/Mong parents to remain involved in their children's education. One last research is called to examine the establishment of a Hmong/Mong charter college similarly to the development of many American Indian tribal colleges in the Midwestern states.

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## APPENDIX A: Human Subjects Approval

### UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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*Twin Cities Campus*

August 21, 2007

Nealcheng X Thao  
1627 Dieter Street  
Saint Pau, MN 55106

*Research Subjects' Protection Programs*

*Institutional Review Board: Human Subjects Committee (IRB)  
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)  
Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)*

*Mayo Mail Code 820*

*D-528 Mayo Memorial Building  
420 Delaware Street S.E.  
Minneapolis, MN 55455*

*612-626-5654*

*Fax: 612-626-0061*

*irb@umn.edu*

*iacuc@umn.edu*

*ibc@umn.edu*

*www.research.umn.edu/subjects*

RE: "Examining the Influences Toward the Hmong/Mong High School Students' Aspiration and Attitudes on their Education"

IRB Code Number: **0708P13621**

Dear Dr. Thao:

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) received your response to its stipulations. Since this information satisfies the federal criteria for approval at 45CFR46.111 and the requirements set by the IRB, final approval for the project is noted in our files. Upon receipt of this letter, you may begin your research.

IRB approval of this study includes the consent form received August 13, 2007.

The IRB would like to stress that subjects who go through the consent process are considered enrolled participants and are counted toward the total number of subjects, even if they have no further participation in the study. Please keep this in mind when calculating the number of subjects you request. This study is currently approved for 60 subjects. If you desire an increase in the number of approved subjects, you will need to make a formal request to the IRB.

For your records and for grant certification purposes, the approval date for the referenced project is August 7, 2007 and the Assurance of Compliance number is FWA00000312 (Fairview Health Systems Research FWA00000325, Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare FWA00004003). Research projects are subject to continuing review and renewal; approval will expire one year from that date. You will receive a report form two months before the expiration date. If you would like us to send certification of approval to a funding agency, please tell us the name and address of your contact person at the agency.

As Principal Investigator of this project, you are required by federal regulations to:

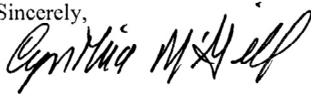
- Inform the IRB of any proposed changes in your research that will affect human subjects—changes should not be initiated until written IRB approval is received,
- Report to the IRB subject complaints and unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others as they occur,
- Respond to notices for continuing review prior to the study's expiration date,
- Cooperate with post-approval monitoring activities.

**Driven to Discover<sup>SM</sup>**

Information on the IRB process is available in the form of a guide for researchers entitled, "What Every Researcher Needs to Know", found at <http://www.research.umn.edu/irb/WERNK/index.cfm>

The IRB wishes you success with this research. If you have questions, please call the IRB office at 612-626-5654.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cynthia McGill". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cynthia McGill, CIP  
Research Compliance Supervisor  
CLM/cd  
CC: Theodore Lewis



## **APPENDIX B: Consent Form**

### **CONSENT FORM**

#### **Title: Examining Family and Community Influences on the Attitudes to Education and Career Aspirations of Hmong/Mong High School Students.**

You are invited to be in a research study of the Hmong/Mong high school students' career aspirations and attitudes toward their education. You were selected as a possible participant because your family falls into one of the Hmong/Mong refugees' waves selected to be included in this research and your family has been referred to this study through your clan leader and other community leaders. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in this study.

This study is being conducted by: Nealcheng Xeng Thao, Work and Human Resource Education Department (WHRE), University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

#### **Background Information**

The purpose of this study is: To examine the family and community influences on the attitudes to education and career aspirations of Hmong/Mong high school students. It is hopeful that this study will empower Hmong/Mong families, communities, parents, advocates, and educators to understand the needs of the Hmong/Mong adolescents and to work closely with K-12 and higher educational institutions to foster programs and services that are responsive to the needs of the Hmong/Mong adolescents. The bottom line is to promote the achievement of Hmong/Mong students at both high school and college. Ultimately, this will help Hmong/Mong parents and community leaders to work closely with the K-12 and higher education system to prepare an effective work force in the Hmong/Mong community.

#### **Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

1. Meet with the principal investigator for at least two hours for a face-to-face interview;
2. A set of written interview questions will be presented to you in order for you to understand them;
3. Your answer will be audio-taped and written on the principal investigator's notebook;

4. The interview will take place at a designated place where you feel comfortable to participate in this study;
5. You can refuse to participate in this study at any time;
6. Both Hmong/Mong and English will be spoken in this interview;
7. You will be asked to allow the principal investigator to call you or have subsequent meeting(s) with you should further clarification needs to be made;
8. You may ask the principal investigator to clarify any confusion or questions that you have prior to or during the interview.

## **Risks and Benefits of being in the Study**

The study has minimal risks.

The benefits to participation could be: Empower parents to support their children's education, influence the K-12 and higher education systems to design effective programs, services, and pedagogical tools to promote Hmong/Mong students' education and career, and to better prepare Hmong/Mong adolescents to become a competent work force in this great country.

### **Compensation:**

You will receive no payment.

### **Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. *Only the principal investigator will keep the audiotape(s) and eventually these audiotapes will be destroyed after the principal investigator has transcribed all the information.*

### **Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

### **Contacts and Questions:**

The researchers conducting this study are: Nealcheng Xeng Thao and his advisor, Dr. Theodore Lewis. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact Dr. Theodore Lewis at: 425 D Vocational and Technical Education Building – 1954 Buford Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55108-6197; Phone: 612-624-

4707; email: [lewis007@umn.edu](mailto:lewis007@umn.edu); and you can reach Nealcheng Xeng Thao at: 1627 Dieter Street; St. Paul, MN 55106; Phone: 651-246-6247; Email: [thao0130@umn.edu](mailto:thao0130@umn.edu)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

***You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.***

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature of parent or guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## **APPENDIX C: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subjects' Excerpts**

**Table 8: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

1. Mee (Female)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We talk a lot about it all the time.</li> <li>▪ We study and my parents say education will lead me to a better job.</li> <li>▪ Both my parents and I do emphasize.</li> <li>▪ They don't say much but they know I do my homework. They remind me</li> <li>▪ Yes, my parents do ask my help for chores at home; I do the chores then I do my homework.</li> <li>▪ I am the oldest child and I need to help my parents.</li> <li>▪ If I do well or get A's, my mom compliments me and tells me I do a great job.</li> </ul>
2.	<b><u>Community</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My parents remind me of their life and their experience of living in poverty. You have to think about the advantages and opportunities that you have compared to your parents. You should pity your parents and take advantage of your opportunities in your life.</li> <li>▪ My neighbors don't really influence me but it doesn't really matter.</li> <li>▪ Both sides of my family do influence my education. They tell me to not go out and be bad and join gang and make sure to</li> </ul>

		study hard.
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some people at school do encourage me to study.</li> <li>▪ A teacher helped me last year a lot after I asked a lot of questions. The teacher saw me making effort. So, this teacher just wanted to help me.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mostly Hmong/Mong peers.</li> <li>▪ I am Hmong/Mong and get along well with Hmong/Mong peers. We have similarity.</li> <li>▪ My peers talk to me at school and help me have fun. At lunch we have peers to talk to for support. I have friends from any clan, namely Hmong/Mong friends.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I want to continue my education after my high school</li> <li>▪ I don't know yet what kind of institution I will attend.</li> <li>▪ My challenges at college will be entrance exams and financial expense like tuition.</li> <li>▪ My mom has influenced my education after high school.</li> <li>▪ My uncle Sua graduated from 4-year college.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My passion is to become a photographer.</li> <li>▪ I might want to be a banker so I can earn a decent salary.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When I see smart students can answer questions and I can't then I get discouraged and believe that I can't do it. Then I get little scared. It's like a race; you won't win.</li> </ul>

		<p>Some kids already know so much.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Distraction in class causes me not to study much such as kids talk or laugh a lot and even teacher tries to stop but the kids defy teacher. This really distracts me to study.</li> <li>▪ At home, there are lots things going on and I get distracted easily.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study is a good thing.</li> <li>▪ Go to school is exciting</li> <li>▪ Education is very important.</li> <li>▪ My parents did not have a chance to go to school. So, their jobs are not so good. This hurts me and motivates me to go to school to get better job for better pay.</li> <li>▪ My parents remind me to study; my friends remind to study; I get lots of support at home.</li> <li>▪ When I need counselor and teachers, they do care about me.</li> </ul>

**Table 9: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

2. Parshouablai (Female)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A little bit</li> <li>▪ My mom and dad lecture me about it.</li> <li>▪ It is annoying, but it helps. If I didn't have them, I might not even be going to school. I may be mad about it, but it makes me want to go to school.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My mom talks to me daily about education because I live with her.</li> <li>▪ Not much, I don't have a lot of homework</li> <li>▪ None because I do my homework all at school.</li> <li>▪ My parents reward me with a car if I do well in my schooling.</li> <li>▪ My parents are not really happy to my education because I am going to an alternative learning center program.</li> <li>▪ It's hard for them because of transportation and splitting up the cars. I'm way behind in credits</li> <li>▪ My mom is mostly concerned with my education because I am behind.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yeah, the refugees, as you know, that have come here have tried really hard. It makes me want to do well. They remind me of being here and needing a good education.</li> <li>▪ No my neighbors don't talk me and we don't talk to them.</li> <li>▪ My relatives don't influence me because we don't visit them and don't have strong relationship. On my mom's side, my grandma comes sometimes and she wants me to do well.</li> <li>▪ My grandma scolds me, but it doesn't make me sad or angry but I know it's good for me.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Not much because when you go to school,</li> </ul>

		<p>you just sit and they give you a packet. You go on your own pace and different people are at different levels. It's about you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I myself encourage me to study. At my old school, my teachers did. At least 2 or 3 of the teachers did.</li> <li>▪ Now, one teacher yells at me to do my work. He wants you to do your best. He encourages me more and he has good intention.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sometimes, I don't want to go to school and my friend Amanda says, "Oh, just go to school, because you need school." My friends do support me.</li> <li>▪ My friends Amanda and Shane, we go to school together.</li> <li>▪ We get along well and we have a lot of common issues.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes.</li> <li>▪ A 4-year college, Bachelor degree.</li> <li>▪ It is better to have 4-year degree</li> <li>▪ Lots of home works, books, more works, it costs more for every thing</li> <li>▪ I plan to stay home and will commute to school in order to save money</li> <li>▪ College will be a lot difficult.</li> <li>▪ My parents influence me to go to college.</li> <li>▪ Both my parents have college education.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to be a computer technologist.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It has just been in my mind for years.</li> <li>▪ No, it's really my own decision.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Friends and work because I am tired; talking on the phone, shopping, especially work, and laziness.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study is good.</li> <li>▪ Going to school is boring but you have to. If it were my choice, I wouldn't go.</li> <li>▪ Education is important</li> <li>▪ My mom works hard, has a career, and is my role model; she finishes college with a Master's degree; she influences me and I want to graduate on time.</li> <li>▪ On tests, I remind myself, but otherwise, I just hang out.</li> <li>▪ My relatives talk to me all the times</li> <li>▪ My peers don't talk to me about it much.</li> <li>▪ I receive a lot of support from my mom..</li> <li>▪ Not now, just the one male teacher did encourage me in the past.</li> </ul>

**Table 10: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subject's Excerptps**

3. Anthony (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<u>Home</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Not that much</li> <li>▪ We kind of talk about it once in a while, maybe twice a week, my dad and I talk about it.</li> <li>▪ I think my dad and I should do more than</li> </ul>

		<p>we have done.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My dad gave me lots of advices about my education.</li> <li>▪ He is my dad and I love him very much; I kind of take his advice.</li> <li>▪ My dad emphasizes the education frequently at home. I show them what I'm doing and they let me do my homework without bothering me. They praise me a lot for getting A's and B's; sometimes, they gave me money for doing well at school; sometimes, they took me to eat at restaurant and I feel good about what they did to me.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My friends always try to talk to me about study because they plan to graduate from high school and go on to college.</li> <li>▪ I am proud of my dad's success in business and his social status; he has many successful Hmong/Mong friends in the business or professional. His success and his friends' success influence my education a lot.</li> <li>▪ I don't really know about my neighbors</li> <li>▪ My uncles always influence me to stay in school and I appreciate their support to my education tremendously.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They always tell me to study at school</li> <li>▪ My football coach.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My close friends are always</li> </ul>

		<p>Hmong/Mong.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They talk to me and we all work on projects together. I trust them and we understand each other more.</li> <li>▪ My friends always influence me to study.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I will continue my schooling after high school.</li> <li>▪ I will try to go for 4-year college if I could go more than that I will</li> <li>▪ The challenges for me to go to college are tuition fee.</li> <li>▪ My parents influence me to go to college</li> <li>▪ None of my family is in college yet.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I would like to be a doctor or dentist</li> <li>▪ I would like to help people with the doctor career; and with the dentist, I can clean people's teeth.</li> <li>▪ My father influences me to be doctor or dentist.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, like many kids do drug all the time and there is peer pressure to me to do drug.</li> <li>▪ Well video games and too much TV to watch are factors that cause me not to study much.</li> <li>▪ I try to ignore peer pressure to do drug and I did share it with my dad.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Studying is sometimes good because I sometimes am sleepy when I do my homework.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some days it is boring some days it is exciting.</li> <li>▪ When I have enough sleep then school is exciting but when I am tired then it is boring because I didn't listen to the teachers.</li> <li>▪ School is very important because it is where you set your goal for life.</li> <li>▪ I need my parents to establish rules at home to guide my study habit.</li> <li>▪ I try to get my high school diploma because if I don't then I waste twelve years of my life and I need my high school education to get into college.</li> <li>▪ I only remind myself to study when I have tests at school.</li> <li>▪ My parents, relatives, and peers influence me to study. My dada influences me a lot to do my homework.</li> <li>▪ Only my football coach who wants me to pass my high school diploma and go on to college.</li> <li>▪ He likes me, cares a lot about me, and has natural bonding to me.</li> </ul>
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**Table 11: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

4. Ricky (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<u>Home</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My parents talk to me a lot about</li> </ul>

		<p>education. At home, I pretty much study when I have a test coming up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My brother, Peter, talks to me a lot because he taught me a lot about it. He just tells me to do well.</li> <li>▪ We talk a lot in the car, in the library or when we watch TV.</li> <li>▪ When I went to my brother's house, he always asks me how school is going. We talk about school whenever I go over there.</li> <li>▪ My dad emphasizes a lot about education.</li> <li>▪ They let me do my homework and support me a lot. They compliment me when I do well on my final tests. Sometimes, if I do well on a test, I bring it home and show it to my parents, and they take me to go out and eat pho (noodle).</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When I see Hmong/Mong people struggling then I want to do well at school.</li> <li>▪ My relatives, cousins, and uncles influence me a lot. When I see them, they always tell me to do well at school and influence me to go to college. They do this often to me and I listen to what they told me.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My teachers and friends encourage me to focus on my study.</li> <li>▪ My Hmong/Mong friend, a student, helps me a lot and I help him too.</li> <li>▪ My math teacher makes sure everyone do</li> </ul>

		his or her homework.
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I make friends with people whom I know and trust</li> <li>▪ When we have test, I ask them to help me.</li> <li>▪ I hang out with these friends.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I plan to continue my schooling after high school.</li> <li>▪ I am aiming for 4-year</li> <li>▪ Family issues are challenge to my schooling.</li> <li>▪ Mostly my dad influences me to go to college.</li> <li>▪ My dad and my two brothers went to college.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to become an engineer</li> <li>▪ It is my interest; I want to learn how to build stuff.</li> <li>▪ Math is my best subject.</li> <li>▪ This has been my own decision to shoot for engineering degree.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ People badmouth about me, which is a factor that prevents me from being a better student.</li> <li>▪ Playing video games, distraction from my nieces and nephews, TV, noises / crying of small kids in the home causes me not to study much.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Going to school is good but sometimes it is also hard, too.</li> <li>▪ It is exciting. When I have a long break, I</li> </ul>

		<p>want to go back to school because it's so boring to stay home. I'm happier when I go to school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School is very important.</li> <li>▪ My dad told me that in Laos he took exam at 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade to move up to the next grade. The system in Laos was very competitive. His experience motivates me to go to school and work hard at school.</li> <li>▪ My dad was famous in soccer and it motivates me to play soccer.</li> <li>▪ I remind myself to study. My relatives and my peers also influence me to study.</li> <li>▪ I receive support at home for my study. When I need help, my older brother always does help me.</li> <li>▪ My history teacher tells me to get it done when I miss my assignment. He always reminds me about the assignment. Other teachers want me to go to school and ask them questions. My history teacher does the opposite compared to other teachers. He is a pretty good teacher, a college prep teacher.</li> <li>▪ People should go to school and focus on their education and people need to succeed it.</li> <li>▪ Upward Bound, MEP, and Fresh Force are after school programs and they help minority students a lot to succeed our</li> </ul>
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		<p>education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I joined Fresh Force and tutored young kids.</li> <li>▪ I saw my siblings teaching, it made me want to be smarter like them.</li> </ul>
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**Table 12: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

5. Zang (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My dad says do your homework and check out books to read</li> <li>▪ My dad emphasizes more of my education.</li> <li>▪ My siblings also influence my education.</li> <li>▪ Mostly I observe my sisters and follow what they do.</li> <li>▪ They let me do my homework and get lots of their attention.</li> <li>▪ Sometimes, they give money if I am doing well.</li> <li>▪ When my grades are dropping, my siblings push me a lot to do more homework.</li> <li>▪ They want me to have a brighter future.</li> </ul>
2.	<b><u>Community</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sometimes my cousins influence my education.</li> <li>▪ Yeah, my uncles do the most. They want me to go to school and finish school.</li> </ul>
3.	<b><u>School</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The teachers always tell me to study and to make habit out of it.</li> <li>▪ Almost every teacher but my AP teacher</li> </ul>



		<p>did the most.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They give us study tests to do for homework. When you study for a final test, you get a lot of direction from them.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They do sometimes but sometimes they might have too much fun but they always do their homework. Sometimes they remind me to do mine.</li> <li>▪ Most of them take challenge courses so I try to get smarter</li> <li>▪ More are Hmong/Mong.</li> <li>▪ We met through family.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I do.</li> <li>▪ I want to get a Bachelor's then see if I can get a Master's</li> <li>▪ I want to go to a University here.</li> <li>▪ Maybe struggling to live on my own will be my challenges.</li> <li>▪ I have a cousin who is always telling me to read and take challenging courses. We talk about that sometimes.</li> <li>▪ Almost all of my siblings have gone to college.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maybe a construction worker for example architecture.</li> <li>▪ I think it is fun and when you build houses, you help families.</li> <li>▪ Not really, just myself.</li> <li>▪ I've seen them on the streets on billboard everyday just repairing lights and things.</li> </ul>

		It's just what I would like to do.
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I am kind of shy and sometimes I don't say anything.</li> <li>▪ I don't like to deal with social issue like working with people.</li> <li>▪ Playing games because I like playing games a lot at home.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sometimes it is exciting; sometimes it's not.</li> <li>▪ Study helps you learn a lot. Sometimes there are things that you just don't get. I.e.: there was a character in one of my history books and I don't understand it. Because it is too abstract.</li> <li>▪ It is more exciting than boring.</li> <li>▪ It is very important.</li> <li>▪ Learning about triangles and learning how to improve them at school was really helpful.</li> <li>▪ Usually someone else reminds me but sometimes I do remind myself to study.</li> <li>▪ Having my parents there helps me a lot otherwise I may not be where I am now.</li> <li>▪ My AP teacher cares more about my welfare.</li> <li>▪ My 9<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher also cares a lot about my study. He makes thing fun and I like that.</li> </ul>

**Table 13: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

6. Mai Kao (Female)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study has been greatly emphasized at home.</li> <li>▪ We have talked about it and they take us to seminars and stuff like a lot of meetings about education.</li> <li>▪ My parents are the main ones to emphasize about our education.</li> <li>▪ When we were young, we got lots of attention but now that we're in college, there's not as much. They depend on us to do our own work.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They take us to seminars with other Hmong/Mong students and their parents to study.</li> <li>▪ Poverty in the Hmong/Mong community does hurt us.</li> <li>▪ Our neighbors do not influence us in our education.</li> <li>▪ Our relatives do influence us in our education.</li> <li>▪ Our relatives, especially our father, do influence us to not get married earlier.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The encouragement to study from schools varies. High schools give us more individualized attention, whereas colleges do not.</li> <li>▪ Our high school teachers encourage us to complete our homework as well as turn in</li> </ul>

		<p>the work on time, but in college, this only happens when we are in a smaller class size.</p>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Our peers/friends do have a great deal of influence in our schooling because we study in group most of the time.</li> <li>▪ Most of my friends are Hmong/Mong, because I have known them since Junior High School or High School; and the U of MN is such a large institution.</li> <li>▪ My friends have very similar background as mine i.e., strong relationship with their families and strong family support in education.</li> <li>▪ A high school math teacher helped me a lot.</li> <li>▪ My peers, mainly females, encouraged me a lot in high school.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I would like to attain my Bachelor's Degree.</li> <li>▪ I am attending the U of MN.</li> <li>▪ I'm interested in the math field.</li> <li>▪ The challenge in continuing my schooling after high schools is not so much in the homework assignments, but in preparation for Midterms.</li> <li>▪ My family influences me to continue my education.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to pursue a career in accounting.</li> <li>▪ I preferred mathematics more so than the</li> </ul>

		<p>medical field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nobody has really influenced my decision to focus on mathematics, but myself, because I believe I would do best in that field.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I am the only barrier from being a better student.</li> <li>▪ The TV and Internet are the factors that cause me to not study so much.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Studying is a good thing.</li> <li>▪ Going to schools is something you have to do.</li> <li>▪ If I want a good job and a good career, school is important to me.</li> <li>▪ What has influenced me to go to college is that all my siblings have gone to college.</li> <li>▪ I receive a lot of support at home from relatives and myself to study.</li> <li>▪ I believe my teachers and counselors do care about me.</li> <li>▪ I cannot think of any particular teachers or counselors, as of right now, who care more about my welfare, but in the past, they did.</li> </ul>

**Table 14: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

7. Tim (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
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1.	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education has been highly emphasized at home.</li> <li>▪ Receive support from parents</li> <li>▪ Participate in school students affairs/volunteer club</li> <li>▪ Lots of support from parents; they never bother my study nor ask me to do any chores when I study at home; they took me out to dinner at restaurant.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hmong/Mong people did better things and that inspire me to go to school; plus, my grandparents inspire me to be better so I can help them.</li> <li>▪ Our neighbors are middle class people and they competed a lot against us; so, I don't want to be falling behind.</li> <li>▪ My relatives are very competitive so I want to be better than they.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The staff at school pressure us to really learn something not just to finish the work</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My friends are educational driven. We are very active at school.</li> <li>▪ My peers are those who influence me to be who I want to be.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to go to 4-year college and further at graduate school.</li> <li>▪ Challenges in college include financial responsibilities, time management, and others.</li> <li>▪ My parents influence me a lot to go to</li> </ul>

		college and both of them are college graduates.
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chiropractor</li> <li>▪ It is a child dream career and my parents support my decision.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drug, alcohol, loss of family member, and peer pressure</li> <li>▪ Too many times with peers cause me not to study.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study is great thing, can be boring and exciting but very important since I rather go to school than stay home.</li> <li>▪ I remind myself that I have homework. My peers support me because we stay competitive. My parents support me a lot at home with my schoolwork.</li> <li>▪ My school counselor seems to help me the most.</li> </ul>

**Table 15: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

8. Pakou (Female- 17 yrs old)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education is emphasized a lot at home.</li> <li>▪ We talk a lot about education at home.</li> <li>▪ My older sister and her husband do. My older sister graduated from college and wants all younger siblings to succeed like her.</li> <li>▪ I get constant encouragement to study, do</li> </ul>

		my homework, and do well on tests at school.
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Successful Hmong/Mong members influence my education because I can be like them and those who don't do well so, I can be better and higher than those.</li> <li>▪ Neighbors don't influence my education.</li> <li>▪ Relatives do influence my education.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I get lots of encouragement and praise from teachers who see me do well.</li> <li>▪ Teachers and families encourage me the most.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I get along with any kinds of peers but most loyal peers are Hmong/Mong because we understand each other more.</li> <li>▪ Not a whole lot of influence from peers for my education.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I do and I want to go to 4-year college or more.</li> <li>▪ Challenges in college will be a lot of work, less help, and independent culture in college (too much freedom).</li> <li>▪ All my sisters encourage me to go to college.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Not sure yet but something to help people.</li> <li>▪ Personal decision or choice.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No</li> <li>▪ Laziness</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study is good, sometimes boring other</li> </ul>



		<p>times interesting, and very important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I remind myself to study and my mom and older sister do.</li> <li>▪ No one particular person at school encourages me a lot to study. It is me who does more for me.</li> </ul>
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**Table 16: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

9. Carrol (Female – 17 yrs old)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<u>Home</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, a lot</li> <li>▪ We talk a lot about education.</li> <li>▪ My parents do, mostly my mom. We do it orally (lecture). Our siblings also talk a lot about it too.</li> <li>▪ No, my mom leaves me alone to do my homework and doesn't ask me to help her with household chores at all.</li> </ul>
2.	<u>Community</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Hmong/Mong community influences me a lot about my education.</li> <li>▪ I see poor people in my neighborhood and that makes me want to study because I don't want to be like those poor neighbors.</li> <li>▪ My relatives do influence my education a lot. For example, some did bad thing and dropped out of school, which makes me realize that I don't want to be like them.</li> <li>▪ My mom's sister in California calls me and</li> </ul>

		tells me to study hard and do well in school. I appreciate her help and constant reminding
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My teachers encourage me and help me; they told me to study and to work hard to get good grades.</li> <li>▪ Teachers who care about me are Math and English teachers.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I have both Hmong/Mong and white friends but my Hmong/Mong friends help me all the times because we have the same attitude and cultural values.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, 4-year college</li> <li>▪ Challenges in college will be harder, bigger classes, more money, and you have to study and learn a lot more.</li> <li>▪ My dad encourages me to go to college.</li> <li>▪ None of my family has gone to college.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nursing.</li> <li>▪ My dad supports my decision to go to nursing school.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need more effort and spend more times to study.</li> <li>▪ Laid back, not enough effort to study, and too much TV, computers, and phone calls with friends take a lot of my time away from studying.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study is good, exciting, and very important because you learn new things every day.</li> <li>▪ Only my parents remind me a lot to study</li> </ul>

		and I haven't done enough for myself.
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**Table 17: 1<sup>st</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

10. Lor (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education is not much emphasized at home.</li> <li>▪ Parents and grandparents lecture me about my education.</li> <li>▪ They took me to learn Hmong/Mong flute</li> <li>▪ They give me attention during homework.</li> <li>▪ They give me compliment and praise when I work hard at school. They are proud of my work.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My relatives influence me to go to school because a cousin got a graduate degree.</li> <li>▪ This neighborhood is a working class and it influences me to study because I don't want to go live in the inner city.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Not much influence from school.</li> <li>▪ My case manager always talks to me and advises me to study hard to pass the tests and earn all the appropriate credits to graduate on time.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I have associated with my classmates, half are white and half are Asians.</li> <li>▪ We study together</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I plan to go to college after H.S.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I plan to attend 2-year college first. Then maybe 4-year later</li> <li>▪ Challenges in college will be English</li> <li>▪ My parents influence me to go to college</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Law enforcement because I want to help the community and it is my own decision</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I should study harder; now not much effort to study</li> <li>▪ Going out too much for fun prevents be from becoming a better student.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study is good, both exciting and boring, and very important.</li> <li>▪ I saw homeless people on the street and I don't want to become one of them. So, this motivates me to study and stay at school.</li> <li>▪ I always remind myself to study.</li> <li>▪ My parents don't remind me much because it is my own responsibility.</li> <li>▪ My peers don't remind me either</li> <li>▪ I receive lot of support at home to do my homework and to study.</li> <li>▪ My dad took me to my Hmong/Mong culture class all the times and he supported me a lot when I played hockey in the past.</li> <li>▪ My English teacher and case manager care a lot about me at school.</li> </ul>

## **APPENDIX D: 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Subjects' Excerpts**

**Table 18: 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts:**

1. Sai (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A lot of emphases at home.</li> <li>▪ My parents lecture me a lot</li> <li>▪ My dad supports me and reminds me a lot</li> <li>▪ My parents care a lot of my homework</li> <li>▪ I receive compliments when I did well at school.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to do well because my relatives came here before us and we are poor because we came to the U.S. late.</li> <li>▪ My cousins influence me a lot about my education. Some of relatives do influence me too.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teachers do help me.</li> <li>▪ School has programs and those programs motivate me sometimes.</li> <li>▪ My friends mostly encourage me to study.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My friends are both Hmong/Mong and non-Hmong/Mong and they do help me when I don't know stuff. However, the Hmong/Mong friends help me more. I associate more with boys at high school and we help each other.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I plan to attend 4-year and more after that</li> <li>▪ Reading is more challenging because my reading scores aren't that high.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meeting new friends are also challenging</li> <li>▪ Money is also a challenge Money is more challenging than English skills.</li> <li>▪ I fear of not doing well at college and not knowing many friends there at college.</li> <li>▪ My parents influence me to go to college and I will be the first one in my family.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Computer engineering or auto mechanics</li> <li>▪ I am good in math; I enjoy engineering and fixing car</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Play too much games, watch too much TV and may not be consistent in doing homework are the factors that prevent me to be a better student than I am now.</li> <li>▪ I have plenty family support at home.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Going to school is important, excited and good thing.</li> <li>▪ My father was a soldier and he inspires me to do well in school.</li> <li>▪ I sometimes remind myself to study; sometimes my parents do; my peers do too.</li> <li>▪ My study skill helps me the most.</li> <li>▪ I have one older brother and sister still living in Thailand; my parents are working to bring them here. They are the ones to influence me to study hard because they are far away and suffer a lot.</li> </ul>

**Table 19: 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

2. Xiong Pao (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Talk a lot about education at home.</li> <li>▪ We talk about when I become older, what job I will take, which path I will end up going down and everything related to that.</li> <li>▪ They want me to study well to get a good job.</li> <li>▪ My father and grandfather do talk a lot about education. My mom tells us to be good people.</li> <li>▪ My family supports me a lot for studying such as not bother me during homework, praise me a lot.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want the Hmong/Mong community to know that Hmong/Mong are smart and capable too.</li> <li>▪ My neighbors are mostly white and they don't influence my education at all.</li> <li>▪ My relatives influence my education a lot; they say that without education, you won't be able to get a good job so you have to work a lot for just a little money; but if you get a lot of education, you can work and still get a lot of money.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some teachers do encourage but I know that I have to really do it for myself.</li> <li>▪ The teacher that did encourage me the most has been my history teacher and no</li> </ul>

		other programs really motivate me.
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sometimes, my friends influence me to study</li> <li>▪ Most of my friends are Hmong/Mong mostly people who look like me and think like me, mainly boys, some are American guys</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I probably go to 2-year college</li> <li>▪ My parents say I have to work hard to get what I want, but I only want to work hard enough to get what I need.</li> <li>▪ My challenge for college will be money to pay tuition, a school location where is close to home.</li> <li>▪ I have heard that college is pretty tough... you have to dedicate all of your time to it and I might not be able to manage my times well</li> <li>▪ My dad, my friend's brother, and my teachers influence me to go to college.</li> <li>▪ My aunty attended college.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Probably graphic design</li> <li>▪ In my mind, I'm always thinking of cool designs in my head</li> <li>▪ I, myself, influence me to go this field because I like to draw and I am pretty good at it.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I watch too much TV, play too many games and get involved with other high tech stuff and these prevent me to be a</li> </ul>



		<p>better student.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I also don't manage my study well because I want to go out a lot for fun or become a lazy person.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, study is always good but it is both exciting and boring. Study is important.</li> <li>▪ I just want to become a smarter person so people can recognize me.</li> <li>▪ Sometimes, I remind myself to study; my dad and my uncle also remind me a lot to study; my teacher reminds me before the test to study; my peers also remind me to study before the test.</li> <li>▪ My history and Spanish teachers influence me a lot because they tell us about self-discipline and you have to practice it.</li> </ul>

**Table 20: 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

3. Seng (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b>Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We do talk about school... all aspects of school.</li> <li>• My parents support us in this area.</li> <li>• My relatives do talk about education and it doesn't upset me because I know they just want the best for me.</li> <li>• My dad is the one who emphasizes more and my older brothers do too.</li> <li>• They support me and not ask me much to</li> </ul>

		<p>do chores because they want me to finish my homework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They give me compliments and give me things if I do good work at school and they are very proud of me.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many intelligent Hmong/Mong are here, i.e. they have their own clinic and help Hmong /Mong people and they influence my education a lot.</li> <li>• My neighbors influence me because I want to be smart and have knowledge, so I want to make something of myself and so, I go to school.</li> <li>• My relatives are successful in school and study hard and that is what I want to be like them</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My math teacher helps me and influences me to go to school</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some of my friends influence me to go to college because they are good student and are studious.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspiration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I plan to go to college for 4 years.</li> <li>• Challenge for me at college includes whether there will be Hmong/Mong students like me I need peer support.</li> <li>• My English is not quite good and I worry that some professors speak too fast.</li> <li>• My family influences me to go to college. My relatives graduated from college.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspiration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Want to become a doctor because it is an</li> </ul>

		honorable job and helps people and pays well. My father and brothers influence me to become doctor.
7.	<b>Barriers/Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don't think that there are any right now.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studying is very good; going to school is exciting and very important</li> <li>• My parents came from Thailand, don't speak English, work so hard, and I want to do well at school so I can help my family.</li> <li>• I receive support at home from my parents, siblings, and relatives to study but not much from my peers.</li> <li>• They don't really remind me but if I ask for help, they do help me out.</li> <li>• My ESL teachers in 1<sup>st</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade help me a lot because my English is not quite good.</li> <li>• My parents don't speak well English and that motivates me a lot.</li> </ul>

**Table 21: 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

4. Tang (Female)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b>Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education is emphasized a lot at home.</li> <li>▪ Education is emphasized through our parents' lectures.</li> <li>▪ My parents and older brothers emphasize education frequently.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Schoolwork takes priority over household chores.</li> <li>▪ As I get older and become more matured, my focus for education improved.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The hardships that my father, grandfather and uncles experience motivate me to get an education for higher profession.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Counselors, teachers and peers encourage me to study.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Having friends who understand you like family members is important.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Century College after high school.</li> <li>▪ The challenges I will face after high school include that I do not know what I want to do and why I am going to school.</li> <li>▪ My parents and older sister influence me to continue with my education</li> <li>▪ My older two siblings continued schooling after high school.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Photographer or Elementary school teacher.</li> <li>▪ I want to become a school teacher, because there was one school teacher who inspired me.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Peer pressure and a lot of wrong choices.</li> <li>▪ Immaturity, peer pressure, confusion and lack of focus are factors that cause me not to study much.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Studying is good and school is important, but the excitement of going to school</li> </ul>

		<p>depends on the pedagogical method of teachers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My parents influence me a lot at home now to study. My new friends, who are experiencing the same life circumstances as mine, are helpful with school.</li> <li>▪ My elementary school teacher cares more about me than other teachers or counselors, but in general, all teachers and counselors do care about my general welfare.</li> </ul>
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**Table 22: 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

5. Kee (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education has been emphasized a lot, every day at home.</li> <li>▪ My parents and siblings talk a lot about education. My parents lecture me a lot. My relatives also talk a lot about the importance of education.</li> <li>▪ We have family meeting every then and now.</li> <li>▪ My mom has been the one to emphasize a lot because she loves us and cares a lot about her children.</li> <li>▪ Attention is given quite a lot at home to my homework. My mom cooks for us and reminds us to study. My older</li> </ul>

		<p>brother Khounee also reminds me to study too.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There is no disruption during study time.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, my relatives tell me to do well at school and education is important and my future depends a lot from the education.</li> <li>▪ My neighbor is my aunt family and they influence me a lot; she watches over me to make sure I go to school every day.</li> <li>▪ We went camping every summer and my relatives including grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins; they had a talk about education for all the kids. They reminded us to study hard. This has been our family tradition during the camping to focus and talk about the kids' education.</li> <li>▪ My maternal grandparents always reminded me/ talked to me about school when we visited them in Milwaukee. My paternal grandparents here in St. Paul always remind me to study, and say that school is important, any time, I visit them.</li> <li>▪ I get lots of lectures from my parents and grandparents, uncles and aunts. I don't mind about those lectures. What they say is true. Those lectures help me; those lectures make me focusing more on my study.</li> <li>▪ It hurts me when I see my dad coming home with injury from his work and that makes me to study hard. My dad is</li> </ul>

		<p>working at a butcher shop in South St. Paul. When I see Hmong/Mong people being poor, it inspires me to study hard because I don't want my kids to have a hard life. I want to move to a better neighborhood and have a better career.</p>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I got a lot of encouragements from all the teachers. They told me to do well and study at school.</li> <li>▪ My friends and my cousins who go to school with me influenced me to study.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I have received quite a lot of encouragements from my friends to study. The ones I hang out with influence me to go to school.</li> <li>▪ I have lots of friends such as relatives, class buddies, lunch buddies; I get along with them because we like each other, support each other, not all but some of them.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspiration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I plan to attend college after high school.</li> <li>▪ I am not sure yet what college but at least 4-year college.</li> <li>▪ The challenges will be money because my parents don't make lots of monies in their job, grades/academic work because college is tougher than high school/hard at first because of the transition from home to college but I will learn to manage my life to get used to the transition. So,</li> </ul>

		<p>these are the challenges for me in college.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, everybody that I know influences me to go to college.</li> <li>▪ My family members, especially my parents influence me a lot to go to college.</li> <li>▪ Yes, my two older brothers and my cousins go to college. My other older siblings did not go to college. That is why my brother Khounee wants me to do well and go to college because he regrets that he didn't do well and didn't go to college.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to be a fire fighter or to be a police officer because when I was young, I met a fire fighter, who came to visit my elementary school as a guest and he inspired me; he made a huge impact on my life when I was in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. The fire fighter came to my class and talked to the class and I felt bonded to this fire fighter. He told us to study and be a responsible citizen. I want to be like him</li> <li>▪ Only the fire fighter inspired but my family inspired me to go to something else. The fire fighter was a powerful and good role model for me.</li> <li>▪ My family wants me to be a doctor or lawyer.</li> <li>▪ My siblings want me to be something else because police officer and fire fighter are dangerous career. I am good in math and science but haven't thought much yet</li> </ul>



		<p>about this field since the fire fighter has been the only adult to make positive impact on me.</p>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Peer pressure like class buddies or girls; I feel like I am a handsome young man and girls flirt me a lot and I want to talk to the girls and that might disrupt my focus on my study; maybe girls and buddies distract my study; I also like to socialize a lot such as talking to people for fun; just like talking to beautiful girls.</li> <li>▪ Going out; less times to do homework; time management and study habit management are some issues that may distract my study habit. I probably spend times away from my study and this may pull down my grades.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Studying is a very good thing. Because studying makes you do better in school, get better grades, and get admitted to better college.</li> <li>▪ Going to school is more exciting than boring; I hate the waking up part and taking school bus early like 6:30 AM, especially winter time.</li> <li>▪ School is very important to me.</li> <li>▪ The fire fighter guy inspired me to go to school and what he said in my class influences me a lot such as stay in school and get good education for a good future.</li> <li>▪ Sometimes I, not always, remind myself to</li> </ul>

		<p>study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ My parents and siblings remind me to study.</li><li>▪ My older brother Khounee reminds me to study because he wants me to succeed. He regrets that he did not do well at school and he passed to me his dream to succeed for our family.</li><li>▪ My peers sometimes do influence me to study; my close buddies always remind me to study; I also remind my close buddies to study too.</li><li>▪ I do receive support at home to study, such as turn off the television during study time; my parents and siblings care a lot at home about study time.</li><li>▪ My English teacher is really cool and she cares a lot about me such as chatting with me, supporting me, and encouraging me to study and going to college. My strong suit is math and sciences but my English teacher is the one who influences me more because she just cares a lot about my welfare and that makes me feel empowered to study.</li></ul>
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## **APPENDIX E: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subjects' Excerpts:**

**Table 23: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

1. Phong (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do home work is emphasized a lot at home.</li> <li>▪ Sister tells me to study hard to get good job.</li> <li>▪ At least get H.S. diploma for a good job.</li> <li>▪ Sister always tells everyone to study.</li> <li>▪ Receive support for homework at home.</li> <li>▪ Praise and compliment from family members for schooling.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, Hmong/Mong community influences my education</li> <li>▪ Yes, my community influences my education.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My teachers encourage me to study and do homework;</li> <li>▪ My English teacher always helps me.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My good friend and I help one another; he calls me all the times even we don't go to school together any more.</li> <li>▪ I associate with most Hmong/Mong peers born in Thailand because they and I have similar experience and we support one another; we understand one another well.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I plan to attend and finish college after high school.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I plan to attend 2 years college first then I may go on to 4 years college.</li> <li>▪ English is my challenge.</li> <li>▪ Classmates in college will not be Hmong/Mong but mostly Americans, which may reduce my motivation.</li> <li>▪ Not worry much of financial expense because there must be financial aid available.</li> <li>▪ It is my own idea to attend college.</li> <li>▪ My teachers support me to go to college.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Computer engineer or computer field (Technology)</li> <li>▪ I am good in math and I enjoy computer.</li> <li>▪ My sister supports this field because I am good in this.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ English Language is a barrier.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ You won't know where your life is headed without your education.</li> <li>▪ I am always excited to go to school; I don't even want to take any break.</li> <li>▪ Teachers here are nicer and really want to help students more compared to Thailand.</li> <li>▪ I always wanted to go school when I was very young</li> <li>▪ Always remind myself to study and finish homework.</li> <li>▪ My teachers always help me at school.</li> </ul>

**Table 24: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

2. Mai Yia (Female)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do home work first before others.</li> <li>▪ Talk a lot about education at home.</li> <li>▪ At least get H.S. diploma for a good job.</li> <li>▪ Parents always lecture everyone to study.</li> <li>▪ My dad is the one to always remind us to study.</li> <li>▪ Receive support for homework at home.</li> <li>▪ Praise and compliment from family members for schooling; dad is happier when we do well at school.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, my Hmong/Mong relatives influence my education</li> <li>▪ Yes, my community influences my education</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My Hmong/Mong teacher and Hmong/Mong friends encourage me to study and do homework;</li> <li>▪ My school gives me encouragement to study.</li> <li>▪ My Hmong/Mong teacher motivates me a lot.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My good friend and I help one another; he calls me all the times even we don't go to school together any more.</li> <li>▪ I associate with most Hmong/Mong peers born in Thailand because they and I have similar experience and we support one another; we understand one another well.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I don't associate with Hmong/Mong born in America because we have different experience and they may not understand mine.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I plan to attend and finish college after high school.</li> <li>▪ Go as far as I could at least 4-year college</li> <li>▪ May flunk at college.</li> <li>▪ English is my challenge/Academic ability is an issue because I start schooling late.</li> <li>▪ Financial is a barrier.</li> <li>▪ My aunties, cousins influence me a lot to study.</li> <li>▪ My cousin is my role model and she is in college.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To be a teacher.</li> <li>▪ Aunties, sister-in-laws, cousins, and sister-in-law's daughter influence my education; they encourage me to study hard and go to college.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ English Language; Start school late; poor preparation for college.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study is always a good thing</li> <li>▪ Schooling is always exciting and very important</li> <li>▪ My sister-in-law's daughter is my role model; she is a college student.</li> <li>▪ I always remind me to study, do my homework, and go to school every day.</li> <li>▪ My parents always support me a lot about</li> </ul>

		<p>my schooling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My Hmong/Mong teacher is my supporter because he is Hmong/Mong and is sensitive to my need-he previously experienced similarly to my experiences and he empathizes me a lot. My ELL teachers also care a lot about us, the new refugee students but the Hmong/Mong teacher is the one who cares the most about us.</li> </ul>
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**Table 25: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

3. Tou Kao (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<u>Home</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family talks a lot about education at home.</li> <li>Education will help you to get good job, good home, and better life style.</li> <li>Parents lecture me a lot all the time; they told me their story of having no opportunity to go to school in Laos; they want me to have a better chance than them because this country has a good education system available for everyone. I know they love me so much but their lecture sometimes bothers me. They also scold us to study hard so we will become self sufficient and independent especially when they get older or pass away.</li> <li>They support me a lot to study and do my homework at home.</li> </ul>

2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My aunt lectures me a lot because she wants me to finish school. Education will lead to a better life.</li> <li>▪ I appreciate what my aunt lectures me because she came here first and knew this system better than me and she cared a lot about my welfare.</li> <li>▪ Many of my relatives also say pretty much the same to me that education is important and I believe them and take their advice seriously.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A Hmong/Mong Educational Assistant helps me a lot. He understands my needs and he is dedicated to help me and other Hmong/Mong students.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I have friends who are born here and those who are born in Thailand and came to US recently with me.</li> <li>▪ My friends are those that I go to school with but they are Hmong/Mong. They help me and it depends on their personality.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I want to go to college but not sure that I will succeed. I will do my best.</li> <li>▪ I plan to go to 4 years college</li> <li>▪ My English proficient skills and money are the main barrier for my college education.</li> <li>▪ My aunt always influences me to go to college.</li> <li>▪ None of my family members has gone to</li> </ul>



		<p>college.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My parents are poor and this affects me the most to try hard to go to college. I don't want to repeat their misery so I will try hard to have a better future than my parents'.</li> <li>▪ My dad passed away and my mom was remarried to my step dad and this further makes me to even study hard because of my suffering of the loss of my dad. My mom loves me and always supports my dream of a better education for a better life.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Computer designer</li> <li>▪ Enjoy computer.</li> <li>▪ Parents support this decision; so does aunty.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ English skills</li> <li>▪ Poor/Crowded home/Depression of death of my biological dad.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study is great.</li> <li>▪ Study is exciting because learn new knowledge</li> <li>▪ Study is very important.</li> <li>▪ See others having high education and get good job so hurt me and I want to be like them.</li> <li>▪ Remind myself to study.</li> <li>▪ Parents remind all the times.</li> <li>▪ Peers influence me o study.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aunt praises and compliments me a lot for studying.</li> <li>▪ An English teacher influences me a lot.</li> <li>▪ The ELL Program is helpful.</li> <li>▪ American teachers are superb compared to teachers in Thailand.</li> <li>▪ Schools in this country are much better because teachers care a lot about you; in Thailand, teachers are meant and care less about students.</li> </ul>
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**Table 26: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

4. Gaozouapa (Female)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<u>Home</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They lecture me a lot (my mom, relatives, and brothers)</li> <li>▪ I also want my brother's 2 children to know that they have to go to school every day.</li> <li>▪ I remind myself to study hard because education will be good for my life and I am inspired a lot.</li> <li>▪ My recent arrival from Thailand and the fact that my father is not here make me study hard.</li> <li>▪ My mother would rather want me to do my homework before any house chores and my brother and his wife do the same as my mom does to me. I receive lots of</li> </ul>

		support toward my study at home.
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When I see them at any family gathering, my relatives always remind to study hard.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My American teacher encourages me to study. This teacher cares a lot about her students. She helps me a lot because I am new to school and she knows that I need help; she is my math teacher.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My brother also helps me a lot at school especially math. He is a good brother who cares a lot about my educational success.</li> <li>▪ I have a close friend who also just came from Thailand; we understand each other and support one another.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to go to 4-year college after high school.</li> <li>▪ I am afraid that I am not the best student so I am scared that I'll fail and waste the money. Money is the big issue</li> <li>▪ Academic difficulty is another challenge, for example English skills are a challenge to me.</li> <li>▪ I won't worry of getting married. College first and marriage will be the last one.</li> <li>▪ A Hmong/Mong mentor influences me to go to college. This mentor is a woman and she advises that even I have just come; I will be able to succeed college if I work hard and not get married earlier.</li> <li>▪ My older sister also influences me to go to</li> </ul>

		<p>college because she got married and have children and can't go to college. Writing and reading English are important to get good job.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My family needs help and they depend on my education to lift up my family to better life.</li> <li>▪ All the children in our house motivate me to study hard so I will be able to lift up their future.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to be a teacher for small children.</li> <li>▪ I want to help children and my own people.</li> <li>▪ Help people who are going through what I have gone through.</li> <li>▪ The Hmong/Mong kids born here are not helpful to me; some look down on me. It hurts me a little bit but I know that even I just came from Thailand; I can still study hard and catch them up.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ English proficient skills</li> <li>▪ Poor academic preparation</li> <li>▪ New arrival</li> <li>▪ Family obligation</li> <li>▪ Poverty</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Go to school is a good thing</li> <li>▪ Exciting because of learning new knowledge, skills, and better future</li> <li>▪ Very important</li> <li>▪ Sister-in-law could not go to school</li> </ul>

		<p>because of getting married earlier. Lucky to have a better chance for life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Always remind self to study; mother and older brother always remind me to study. My peers also influence me to study.</li> <li>▪ ESL teachers do; Hmong/Mong mentors do.</li> <li>▪ ESL program does.</li> </ul>
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**Table 27: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

5. Meng (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<u>Home</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We talk about education at home.</li> <li>▪ My older brother and my parents talk a lot about education.</li> <li>▪ They support my education a lot; they leave me alone to do my homework, to study my tests, and to do math/reading every night and buy me clothes when I study hard.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My relatives influence me a lot; they always tell me to study hard to get good job.</li> <li>▪ We are poor; my dad is in coma now and this further motivates me to study hard so I will have a better future.</li> <li>▪ I see some people having good job making more money and this motivates to work harder so I can be like them.</li> </ul>

3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School influences me a lot about my education; after school program has been very helpful to me; Hmong/Mong mentors always have made difference in my learning; these Hmong/ Mong mentors can explain things in Hmong/Mong to make me understand my school work much better.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My friends influence me about my education. Moreover, my friends from my clan or who are my cousins make me trust them more and I feel comfortable with them; they have big influence on my education.</li> <li>▪ I don't associate with Hmong/Mong kids born in the U.S. because sometimes they look down on me such as call me "Hmong/Mong Thailand". So, I associate more with Hmong/ Mong kids from Thailand because we have similar experience and we support and respect each other a lot. I am Hmong/Mong green so I tend to associate more with Hmong/Mong green kids.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I will go to 4-year College or even 7-year College if I could.</li> <li>▪ My parents and brother influence me to go to college.</li> <li>▪ My challenge will be English skills.</li> <li>▪ My relatives who came here long time ago always influence me to go to college. My</li> </ul>

		<p>teachers also influence me to go to college</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ None in my family is in college yet.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I would like to do something with computers.</li> <li>▪ My brother influences me to pursue computer in my career.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To get good grades, I have to study hard; this is a tough life because it makes me depressed if my grades go down.</li> <li>▪ We came later and this makes me depressed because we are behind those who came here many years ago.</li> <li>▪ We are poor and my father is sick and in coma.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Go to school is good, exciting, and very important.</li> <li>▪ I want to have good job, buy good car.</li> <li>▪ My friend Mai helps me a lot at school.</li> <li>▪ I remind myself to study; my family members do remind and my peers call me to remind me to study.</li> <li>▪ Yes, my teachers also remind me to study hard.</li> </ul>

**Table 28: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

6. Tria (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b><u>Home</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My parents periodically reminded me not to play too much, but to focus on school.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My parents and I talk frequently about my education.</li> <li>▪ A lot of attention is given to my study habits.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seeing that Hmong/Mong are poor motivated me to study hard.</li> <li>▪ I want to better myself so I can move out of the neighborhood.</li> <li>▪ My parents do influence me in my education so that I can attain a better paying job later in life.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Counselors and teachers encourage me a lot to study.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My peers are in a similar situation as mine, being that they recently arrived from Thailand, and they are very helpful and trustworthy.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If I can, I want to continue schooling after graduating from high school.</li> <li>▪ I like to attend a four-year college institution.</li> <li>▪ I am worried that my English will not be proficient for me to make good grades and to continue further in my education.</li> <li>▪ The principal at my high school has encouraged me to further my education.</li> <li>▪ No one in my family has continued his or her schooling after graduating high school.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to become a teacher so that I can help those in need of help.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No one has influenced me in my aspiration to become a teacher.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I believe there are no factors that prevent me from being a better student.</li> <li>▪ Dating is a factor in preventing me from studying.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School is important and exciting; and studying is a good thing.</li> <li>▪ I came to America late so I am motivated to study hard to “catch up”.</li> <li>▪ My parents and my friends encouraged me to always stay focused.</li> <li>▪ Ms. Vue (Counselor) cares about me.</li> </ul>

**Table 29: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subject’s Excerpts**

7. Bao Nhia (Female)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<u>Home</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education is emphasized at home some times and I am the one who emphasizes the most about education because I am the oldest in the family.</li> <li>▪ My parents encourage me to study first before anything else.</li> <li>▪ My parents do not try to get in the way of my studying.</li> <li>▪ I emphasize education frequently, because I am the oldest.</li> <li>▪ A lot of attention is given to homework over household chores.</li> </ul>

2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arriving recently to this country motivate me to study hard and seeing Hmong/Mong people being poor inspired me to wish for greater thing thru education.</li> <li>▪ Our relatives encouraged me to study first before getting married.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The school provides extra teachers and personalizes our lessons in small groups to make sure we are successful.</li> <li>▪ My ESL teacher is the most caring and attentive to my educational progress.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My peers and I talk to each other about our school problems and progress. We share and encourage each other's to do well.</li> <li>▪ My peers are recent immigrants from Thailand like me.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I plan to continue to college.</li> <li>▪ I want to try to two-year institution first to test out my ability.</li> <li>▪ I am worried that my English will not be sophisticated enough in college; and that I will not be able to keep up with the college classes.</li> <li>▪ My parents are the two figures that always encouraged me to further my education.</li> <li>▪ No one in my family has a college education.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to be either a nurse or a pharmacist.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to become a nurse or pharmacist, because it is about helping other people; and I also want a higher paying job compared to my father.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are no factors that prevent you from being a better student.</li> <li>▪ I am too self-conscious and shy in the classroom and am new to this country.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School is sometimes boring, but mostly exciting and also important.</li> <li>▪ America has allowed me the opportunity to learn and catch up to others.</li> <li>▪ I am the oldest so I am very diligent about my education because I want to be a role model for my younger siblings.</li> <li>▪ My ESL teachers help me the most.</li> </ul>

**Table 30: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

9. Teng(Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b>Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Every sibling reminds one another about school. In my family, my parents don't even say as much I have done. I am the oldest child; I remind my siblings a lot to study. They listen to me and always take my advice. Not all of my siblings enjoy going to school or studying but I am the one to tell them the importance of education because I have seen so many</li> </ul>

		<p>paths and the kind of future that we want. I came to the U.S. at an older age and my chance is slim so, my siblings understand my experience. So, when I tell them to study, they listen to me. In Thailand, my parents discussed a lot about education. Mostly boys went to school in Thailand. Girls did not have the chance to attend school. My mother helped me a lot in Thailand regarding my schooling but my father was busy with other things. Nobody in my family had really gone to school before-nobody could really write or read. So, to overcome this has been a challenge for my family. It is not something that comes naturally to me; it is hard to do. In Thailand, there was no job for me. So, now, I have no times to waste because I am getting older. I would better hurry up to catch up.</p>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ During social events or parties, relatives, cousins, and friends ask me a lot about my education. I share with them my struggle in my quest for my GED education. They support my effort to get my GED and encourage me to finish it soon and go to college.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My teachers support my study and encourage me to complete my GED and go on to college. Most of these teachers</li> </ul>

		<p>are very good to recent refugee students like me. They told me that there are people sixty more years but are capable to complete their GED and go on to college.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Most of my ESL teachers support me a lot and are quite supportive to me all the times. They have good passion and are always there for us.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I have many friends but the ones that I am close to are those who just came from Thailand with me. We knew each other in Thailand and we became buddies to one another. We offer support to one another. We call each other a lot. We understand each other's struggle and needs. Thus, we support each other a lot since we are in the same boat</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I plan to attend 2-year college after I complete my GED. I want to transfer to 4-year college after I finish 2-year college.</li> <li>▪ English will be my major challenge in college. Moreover, social support may be another issue; I won't be with my Hmong/Mong friends like in High school and will be with mostly white students in college. This will be a complete change and I am scared because I will compete with people whom I don't know. The culture will be different because the pace will be faster than now in my GED class.</li> <li>▪ My brother-in-laws and sisters encourage</li> </ul>

		<p>me a lot to attend college.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ None of my family is in college and I will be the first.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I would like to become a carpenter or furniture builder; Carpentry is my hobby; I dream to be a carpenter, to build house, and build furniture.</li> <li>▪ I enjoy working with wood. I am quite good at it, too.</li> <li>▪ I had met many Hmong/Mong who have already been in this field. A Hmong/Mong carpenter has shared his experience with me as a carpenter; he also joined the union. His story influences me a lot to follow his footsteps.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I have been busy with family responsibility such as help my parents pay all the bills, driving them to grocery store, medical appointments, and others.</li> <li>▪ Time is a big issue; I feel like I don't have enough time to focus in my study.</li> <li>▪ Moreover, we live in a crowded household and this also distracts my study.</li> <li>▪ English is my main challenge. Due to my limited English skills, it took me lots of times to comprehend any reading and I have to use a dictionary at all the times. This has been a tedious task. At times, my limited English skills discourage me a lot to study because it takes too much of my times to read and to understand its</li> </ul>

		<p>contents. It is time consuming for reading English and this discourages me quite often.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Time consuming, family issue, and helping my family such as pay the bills, drive my parents to grocery store, and helping my father for cultural ceremony are some factors that cause me not to study much because I have been exhaustive and burnt out with these responsibilities.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study is always a good thing.</li> <li>▪ Going to school is always exciting. When I was younger, I always thought of learning to read and write because I want to go far in life. If I could read and write then I would be better off. I always wondered how some people did read and write so well. Going to school makes me knowledgeable and helps improve my career.</li> <li>▪ School is very important to me.</li> <li>▪ I wondered why some people did well in writing and reading and I would like to have the ability to do. I saw people being able to speak and write English; I always ask people for help such as completing the forms, reading my bills, and others; it takes too much time to rely on others. These all things have made me wanting to become self-reliant and self-sufficient.</li> <li>▪ I am the oldest child so, I remind myself</li> </ul>

		<p>to study and I also remind my younger siblings to study. They listen to me. My relatives always encourage me to study and not to give up on learning English. My friends call me and support me a lot to study. I also encourage them the same thing. We support one another and maintain close contact to one another. My parents support me a lot, especially my father. He expresses that I am taking over his role to lead my siblings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ My father emphasizes a lot about education and encourages me to work hard and take over his role to lead my siblings.</li><li>▪ I go to school at the adult education program. I also accompany my father during the weekends to help my community.</li><li>▪ When I first came here, I attended a program at Maryland Avenue and Payne Avenue; a teacher named Marilyn always helped me with my English; she was a superb teacher; I still emailed her a lot when I had questions about my education. She emailed back to me. Even now, she is no longer my teacher but she still maintains contact with me. She cares a lot about my welfare. She is the best teacher that I ever had in my life.</li></ul>
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**Table 31: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

9. Doua (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b>Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At home, we talk about education but not too much. They lecture me about going to school every day and doing well at school.</li> <li>▪ My parents emphasize the most about my education. Sometimes, my older brother does.</li> <li>▪ They remind me to make sure my homework is done.</li> <li>▪ My older brother helps me at times. He gave me support and some rewards.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My relatives influence me a lot to study, especially when they came to visit us.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At school, some teachers help me a lot. They speak English and I don't quite understand it. This makes it difficult for me. My teachers are very patient because they speak English to us but we tend to speak Hmong/Mong. Even though, my teachers keep trying to help me. They encourage me to speak English.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I associate with Hmong/Mong males, who came from Thailand recently. We support and influence on one another to study.</li> <li>▪ In Thailand, Hmong/Mong girls were studious and in the U.S., they continue to be studious. Most of Hmong/Mong girls</li> </ul>

		<p>coming recently from Thailand are very good students because they are studious.</p>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, I do want to go to college after completing my high school diploma.</li> <li>▪ I want to go to 4-year college</li> <li>▪ My challenges in college will be English; my English skills are not enough. I am not concerned of getting married early or financial problem for tuition. My main concern is English because I have just come from Thailand for the past three years.</li> <li>▪ My older brother is married and has children; he encourages me and supports me to go to college.</li> <li>▪ None of my family has gone to college.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I am interested to do something with the field of computer. There are other jobs such as transporting furniture that I am interested in that field also.</li> <li>▪ I enjoy computer and I think I could do well in computer field.</li> <li>▪ My English would be better than my math.</li> <li>▪ My brother supports my decision to aim for computer as a career.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We just came here recently after every Hmong/Mong, so this makes our life difficult and depressing.</li> <li>▪ We are also very poor and my father is</li> </ul>

		very sick. It's a hard thing to live with.
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Studying is a good thing.</li> <li>▪ Going to school is not exciting for someone who doesn't know a lot of English and doesn't have much social skill. You can figure out that I am new around here.</li> <li>▪ School is very important to me.</li> <li>▪ I want to get a good education and learn well. I also want to earn enough money to get a car.</li> <li>▪ I remind myself to study. My relatives remind me to study all the times, any time, they visited us. My friends also remind me to study. I have a friend named Mai Yang who helps me a lot. I always receive support from all the people that I have just mentioned to you.</li> <li>▪ Most of my teachers care a lot about my education. My ESL teacher does the most. Many Hmong/Mong tutors also influence me a lot. They help me a lot at school.</li> </ul>

**Table 32: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wave Subject's Excerpts**

10. Tou Tong (Male)

No.	Questions	Excerpts
1.	<b>Home</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I arrived here in 8-22-02004 and started school at 9<sup>th</sup> grade. I am the oldest son. I went to school in Thailand. I am the second oldest child. I attended a private</li> </ul>

		<p>school in Thailand. I speak more Thai than English and Hmong/Mong.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ My parents emphasize a lot about education at home. My mother was the one to emphasize more. Even in Thailand, my parents sent me to private school. My parents help me the most. My mother is the one to push me a lot because she stays home and nurtures me a lot. My father works outside of the family so my mother has more times with the children. They remind me to study hard. Otherwise, I won't have a good job. I also helped my parents to earn little money while we were living in the refugee camp. However, my parents remind me a lot to focus on my education.</li><li>▪ My parents remind me that school is the number one important matter.</li><li>▪ In the U.S., my parents continue to emphasize the importance of education; they say that we came here late so, we must work harder to catch up other Hmong/Mong who came here many years ago.</li><li>▪ My parents remind us not to watch TV but do our homework. They took us to library to study; they gave us money to buy books and other needs for schooling.</li><li>▪ They praise us a lot after school conference because they heard good</li></ul>
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		<p>report from teachers. They monitor our study habit, not to watch too much TV. They put pressure more on my siblings who didn't do well at school.</p>
2.	<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There is an after school program at the Wellstone center. We often go there for additional help.</li> <li>▪ My relatives also remind us to study. My uncles from mother's side called us from Fresno, California and always reminded us to study hard. I am so happy to their advice.</li> <li>▪ I know that we just came here. So, I am grateful to my uncles' lectures and advices. My dad's side also influences me a lot. My uncles always remind me to study, mostly older uncles. Not so much my cousins who were born here influence my education.</li> <li>▪ My family went to see Dr. Phoua. Our doctor also encouraged us to study.</li> </ul>
3.	<b>School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At school, our ESL teachers help us a lot. They understand our challenges and always encourage us to keep trying. They are very patient and take their time to teach us, nurture us not to be shy or afraid but to keep trying and they have been greatly helpful to my learning. The counselor is also helpful to my schooling. The ESL teachers are the best advocates for my schooling. There is a Hmong</li> </ul>

		<p>/Mong Educational Assistant. He helps us a lot. He is always there for us.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There are Hmong/Mong students born here and still know Hmong/Mong language and culture well; they too help us a lot because they understand our needs; they know Hmong /Mong culture well and they don't reject us.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Peers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My best supporters are Hmong/Mong students who just came from Thailand. We have the same experiences and we are sensitive to each other's needs. Thus, we support one another even they are not my close relatives but we feel close to each other because of our similarity.</li> <li>▪ We also knew each other in Thailand.</li> <li>▪ My close friends are those who just came from Thailand recently.</li> <li>▪ The Hmong/Mong college students also help us a lot; there is an after school program and these Hmong/Mong college students volunteer to mentor us. They have made huge impact in my learning.</li> <li>▪ This program focused on basic standard test, ACT, and college preparation. This is a great program for me to prepare for my college education.</li> </ul>
5.	<b>Educational Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, after my high school, I plan to attend 2-year college; I attend 2-year college first then I will transfer to 4-year college. I need to prepare myself in the 2-year</li> </ul>

		<p>college to make sure I do well then go on to 4-year college.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ College education is much more challenging for me because the pace is faster and my English is not ready. Moreover, it will cost more monies. Therefore, the combination of fast pace, challenging English skills, and the tuition is the main challenge for me in college.</li> <li>▪ I don't worry about having a girl friend because I know that education is my priority.</li> <li>▪ I don't worry much about the progress of my relatives who came here many years ago. Even they have done much better than my family that doesn't bother me a bit.</li> <li>▪ What worry me is that my English is not good enough.</li> <li>▪ Coming recently from Thailand helps me to motivate more to study hard. Our family condition of being poor, struggling through many issues, and suffering more give me hope and empower me to catch up those who came here years ago. I have a lot of hope to do well and catch up my relatives.</li> <li>▪ I always think that one day I will catch them up. At times, I feel bad of my family's recent arrival but most times, I don't mind to catch them up.</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ College education is a must for a better job.</li> <li>▪ Now we are living in a public housing and my goal is to get good education for a good job. So, my family will move out of this place to own a nice home; I will buy a new car and will be able to travel to visit Thailand and Laos.</li> <li>▪ I am the main advocate for my education because my parents are uneducated.</li> <li>▪ I went to school in Thailand and I know the importance of education. In the U.S., I have seen homeless people living underneath the bridge and I don't want to be one of them. So, I have to concentrate in my education for a better future.</li> <li>▪ We were poor in Thailand; we are refugee; we experience poverty; so, I must work hard to overcome these hardships.</li> <li>▪ I have cousins born here who graduated from college.</li> <li>▪ I can't even help my parents with paper work. So, I feel bad and that motivates me to study hard. My parents suffer a lot because they have a hard time to adjust. This further motivates me to study hard.</li> </ul>
6.	<b>Career Aspirations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I have thought about entering a field of computer technology such as computer technician or computer engineering. I am good in math and I like computer a lot.</li> </ul>
7.	<b>Barriers / Impediments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The main barrier is my English skills.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ My family is poor and I have to work harder to do catch up.</li> </ul>
8.	<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Studying is a good thing.</li> <li>▪ Going to school is exciting</li> <li>▪ School is very important to me.</li> <li>▪ I want to have a better career so we can own a home, buy a car, and travel to visit Thailand and Laos.</li> <li>▪ I always remind myself to study. My relatives always encourage me to study. My mother is my main supporter to focus on my study. My friends who just came from Thailand recently support and influence me a lot to study.</li> <li>▪ My ESL teachers, my Hmong/Mong Educational Assistant, and my Hmong/Mong college student mentors care a lot about my education. They influence me a lot to study.</li> <li>▪ The ESL teachers are my best advocates. They enjoy teaching us and nurturing us to learn English. They know how to teach us, to persuade us to learn and not be afraid of them.</li> <li>▪ These ESL teachers have patience and have best teaching skills to motivate us, the recent refugee students, to learn. I am so grateful to these ESL teachers.</li> </ul>