

The College Search Process: Differences between Hmong and Somali Students

THESIS

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By

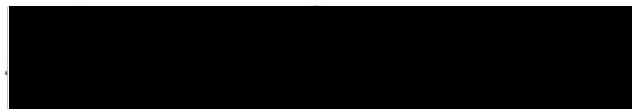
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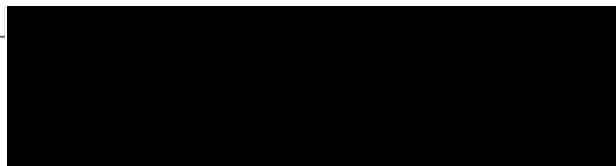
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Abstract

The researcher explored the college search process of three Hmong and one Somali student at four Minnesota higher education institutions using a phenomenological approach. Minority students, underrepresented/underserved students, are highly sought after by colleges across the nation. There are more than 60,000 Hmong and 30,000 Somali within the state of Minnesota. The author presented results utilizing six themes that emerged as noteworthy contributors of research participants during their college search process. The themes include: Residence, Ethnicity, Gender, Family Educational Background, Predispositions to Education, and Secondary Contributors.

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Chapter One

Introduction

The process of choosing an institution of higher learning is, for most students, a complex and interactive endeavor. Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith (1989) suggest the decision to go to college is the result of a three-stage process that begins as early as the seventh grade and ends when the student enrolls at an institution of higher education. Is this process different for Hmong and Somali students vs. traditional students and what are these differences?

Purpose

The intent of this study was to explore Hmong and Somali students' college search process. Previous research done on the college search process (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000; Ceja, 2006; Hemsley-Brown, 1999; Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989; Perez & McDonough, 2008; Smith & Fleming, 2006) made no specific mention of Hmong or Somali students. There has been research on Hmong college students in higher education (Lor, 2008; McClain-Ruelle & Xiong, 2005; Huffcutt, 2010; Swirkowski, 1997; Vang, 2003; Xiong & Lee, 2011) however; the research did not focus on the college search process.

Year after year, college admissions counselors embark on a mission to recruit a variety of students to fulfill college enrollment goals. Colleges recognize that there is value in diversity, both economic and racial diversity add to the educational experiences of all students. One of the most sought after populations has been minority students. Students from underrepresented/underserved populations, such as those of Hmong and Somali descent fall into that category. More than 60,000 Hmong and over 30,000 Somali reside within Minnesota according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2011). This study aims to provide valuable information to

college admissions personnel which may be used to develop more meaningful and engaging recruitment strategies for Hmong and Somali students.

According to Tom Stinson, Minnesota state economist, “the racial makeup of the state is changing, as immigration increases Minnesota’s minority populations. Minneapolis will see magnified demographic changes as it is a large and dynamic urban center.” Please see Appendix A: Minnesota State Population Change 2000-2010. This table indicates the significant changes in the make-up of Minnesota’s population over the last ten years. Education needs to remain a top priority in Minnesota, especially with the changing demographics. Students from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds typically have a lower high school graduation rate and are less likely to graduate from college. Thus, the need for additional research on this underrepresented/underserved population’s college search process could help address the achievement gap by better understanding the needs of those students and the best way to help them succeed.

The 2010 Census indicated the Asian American population in the United States grew 46% between 2000 and 2010. This was faster than any other racial group nationwide, including Latinos. Looking further, there are a number of discrete Asian American ethnic groups, one being Hmong. Nationally, the Hmong population growth between 2000-2010 was 40%. According to the U.S. Census Bureau California, Minnesota, and Wisconsin boast the highest Hmong populations in the nation. California is home to over 90,000 while Minnesota is home to over 60,000 and Wisconsin to just over 45,000 Hmong. In addition, the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice (2011) found, “Asian American educational attainment generally approaches or exceeds that of non-Hispanic Whites. Yet disaggregated 2007-2009 American Community Survey data showed that the educational attainment of Hmong, Cambodian, Laotian,

and Vietnamese Americans is similar to African Americans and Latinos, limiting employment opportunities for many from Southeast Asian communities”.

Additionally, students of Hmong descent have family traditions and customs that may impact their college search process more than students of other ethnic backgrounds. For example, in the event of a parent’s death Hmong children might miss up to two weeks of school to pay respect to the deceased. In such a case, missing that much school at the college level could severely impact the grade outcome of a semester. Hmong families generally like to live close to one another in areas where relatives and in-laws are within easy reach. This may help explain the high concentration of Hmong populations in California, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. In addition, this type of connection could impact how far away a student chooses to go for schooling. According to Christopher Vang, an assistant professor in the Department of Teacher Education at California State University, multigenerational homes are common among Hmong in America because of socio-economic difficulties, especially for uneducated parents who have unstable incomes and limited resources. Schools need to be aware of the important family ties of their Hmong students. To Hmong, “family” typically means great grandparents, grandparents, parents, siblings, in-laws, relatives, clans, and community. More research on underrepresented/underserved populations such as those of Hmong and Somali descent is needed to prepare and improve cultural competence of higher education professionals.

Setting

Using a phenomenological approach the researcher developed an understanding of three Hmong and one Somali student’s college search process. The purpose of using the phenomenological approach was to capture the ‘lived experience’ of the students. Overall, the

researcher focused on the subjective experiences and interpretations of the college search process through the eyes of the participants.

The researcher interviewed four students, one Hmong male, two Hmong females, and one Somali male, from four different institutions. The institutions consisted of one two-year public institution, one four-year public institution, and two four-year private institutions. By interviewing these students, the researcher developed an understanding of the college search process through the eyes of a Hmong or Somali student.

Assumptions

The researcher's perceptions of higher education and the college search process have been shaped by his personal experiences. From October 2002 to the present the researcher has worked as a college admissions counselor at the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD). In this role, the researcher has worked with a variety of students, parents, colleagues, and other admissions personnel. The position has provided the researcher with a unique perspective on the college search process. Specifically, the researcher has served as a **UMD** field representative in Hennepin County, presented to a variety of groups (i.e., students from diverse backgrounds, parents, and colleagues) visiting campus, and reviewed files of underserved/underrepresented students. Hennepin County boasts 22 independent school districts which play host to a diverse student body. The researcher believes this role has enhanced his awareness, knowledge, and sensitivity to many of the challenges students encounter during the college search process. Although every effort has been made to ensure objectivity, these biases may have shaped the way the researcher viewed and understood the data collected and the way he interpreted it. The researcher began this study with the perspective that Hmong and Somali students experience the college search process differently from one another and from traditional students.

Limitations

Potential limitations included a small sample size (4), only interviewing three **Hmong** students and one Somali student that were already attending college. Since a small sample was used, the generalizability of the information is limited. The student populations the researcher requested to work with were considered a limitation as well, as they were considered vulnerable populations according to the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Also, the interview process itself posed a risk. Those interviewed may have potentially tried to provide socially appropriate answers, thus a factor in determining the validity of the research. Reliability concerns were addressed by cross-checking the transcribed interviews with the audio version and follow-up with research participants. Participants were provided the opportunity to clarify, expand, or request removal of interview material (ultimately, removal was at the discretion of the interviewee).

Definitions

-ACT—an achievement exam that consists of subject area tests in: English, Mathematics, Science, and Reading. (Many colleges use ACT scores for admission consideration.)

-Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)—is a college readiness system for elementary through postsecondary students designed to increase school wide learning and performance.

-Chain migration—a movement in which prospective migrants learn of opportunities, are provided with transportation, and have initial accommodations and employment arranged by means of primary relationships with previous migrants (Perez & McDonough, 2008 p. 253)

- College Possible—an organization (formerly known as Admission Possible) founded by Jim McCorkell in 1999 to work with college-capable low-income students by providing both guidance and the basic tools necessary to compete effectively.
- College search process—the steps a student takes prior to determining which college to attend
- C3—A high school program created to promote the future success of students:
 - Care- promoting respect for oneself, others, and the community
 - College-encouraging and preparing all students for post-secondary education, and
 - Career-encouraging lifelong learning and planning for success in life
- E-view—an interview done via e-mail
- Gatekeeper—a colleague at another institution the researcher worked with in order to connect with potential research participants
- HF1—Hmong Female 1 participant
- HF2—Hmong Female 2 participant
- HM—Hmong Male participant
- Multicultural Excellence Program (MEP)—the mission of the MEP is to provide guidance and support to promote the academic success of students culminating in the acquisition of a college degree. Participants of the MEP program consist of students who graduate from a Saint Paul Public High School, meeting the requirements and attending a MEP college. (Description acquired from: <http://www.d.umn.edu/mlrc/ocd/programs/>)
- SAT—an exam which assesses subject matter learned in high school and problem solving skills in three areas: Writing, Mathematics, and Critical Reading. (Many colleges use SAT scores for admission consideration.)
- SM—Somali Male participant

-TRIO Programs—A family of federal outreach and student service programs designed to increase access, identify, and provide services for disadvantaged students to higher education.

The Federal TRIO programs include eight different programs (program descriptions relevant to this study were acquired from U.S. Department of Education Website

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html>):

1. Educational Opportunity Centers
2. Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate
3. Student Support Services (SSS)
4. Educational Talent Search (TRiO ETS)—program that identifies and assists individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The program provides academic, career, and financial counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to and complete their postsecondary education. The program publicizes the availability of financial aid and assists participants with the postsecondary application process. Talent Search also encourages persons who have not completed education programs at the secondary or postsecondary level to enter or reenter and complete postsecondary education. The goal of Talent Search is to increase the number of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds who complete high school and enroll in and complete their postsecondary education.
5. Training Program for Federal TRIO Programs Staff
6. Upward Bound—provides fundamental support to participants in their preparation for college entrance. The program provides opportunities for participants to succeed in their precollege performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits. Upward Bound serves high school students from low-income families and high school students from

families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree. The goal of Upward Bound is to increase the rate at which participants complete secondary education and enroll in and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education.

7. Upward Bound Math-Science—program is designed to strengthen the math and science skills of participating students. The goal of the program is to help students recognize and develop their potential to excel in math and science and to encourage them to pursue postsecondary degrees in math and science, and ultimately careers in the math and science profession.

8. Veterans Upward Bound

-Traditional student—non-Hispanic White student from a middle class to upper-middle class family

-Underrepresented/underserved—refers to students who are represented in disproportionately low numbers/students who come from low-income or what is deemed difficult socioeconomic status.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the college search process of Hmong and Somali students utilizing a phenomenological approach. The study addressed the topic from a perspective that had yet to be presented. Due to the changing demographics of Minnesota the researcher chose these two populations as a starting point for research. It is the hope of the researcher that this study will provide data that might help in the development of new recruitment strategies for Hmong and Somali students. The next chapter presents a review of some of the literature regarding the college search process.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter will address some of the research available on the college search process. The three stages of the college search process include predispositions, the search, and the decision or the choice (Cabrera, & La Nasa, 2000). Cabrera and La Nasa (2000) noted “in undergoing each phase of the college choice process, high school students develop predispositions to attend college, search for general information about college, and make choices leading them to enroll at a given institution of higher education” (p. 5). This important process has, according to David Kraus (2008), an admissions professional for 24 years, long been something that produces heightened anxiety for students and their families due to stories of past students’ experiences typically printed in newspapers every spring and fall. In a 2008 Journal of College Admission article Kraus states, “I shudder when I read these articles as the only conclusion is that the college search process is terribly capricious, and admission decisions are arbitrary and uncaring at best” (p. 6). The postsecondary decision making process typically lasts from pre-high school through the senior year for a typical student.

Stages of the Decision Making Process

The predisposition stage is the initial conception of ideas relating to students’ future postsecondary aspirations (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000). The authors (2000) contend students are typically well established in this stage by the eighth grade, as it is thought that the predispositions stage takes place during grades 7-9. According to a study conducted by Hemsley-Brown (1999), many of the preconceptions students have were based upon parental influence. A study by Smith and Fleming (2006) supported these findings that parents have substantial influence on the predisposition stage, as their background and ideas on college are

typically transferred to their child during this time. Another study, conducted by Perez and McDonough (2008) cited not only parental influence, but also extended family members, trusted individuals, and chain migration contacts as valuable resources to Latina and Latino students. In addition, Hemsley-Brown (1999) cited peer group pressure, self-image, and group identity (socioeconomic status) as influential factors.

Much of the research on Hmong students is about their experience while attending college; however, the research can be applied to their college search process. Lor (2008), in a study which examined key life experiences of 18 Hmong graduates of the University of Wisconsin system, concluded family, particularly parents, siblings, and extended family members played a noteworthy role in their college experience. However, Xiong & Lee (2011) noted many Hmong parents have no formal education, may not understand the English language, and lack knowledge of the U.S. educational system. Therefore, much of the support Hmong students receive from parents may be in the form of encouragement, or emotional and spiritual support rather than support surrounding the actual search process. According to data from the 2008-2010 American Community Survey, nearly 40% of Hmong adults over 25 years of age possessed less than a high school diploma (U.S. Census, 2011).

Students, families, and schools use predispositions to plan for a postsecondary track through course work while in high school. According to Smith and Fleming (2006) “the most visible direction-setting practice parents can engage is to take the necessary steps to ensure that their children are placed into a college-going trajectory by enrolling them in college preparatory courses” (p. 78). A thorough review of the literature indicated that parental influence was most apparent during the predisposition stage of the college search process. Cabrera & La Nasa (2000)

also contended that “among the factors predicting students’ early educational plans, parental encouragement is the strongest” (p. 7).

During the search stage of the college choice process, students begin to develop a list of prospective colleges. According to Smith & Fleming (2006) this “is when students (and parents) take an inventory of their needs, values, wants, and limitations and then attempt to match them to a large number of desirable institutions, thereby creating choice sets” (p. 77). The college search, including contact with colleges, visits, and accumulation of college materials, usually begins in the tenth grade and commences during the twelfth grade (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000). Educational experiences along with social and economic realities may make it difficult for parents to assist their student during the college search process (Ceja, 2006). However, Ceja (2006) noted parents generally provide whatever type of support they can to student’s college search process (i.e., driving a student to the post office to mail an application, or displaying a sense of emotional and moral support).

Cabrera and La Nasa (2000) described the college choice stage as having two primary influences: economical and sociological. “The economic perspective regards enrollment as the result of a rational process in which an individual estimates the economic and social benefits of attending college, comparing them with those of competing alternatives” (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000, p. 12). The sociological aspect used to predict where the student matriculates includes their socioeconomic characteristics and academic preparation (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000). Smith and Fleming (2006) concluded it is during the choice stage that students withdraw somewhat from their parents and rely on peer groups, teachers, counselors, and other sources to arrive at a final college attendance decision. Other sources of influence during the college search process

might include ethnicity, gender, or secondary contributors: College athletics, guidance counselors, Academic Support Programs.

Ethnicity and Gender

According to Perez & McDonough (2008) there has been mixed evidence regarding the role of race, ethnicity, and gender in the college choice process. Smith & Fleming (2006) stated “most of these college choice frameworks are built from the experiences and perspectives of white students” (p. 76). With that in mind, models must expand to include a variety of ethnicities taking part in the college search process. The Latina and Latino ethnic group is one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in the country (Perez & McDonough, 2008 p. 250). Ceja (2006) took an in-depth look at the role that Hispanic families play in students’ college searches. He found that siblings more often than not play a role in assisting with the college choice process. Parents were supportive, but typically did not have the background or knowledge to contribute their opinions to the college choice of their child due to their lack of first-hand experience with a postsecondary education.

King (2000) indicated that an undergraduate enrollment gender gap that places females at an advantage is characteristic for all racial groups but is most extreme for African Americans (63% female to 37% male). The changing demographics within the United States suggest that the college decision process will become increasingly more complex. It is imperative that future studies continue to address these factors in the college choice process.

Secondary Contributors: College Athletics, Guidance Counselors, Academic Support Programs

Colleges, at times, gained notoriety through their athletic program(s). Student-athletes add another dimension to the college search process. Toma and Cross (1998) found if a college

is involved in an athletic championship season, specifically football and basketball in the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I level (NCAA Div. I), they were more likely to see marked increases in freshman applications in subsequent admission cycles. The study, however, did not indicate the average grade point average (GPA) and standardized test scores of these students, so quality of the applicants was not known. Beyond choosing a team, student-athletes must choose a college that fits their needs. A study performed by Letawsky, Schneider, Pederson, and Palmer (2003) established that the degree programs offered, not athletics, was the most important factor in the college choice of student-athletes. Not far behind were factors of coaching and academic support. However, the authors found it noteworthy that two of the top three determinants were non-athletic.

School guidance counselors also influence the college choice students make. In a study performed by Perez & McDonough (2008), school counselors were cited second to parents by students as someone they spoke with about college planning. Normally, counselors enter the college search process in the student's sophomore or junior year. Counselors are employed in many school districts to assist students with various types of personal decisions in life, as well as act as a resource through the college decision process. School guidance counselors tend to be assigned to a grade range (i.e. grades 7-8) and specific portions of the alphabet. Cabrera & La Nasa (2000) showed guidance counselors had an effect on the school choice of students by keeping in constant contact with them and planning coursework to fulfill college admissions requirements. Lor's 2008 study "Key life experiences contributing to Hmong students' matriculation" confirmed that counselors guided students as to which courses to take, helped fill out college applications, and also advised students on seeking potential scholarships. This is a major responsibility for counselors, especially for those who are in large schools or who have

other duties in addition to college counseling. In addition to counselors, Lor (2008) indicated his study participants mentioned how relationships with teachers and professors also contributed to their decision to pursue higher education.

In 2011, Xiong & Lee conducted a study to evaluate the effectiveness of Academic Support Programs (ASPs) in the Hmong population. The study assessed students' perception and usage of these programs. The study consisted of 55 Hmong college students (42 females and 13 males) enrolled at a large, public California State University. Results indicated that 28 of these students utilized or participated in an ASP, while 27 students had not utilized or participated in ASPs. Factors which students perceived to be reasons why they utilized ASPs included: financial assistance, assistance with class selection, feeling unprepared for college, having friends in the program, being the first in the family to attend college, as well as other factors. On the flip side, those who chose not to participate in ASPs were asked why they did not seek assistance. Reasons participants provided for not utilizing ASPs included: lack of information on how to seek help from ASPs, lack of awareness of ASPs available to them, types of ASP services, lack of Hmong staff, and no need for services. Findings from the study indicated that the majority of Hmong college students who have used ASPs found them to be helpful. The majority of participants that found ASPs to be helpful cited their use of academic and financial services more helpful than any other services. The study also noted that ASPs could do more, for example, they could reach out to parents and educate them on the demands associated with obtaining a higher education. A school might utilize an ASP to educate Hmong parents that lack familiarity with the U.S. educational system or that have not gone to college themselves. Ultimately, ASPs are not just for Hmong students, but they are important tools that can be utilized to promote the pursuit of higher education, and a path to success.

Conclusion

There are many dimensions to the college choice process. Family seems to have the largest impact on many decisions future college students make, and it is important for families to take this into consideration when they are supporting their student. College admissions representatives must be aware of the needs of all students and the varying influences throughout their college decision process. It is clear additional research on the college decision process is needed in order to reflect the ever-changing landscape of postsecondary education institutions in the United States as well as the changing demographics including ethnicity and gender. Chapter Three presents a study on the college decision process for three students of Hmong and one student of Somali descent. The researcher chose students of Hmong and Somali descent due to the two populations not being specifically mentioned in the previous college search process research reviewed.

Chapter Three

Methodology

The intent of this qualitative study was to explore the college search process of Hmong and Somali students. Using a phenomenological approach, the researcher developed an understanding of three Hmong and one Somali students' college decision process. Overall, the researcher wanted to focus on the subjective experiences and interpretations of the participants in regard to the college search process. This chapter will describe the research setting, the participants, the procedures used to gather the data, and conclude with a description of the process utilized to analyze the data.

Setting and Participants

Creswell (2009) stated, "The idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites (or documents or visual material) that will help the researcher understand the problem and the research question" (p. 178). The researcher interviewed (See Appendix B for interview questions) a total of four students, three Hmong students and one Somali student, from four different institutions. All four of the participants were current freshmen at their institution. The four institutions consisted of a two-year community college, a medium-sized four-year public institution, and two small four-year private institutions. By interviewing these students, the researcher hoped to develop an understanding of the college search process through the eyes of Hmong and Somali students.

Initial contact with the participating institutions was made through the office of admissions via telephone call to colleagues employed at each institution. This was followed by a formal letter (See Appendix C) explaining the purpose of the research, along with a request of written permission/access to work with the specified student population, in this case Hmong and

Somali students. In the letter the researcher explained why these individuals were selected to participate in this study. The researcher provided assurance of confidentiality which was shared with gatekeepers as well as participants. Once granted access to the specified student population, the researcher worked with colleagues at each participating institution to identify potential participants.

In a separate letter to prospective participants (See Appendix D), the researcher explained the purpose of the study and the research methodology. Letters were sent directly to the colleagues at each institution and forwarded to the individual students identified as potential participants. Those who responded were provided a consent form (See Appendix E) explaining the study and the purpose of the research. Each participant was sent two informed consent forms, one for their records and one to be returned to the researcher prior to the interview. The researcher wanted to select two respondents from each institution, one Hmong and one Somali student if possible. However, it was not possible to choose one of each based upon responses as previously noted in the limitation section.

Procedure and Data Gathering

Data was collected via an e-view (See Definitions section), a face-to-face interview or via phone conversation. Each participant was asked to select the method he/she was most comfortable utilizing for the interview. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007) interviews enable participants to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view. Initial interviews took place between mid-September 2011-mid October 2011. A follow-up conversation was conducted either by e-mail, in person, or via phone giving each participant an opportunity to view the

transcripts from the initial interview and clarify any statements or make a request to remove a statement. The follow-up contact occurred between mid-October 2011 through November 2011.

If the face-to-face option was chosen, the participant was asked whether or not the interview could be audio recorded along with taking notes. The interviews acted as a flexible tool for data collection allowing the researcher to utilize multi-sensory channels: verbal, non-verbal, spoken, and heard (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007). According to Creswell, (2009) use of a protocol for recording observational data should be identified prior to entering the field. Observational protocol used during the interviews included descriptive notes (a reconstruction of dialogue, a description of the physical setting, accounts of particular events, or activities), reflective notes (the researchers' personal thoughts), and demographic information (time, place, and date of the field setting where the observation took place) (Creswell, 2009).

Data Analysis

Creswell (2009) contended data collection and data analysis are conducted concurrently in qualitative research. Data was transcribed by listening to the audio recording on an on-going basis, for each individual that requested face-to-face interview. The transcribed interview was then cross-checked with interview notes. For those that chose the e-view, the researcher would read through answers on receipt and either call or e-mail the participant for clarification or expansion of thought if needed. Finally, each participant was given an opportunity to see a transcript of the interview during a follow-up conversation so as to clarify, expand, or request a section be removed from the transcript. Ultimately, removal was at the discretion of the participants.

Summary

In summary, the researcher utilized a qualitative study to explore the college search process through the eyes of students of Hmong and Somali descent. Research participants were selected from four different institutions; a two-year community college, a medium-sized four-year public, and two small four-year private institutions. The researcher chose to work with current freshmen in college as they had just recently completed the college search process. Participants were interviewed via e-view, face-to-face, or phone between mid-September 2011 and mid-October 2011. A follow-up conversation occurred between mid-October 2011 and mid-November 2011. During the follow-up, the researcher went over transcripts from the initial interview, asked for clarification if needed, and asked participants if they would like to remove any remarks previously made. Each of the interviews was transcribed and cross-checked with interview notes. The next section will present results.

Chapter Four

Results

To reiterate, the process a student follows to select an institution of higher learning can be referred to as the college search process. This process can be confusing and complex for students seeking higher education. Previous research (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000; Ceja, 2006; Hemsley-Brown, 1999; Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989; Perez & McDonough, 2008; Smith & Fleming, 2006) had no specific mention of Hmong or Somali students. Results presented were based upon interviews conducted (See Interview Questions in Appendix B) with Hmong and Somali students who were current freshmen college students.

The research participants recently went through and completed the college search process. Eight students submitted consent forms; however, on beginning interviews four opted out of the study. Of the four remaining, one student chose a face-to-face interview, while three others chose to utilize the e-view method. Three out of the four students that responded were of Hmong descent, two females and one male, while one student was a male of Somali descent.

This chapter will present the results from the interviews utilizing six themes: Residence, Ethnicity, Gender, Family Educational Background, Predispositions to Education, and Secondary Contributors. Full responses from participants can be seen in Appendix F and were characterized as follows: Hmong Female 1-HF1, Hmong Female 2-HF2, Hmong Male-HM, and Somali Male-SM. The participant who provided the response was noted at the end of the question (i.e., When did your family arrive in the United States? HF1). This will be followed by the response from that participant. Chapter Five will present potential educational implications, recommendations for future research, and provide a summary in the hope a future individual will pick up where this researcher left off.

Residence

The researcher felt when or how long ago the students' families arrived in the United States or Minnesota may have impacted their college search, when they were exposed to the U.S./Minnesota's educational system. Two interview questions addressed residence:

- 1.) When did your family arrive in the United States?
- 2.) How long have you lived in Minnesota?

Each of the four participants was either born in the United States or moved here (Minnesota) around the time he/she would have begun middle school (grades 7-9). Familiarity with the educational system should have been sufficient to know of and engage in the college search process. In this regard, residence was not seen as a key factor in the participant's college search.

Ethnicity

Research participants mentioned aspects surrounding their ethnicity in a variety of their responses. The researcher found references to ethnicity in responses to the following questions:

- 1.) How did your cultural background/beliefs play a role in the college choice process?
- 2.) Does being a student of Hmong or Somali descent affect the college decision making process?
- 3.) How would you describe your college search process? When or how did you begin your college search? What criteria were used throughout your search process?
- 4.) Do you feel this process is different for males vs. females? How so?
- 5.) How would you say the college search process is different for you vs. another?
- 6.) Why a public vs. a private school vs. a two-year school?

Past research indicated mixed responses as to whether ethnicity played a noteworthy role in the college search process. However, in this study ethnicity was a noteworthy contributor to

research participants' college search. Each of the Hmong participants referred to how strictly Hmong cultural norms were adhered to by their parents/family. HF1 participant stated, "In the Hmong culture, a woman traditionally stays home and takes care of the house and family". HF2 participant said, "I believe being a minority and class level affects the college decision making process." The Hmong male participant indicated his family's choice to send him to a Hmong College Prep Charter school played a role in his decision to pursue a college education. His school not only encouraged all of their students to pursue higher education after high school, but also focused on educating students on Hmong culture and languages. Considering the Hmong participant responses regarding cultural norms and traditions ethnicity played a noteworthy role in participant's college search process. From this researchers perspective it was a significant factor in the Hmong participants search processes. The SM participant made sure that the colleges he was considering did not interfere with his beliefs and culture. Essentially, each indicated their ethnicity played a role during their search. This could be interpreted as each of them finding an institution that would not interfere with who they are not only as a student from an underrepresented population, but also as an individual. In addition, each participant chose a college campus where they felt they would be embraced; provided with resources and support, and the ability to grow while learning about themselves as well as others. Ethnicity played a role, probably one of the most noteworthy roles of their college search from this researcher's perspective.

Gender

One question specific to gender was asked by the researcher:

- 1.) Do you feel this process is different for males versus females? How so?

Gender seemed to be a contentious subject among the participants of the study. The researcher gathered mixed responses in regard to whether gender played a role in the college search process. Each of the female participants indicated gender played a role in their search being different. The female participants felt their male counterparts or siblings had an easier time garnering parental/family support during their college search. Both Hmong females indicated yes, it is different due to cultural expectations and traditions. One female stated, "It seems that males have more freedom to go however far away they want to go." The girls both pointed out in the Hmong culture it is tradition to ask for permission (male and females alike), but parents tend to be more lenient with the males. Issues such as how strictly the family follows Hmong traditions from the past and safety concerns were two reasons cited by the female Hmong participants for this behavior. Both Hmong females commented on the different treatment they received vs. their male siblings. HF2 participant stated, "My dad was always there to help my oldest brother out with his college application and FAFSA, but when it came down to his oldest daughter who was next in line to go to college, he didn't give me any help." On the other hand, the Hmong male participant and the Somali male participant believed a person's gender did not make a difference in the college search process. One comment the researcher found noteworthy made by the HM participant that had nothing to do with gender, but instead another type of student was; "My college search I would say, that it was different from the typical high school student. Regardless of race, gender, and where they are from. I say this because quoting from my Student Safety Specialist; I was a kid at-risk." What is an "at-risk" student? In regard to this study, the HM participant was saying he was considered an "at-risk" student because of his grades and attitude toward college the first three years of high school. The HM participant stated, "I just didn't care for college my first three years of high school. I just wanted to live life free and do whatever I

want, which was just have fun and be a thug out on the streets care free from problems,” An entire study could be devoted to “at-risk” students and their college search. Ultimately, the research participant’s responses are further evidence of the mixed role gender plays in the college search process, and verify Perez & McDonough (2008) findings. This is an area where additional research could be used to develop college search frameworks based upon experiences of an array of underrepresented/underserved populations versus traditional students.

Family Educational Background

The researcher asked a small number of questions about the participants’ family members’ experiences with a college education. The questions were:

- 1) Have your mother, father, or a sibling attained a college degree?
- 2) Where did they receive their education?
- 3) Do you have any other family members that have attended or are currently attending a two-year or a four-year college in MN or the continental U.S.?

The answers to the above questions provided a glimpse into who the students may have utilized as a resource during their college search. In addition, the answers to the questions also provided an idea of when the participants may have entered the predispositions stage. According to Cabrera and La Nasa (2000) the predispositions stage is the initial conception of the ideas relating to students’ future postsecondary aspirations. Specifically, did the parents of those interviewed have a college education, thus projecting their expectations during the predispositions stage, or did they witness an immediate family member go through the college search process? None of the parents of the study participants attained a college degree according to participant responses. However, three of the four participants had siblings attending college or had siblings with college experience. Both Hmong female participants and the Hmong male

participant indicated siblings currently in school or mentioned siblings that graduated from college. When it comes to extended family members, two of the participants mentioned these family members in their responses. HF2 participant stated, “Most of my aunts and uncles from my mom’s side of the family attended college and they were always there to help me when I needed help.” The Somali male was the only one to indicate he was a first generation college student. Family educational background certainly had an impact on the search process for the research study participants. Three out of the four participants had older siblings that had gone through the college search process prior to them thus providing a foundation of understanding of what the search might entail. It is this researcher’s belief that having older siblings that had gone through the college search process previously impacted participant’s predispositions to acquiring additional education. Being a first generation college student the Somali male participant had an additional barrier to overcome, no one had gone before him.

Predispositions to Education

To gather data regarding participants’ predispositions to education, the researcher asked:

- 1.) How would you describe your college search process?
- 2.) When or how did you begin your college search?
- 3.) What role did your parent(s), siblings, teachers, counselors (college admissions counselor vs. high school guidance counselor) or others play in this process?

The researcher was able to ascertain whether the research participants followed the findings of previous research regarding when the typical college search process begins. Three of the four participants indicated their college search began during junior year of high school (HF1, HF2, and HM), while one participant indicated beginning the search process during sophomore year (SM). However, as indicated by previous research (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000; Ceja, 2006;

Hemsley-Brown, 1999; Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989; Letawsky et al., 2003; Perez & McDonough, 2008; Smith & Fleming, 2006; Toma & Cross, 1998) a multitude of factors play a role in the college search process. Students of Hmong and Somali descent appear to be no different in regard to parental influence, positive or negative, as playing a role in the decision to attend college. Parental involvement varied, but it was parental approval that participants seemed to strive for. However, for most of the participants in this study, other individuals were cited as being more helpful with the college search process. For example, one Hmong female indicated, "My admission possible coach was the number one person I went to for help and questions about college and the college process". Another, the HM participant, indicated a college prep program at his high school was the biggest help preparing him for his college search process. A third participant, SM, indicated family members put forth a lot of effort when it came to his college search. He went on to explain family members, "asked those people who came earlier than we did to the United States which were the best colleges." Essentially, he was referring to what Perez & McDunough (2008) referred to as chain migration (see definition section p. 5). The same young man also identified as a first-generation college student, which reaffirms the importance of chain migration contacts as indicated by Perez & McDonough (2008). Each of the research participants cited sources other than parents as influential in the college search process which is consistent with previous research findings for other student populations.

Secondary Contributors

Four questions were utilized to gather data about secondary contributors:

- 1.) Did college athletics play a role in your decision?

- 2.) Were you involved with a college prep program? (For example, TRiO (ETS), Upward Bound, AVID, MEP, or Admission Possible)
- 3.) What role did your parent(s), siblings, teachers, counselors (college admissions counselor vs. high school guidance counselor) or others play in this process?
- 4.) Why a public vs. a private school vs. a two-year school?

In this study, secondary contributors were considered college athletics, high school college preparation programs, family members other than parents, high school counselors, college admissions personnel, and college type (i.e., two-year vs. four-year). Secondary contributors for students participating in this study did not include NCAA sanctioned athletic programs at all. However, the fact institutions the students chose had intramural sports programs were noted as an opportunity to remain active. For example, one of the study participants sums it up well with her comment, “I looked more for activities like intramurals and a very nice athletic facility where I can work out and exercise.” Three of the four participants cited either a high school college preparation program, Care, College, and Career (C3) or another college preparation program such as Admission Possible, TRiO (ETS), AVID, or MEP as contributors to their college search process. The programs listed above have been utilized to promote college, provide collegiate entrance exam (ACT or SAT) preparation, and work with underserved as well as underrepresented populations on their path to pursuing higher education. Such programming enhances student’s dreams of college, but also makes those dreams become reality. In addition, high school guidance counselors and college admissions representatives were cited as contributors to research participants’ college searches. For example, one participant stated, “My guidance counselor and TRiO advisors were always there if I needed help getting information for my college applications.” The same participant also indicated how an admission representative

helped with the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Another participant stated, “I had help from all these people when it came to furthering my education. Everyone had their differences when helping me, but one thing that was common for all of them was that they motivated me.” Many contributors, whether primary or secondary, played a role in each participant’s college search process. Each student is unique in regard to what they will consider a primary or a secondary factor for their search.

Discussion and Summary

Does being a student of Hmong or Somali descent affect the college search process? The conclusion reached by this researcher was affirmative; however, a number of factors played a noteworthy role during the college search process no matter what the ethnic descent of the student. Ethnicity, in regard to cultural norms and traditions, played a noteworthy role for each of the participants of the study. However, the results indicated the needs of students vary widely as it pertains to the college search process. Each student brought with him or her vastly differing experiences and backgrounds which impacted who they sought out for help with their college search. The data support what Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000; Ceja, 2006; Hemsley-Brown, 1999; Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989; Perez & McDonough, 2008; Smith & Fleming, 2006 learned about the populations they chose to work with regarding the college search process. That is, there are a multitude of factors such as parental and sibling influence, extended family, chain migration, guidance counselors, and college preparation programs that play a role in a student’s college choice process. Although Hmong and Somali students were not mentioned specifically in previous research (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000; Ceja, 2006; Hemsley-Brown, 1999; Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989; Perez & McDonough, 2008; Smith & Fleming, 2006) similarities do exist not only among the two populations, but also when compared to African

American, Latino/a, and white students. In each population parents and family played a role, whether actively involved and supporting their student or seemingly showing no support, but nonetheless played a role in their college choice process. In addition to family, study participants cited guidance counselors, admissions representatives, and college preparation program mentors as helping them with their search. Many of these same individuals were mentioned in previous research (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000; Ceja, 2006; Hemsley-Brown, 1999; Perez & McDonough, 2008).

In summary, the results of this study support the fact the college choice process is complicated. Regardless of factors such as ethnicity and gender, students depend on and are helped by a variety of people throughout their search. To keep education a top priority in Minnesota Tom Gillaspay, state demographer, says, “the state’s success is going to depend on how well we’re training [the next generation], and in part how well [the next generation] does in getting trained.” In order for this to happen, we must take note of the populations we are working with as well as recognize their differing needs. Thus, additional research on underrepresented and underserved populations, such as Hmong and Somali students, college search process is needed. Additional research could lead to the development and implementation of recruitment strategies that lead to the graduation of more underrepresented and underserved students or in other words a more diverse and well-trained workforce.

Chapter Five

Summary & Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of Hmong and Somali students' college search process. Previous research made no specific mention of either Hmong or Somali populations in regard to the college search process. A review of the literature confirmed the need to learn more about how students of Hmong and Somali descent experienced the college search process. The researcher found that a multitude of factors played a role in the college search process of the three Hmong and one Somali study participant. Similarities seem to exist among all students embarking on the college search. Parents and family impacted the student during his/her college search. These individuals provided support or motivation in whatever way possible. In this study, ethnicity was a noteworthy contributor to research participant's college search. A student's ethnic descent and the cultural norms and traditions which accompany that cannot be ignored as it pertains to the college search. This chapter will discuss potential educational implications and recommendations for future research.

Educational Implications

The college search process is ever changing. Students of all types of backgrounds enter this process each year and it is imperative for the future success of our state as well as the nation to develop and implement strategies which work to close the achievement gap that exists among students of underrepresented and underserved populations and white students. Gaining an understanding of *all* the students undertaking the college search process will allow those involved to provide the most helpful and time sensitive information available. The goal of the researcher for this study was to gain understanding for two populations which previous research had not specifically focused upon. It leads this researcher to a better understanding of when or

how to approach Hmong and Somali students about attaining a postsecondary education.

Increasing the numbers of underrepresented/underserved students going on to college and attaining a postsecondary degree will help close our achievement gap. Not pursuing research on how to serve and work with our growing populations of underrepresented/underserved students could be detrimental to Minnesota's future competitiveness. Education has and will continue to be the stimulus for economic success.

Recommendations for Future Research

The researcher would recommend utilizing a survey for future research on these two populations in order to reach a broader number of participants. In addition, as a result of the research, the role of high school and college preparation programs and those associated with those programs will need to be examined in more detail. For example, the success of the Admission Possible program is evident based upon the proposed expansion beyond working with high schools in the Twin Cities to working with high schools located in Milwaukee. In the Twin Cities this past year they were supporting 1,400 low income high school students via 17 different high schools in the Twin Cities metro, ninety-two percent of whom are students of color. Programs such as this have the potential to reduce the achievement gap. Ultimately, more research is needed surrounding the college search process and ethnicity to understand the process and students undertaking the process as it evolves.

Conclusions

As education program improvements and funding continue to be hot topics of debate, so too will the college search process for students. In order to work with students during each step of the process, those involved must commit themselves to being informed. To be informed, one must base decisions upon previous research, attend professional development conferences, or

undertake research themselves in order to find answers. Continued research could benefit both students as well as professionals working with those students. I encourage additional research on Hmong and Somali students and their experiences pertaining to the college search. In addition, research on college preparation programs (Admission Possible, AVID, TRiO, and others) would also be encouraged. The future success of our state as well as our nation depends upon a well-educated workforce.

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Appendix A
Minnesota Population Change 2000-2010

Table 1

Population Change 2000-2010

STATE POPULATION BY RACE

MINNESOTA: 2010

Race	Percent of Population	Increase of change from 2000-2010
White	85.3%	2.8%
Black/African American	5.2%	59.8%
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.1%	10.8%
Asian	4.0%	50.9%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islands		8.9%
Other	1.9%	56.5%
Two or More	2.4%	51.2%

STATE POPULATION BY HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN

MINNESOTA: 2010

Race	Percent of Population	Increase of Change from 2000-2010
Hispanic or Latino	4.7%	74.5%
Not Hispanic or Latino	95.3%	5.8%

Table 1-Population Change 2000-2010 Retrieved from: <http://www.deinography.state.inn.us/>

Appendix B
Interview Questions

Does being a student of Hmong or Somali decent affect the college decision making process?

Sub questions-

When did your family arrive in the United States?

How long have you lived in Minnesota?

How would you describe your college search process? When or how did you begin your college search? What criteria were used throughout your search process?

Have your mother, father, or a sibling attained a college degree? Where did they receive their education?

Do you have any other family members that have attended or are currently attending a two-year or a four-year college in MN or the continental U.S.?

What role did your parent(s), siblings, teachers, counselors (college admissions counselor vs. high school guidance counselor) or others play in this process?

Were you involved with a college prep program? (For example, Upward Bound, AVID, or Admission Possible.)

How did your cultural background/beliefs play a role in the college choice process?

What were the easiest as well as the hardest parts of the college choice process?

How would you say the college search process is different for you vs. another?

Do you feel this process is different for males vs. females? How so?

Why a public vs. a private school vs. a two-year school?

Did college athletics play a role in your decision? If yes, how so?

Appendix C
Gatekeeper Letter

Date

Name

Title

Address 1

City, State Zip code

Dear First Name,

My name is Bryan Karl and I am a graduate student in the Department of Education as well as an Admissions Counselor at the University of Minnesota Duluth. I am writing to request your assistance accessing potential research participants. Ultimately, I would like to interview Hmong and Somali students about their college search experience. For the purposes of this study, I would like to interview current first-year students as the college search is still fresh in their mind.

I would like to interview, later this year, fall 2010 freshmen at four different institutions. The interviews will be scheduled in December/January. My request is that you identify freshmen fitting the definition above based upon responses on application materials. Once identified, I would ask that you send an e-mail on my behalf (script of e-mail to be provided by me) to students that fit the criteria to participate in the study. From there, I would select study participants based upon the responses. This information will be gathered from students agreeing to participate in the study through face-to-face, phone, or e-mail interviews, based upon the participant's preference, that would be scheduled at the convenience of both the research participant as well as the researcher. I will ask a variety of questions about their views of their individual college search experience and what led them to choose their college.

The results of this project will help me write my master's program thesis. Through interviewees' participation I hope to understand perspectives of their college search process and to determine if there are similarities or differences between the two groups. I hope that the results of the project will be useful for me and possibly other admissions professionals to better understand perspectives of these two growing populations.

I do not know of or foresee any risks to you if you agree to assist me and I guarantee that your identity, the identities of the interviewees, and the name of your institution will not be included in my thesis. Your participation is voluntary.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you may contact me at 218-726-8804 or bkarl@d.umn.edu. You may also contact my research advisor, Cindy Ryan, at (218)-726-7233 or via e-mail clryan@d.umn.edu. This project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Minnesota Duluth (Approval letter available to view upon request).

Sincerely,

Bryan Karl
UMD Admissions Counselor
2011 UMD M.Ed. Candidate

Appendix D
Participant Information Letter

Date

Dear Student,

My name is Bryan Karl and I am a graduate student in the Education Department as well as an Admissions Counselor at the University of Minnesota Duluth. I am writing to request your assistance as a research participant. Ultimately, I would like to interview Hmong and Somali students about their college search experience.

For the purposes of this study I would like to interview a total of six fall 2010 freshmen at different institutions. The interviews will be scheduled mid-December through mid-January based upon your availability. You were identified as a potential participant by a contact in the office of the admissions at your institution. Specifically, you were identified as a freshman fitting the definition above based upon your responses on application materials submitted to the institution.

The results of this project will be utilized in my master's program thesis project. Through your participation in a face-to-face, phone, or e-mail interview I hope to understand your perspective of your college search process and to determine if there are similarities or differences between Hmong and Somali students. I hope the results of the project will be useful for me and possibly other admissions professionals to better understand perspectives of these two growing populations.

There are no foreseeable risks to you if you agree to assist me and I guarantee that your identity and the name of your institution will not be included in my thesis. Your participation is voluntary, and will have no effect upon your status as a student at your institution or your possible future status with the University of Minnesota Duluth. If you agree to participate, I will provide you a copy of a consent form as well as a consent form that will need to be signed and returned to me.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you may contact me at 218-726-8804 or bkarl@d.umn.edu. You may also contact my research advisor, Cindy Ryan, at (218)-726-7233 or via e-mail clrvan@d.umn.edu. This project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Minnesota Duluth.

Sincerely,

Bryan Karl
UMD Admissions Counselor
2011 UMD M.Ed. Candidate

Appendix E Consent Form

The College Choice Process: Differences between Hmong and Somali students

You are invited to be in a research study of The College Choice Process: Differences between Hmong and Somali students. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate in this research study. You were selected as a possible participant because of your ethnic status, as determined by a contact at your institution based upon your application materials. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Bryan R. Karl, 2011 University of Minnesota Duluth master of education candidate.

Background:

The intent of this study will be to explore the differences of experience for first year Hmong and Somali college students' lived experiences of the college choice process. Previous research (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000; Ceja, 2006; Hemsley-Brown, 1999; Hossler, Braxton, & Coopersmith, 1989; Perez & McDonough, 2008; Smith & Fleming, 2006) has no mention of Hmong or Somali students. Year after year, college admissions counselors embark on a mission to recruit a variety of students to fulfill college enrollment goals. One of the most sought after populations is that of minority students, students from underserved or underrepresented populations. Hmong and Somali students fall into that category, thus the study will illuminate the difference of experience, in their words, for these two populations through the college choice process.

Procedures:

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

1. Participate in a face-to-face, phone, or e-mail interview based upon participant preference. The interview will be scheduled to take place between mid-November and mid-December. If the interview takes place via face-to-face or phone, it would be scheduled to take place over a time span of 60 minutes as well as be audio recorded. Interview and interview location to be determined by the research participant based upon schedule and availability of both the research participant and the researcher.
2. Be available for a follow-up contact either in person, via phone, or an electronic exchange per the discretion of the research participant. The follow-up will be scheduled to take place mid-December to mid-January. During the follow-up contact participant(s) will be given the opportunity to review a transcript of the initial interview, clarify any statements, or make a request to remove a statement.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study:

The study has minimal to no risk to the research participants. The researcher will simply be asking participants to recall their lived experience that ultimately led them to their current collegiate institution. The minimal risk might be considered recalling an unpleasant or painful memory throughout this lived experience. The benefit of participation is that the participant will have an opportunity to illuminate, or share their lived experience. No other benefits are known.

Compensation:

No monetary or other compensation will be offered for participation in this study.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only I, as the principal researcher, will have access to the records. Audio recording of face-to-face or phone interviews will remain in the sole possession of the principal researcher, Bryan R. Karl, and be discarded one year after completion of the research study. Audio recording will be utilized to produce a written transcript of face-to-face interviews which will be used to write my thesis. Transcripts from e-mail interviews will be stored securely and only I, as the principal researcher, will have access to the records.

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 Duluth or “your current collegiate institution”. If you decide to participate, you are not obligated to answer every question and you do have the right to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is: Bryan R. Karl. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact Bryan or his academic advisor:

Bryan R. Karl
University of Minnesota Duluth
Office of Admissions
1117 University Drive
Duluth, MN 55812
Phone: 218-726-8804
Fax:218-726-6394
E-mail: bkarl@d.umn.edu

Cindy Ryan
Department of Education
University of Minnesota Duluth
Education Endazhi-gikinoo' amaading 178
412 Library Drive
Duluth, MN 55812
Phone:218-726-7233
E-mail: clrvan@d.umn.edu

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **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 you records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read and understand the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers or been provided the contact information to do so at a future date. I consent to participate in this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

Appendix F Interview Responses

Does being a student of Hmong or Somali decent affect the college decision making process?

Residence

(a) When did your family arrive in the United States? **HF1**

My family arrived in the United States in March 1989.

(b) How long have you lived in MN? **HF1**

I have lived in Minnesota since August 1998.

(a) When did your family arrive in the United States? **HF2**

My mom and dad arrived in the United States when they were teenagers. My siblings and I are bom in the United States (Minnesota and California).

(b) How long have you lived in MN? **HF2**

I lived in MN: the day I was bom to fourth grade.

I lived in CA with my mom: fourth grade to sixth grade.

Moved back to MN to live with my dad: seventh - Present.

(a) When did your family arrive in the United States? **HM**

My family arrived here in the United States in 1987 in Detroit. Then the next day they took another plane straight to Saint Paul.

(b) How long have you lived in MN? **HM**

I was bom in Saint Paul, Minnesota, and I have never lived anywhere else except for Duluth.

(a) When did your family arrive in the United States? **SM**

Me and my family all arrived in the United States in 2005.

(b) How long have you lived in MN? **SM**

I lived in MN since 2005 when I arrived in the United States

Ethnicity

(h) How did your cultural background/beliefs play a role in the college choice process? **HF1**

My cultural background did play an important role in my college choice process. In the Hmong culture, a woman traditionally stays home and takes care of the house and family. However, the current generation of Hmong teens and young adults are beginning to stop this tradition. I have six brothers, three that are older than me and three that are younger than me. I have two older sisters while I am the youngest daughter. My oldest sister is married and my older sister was already attending the College A. We are only one year apart. Therefore, I experienced a year without my older sister. It was only me around to help my mom. My three younger brothers did not do much. I was scared and sad to leave my mom with the boys if I lived on-campus. I love my mom dearly. She would have no daughter to help her or talk to. Also, Hmong parents tend to care more about the safety of their daughters compared to their sons. It is more difficult for women to go further distances. My mom did not want to me to go to College A. At first, she told me to just attend the colleges near home so that I can come back home. I did not say anything, because she knew that I still wanted to go to College A. After a while, she finally agreed. A positive factor was that my older sister was also there. If we need anything we can

come to each other for help. We can also come back home and go back to campus together. That was one relief for my mom.

Does being a student of Hmong or Somali decent affect the college decision making process?**HF2**

I believe being a minority and class level affects the college decision making process. In high school, as a Hmong student, I am thankful to be in college prep, programs such as, MEP, AVID, and TRiO. Although my parents did not help me fill out my FAFSA and college applications, TRiO kept me on track and helped me get the information needed. Since my mom lives in California with most of my younger siblings, my mom couldn't help me with much. Although I lived with my dad, he didn't want anything to do with helping me fill out my college applications and FAFSA. From my point of view, I felt my dad did not want me to go to college because I am his first daughter and second child going to college; he probably did not want to see me succeed in life because men are supposed to keep their superiority.

(c) How would you describe your college search process? When or how did you begin your college search? What criteria were used throughout your search process? **HF2**

I began my college search when a friend of mine started to talk about which colleges he was thinking about attending. I really had no drive to search for the "right" college for me because I felt there were no colleges that suited me. I wanted to attend a private liberal arts school in the cities with a very high percentage of minorities (because I will be more comfortable to get involved). When I saw how serious my friend took his college search, he helped increase my interest in college. I knew I was going to college but I didn't know which college. I applied to colleges in MN and two out of state that were close to MN (College and A Wisconsin School). Although I got accepted to most of the colleges I applied to, I still did not know where to go. I chose College A because of the support I get from TRiO, my financial aid packet, and because it wasn't too close or too far from the Twin cities.

(h) How did your cultural background/beliefs play a role in the college choice process?**HF2**

My dad wanted me to go to the 4-year public because tuition was cheaper and because he believes it's the best school in MN. Although I thought about attending the 4-year public because of its location and recognition, I chose not to because of the lack of support and class size. Since I chose not to go to the 4-year public and because of my unbalanced relationship with my dad, he chose not to support my college search. I remember asking him if he can give me his income information so that I can fill out my college app on commonapp, he simply looked at the computer and said, "No." I suppose a student's college choice process is based on the relationship they have with their parents. I know some Hmong parents who are willing to do anything and give any kinds of information to their child so that they can attend college and be successful. I on the other hand, lived with a father who made it seem as if he didn't care and if I wanted to go to college I would have to find a way to attend college without his help.

(k) Do you feel this process is different for males vs. females? How so?**HF2**

Yes, culturally. My dad was always there to help my oldest brother out with his college application and FAFSA, but when it came down to his oldest daughter who was next in line going to college, he didn't give me any help. Another reason why my dad did not want to help me was probably because of money and because he thinks I wouldn't make it through college.

My brother made few mistakes during his college choice process. Originally he planned to go to a 4-year public College, but chose Community College because he became a father. My dad helped pay for my brother's needs to go to the 4-year public and when he found out my brother couldn't because he soon became a father, my father was disappointed and angered.

(c) How would you describe your college search process? When or how did you begin your college search? What criteria were used throughout your search process?**HM**

My college search I would say, that it was different from the typical high school student. Regardless of race, gender, and where they are from. I say this because quoting from my Student Safety specialist; I was "A kid at risk." I just didn't care for college my first three years of high school. I just wanted to live life free and do whatever I want, which was just have fun and be a thug out on the streets care free from problems. But as second semester of my junior year came by I started to open my eyes. Coming from a Hmong family, my parents always influence the Hmong traditions and the expectation that I was to do. But what really made me consider college and a better future was one thing that they said and is something I think that not just Hmong teenager needs to know but also every teenager is that their parents also have expectation of their own from their children. My parents worked very hard and they have more expectations than I do and this was the real thing that set me fourth on to my search.

With saying this, how I began my college search, first was my school. I went to a Hmong College Prep Charter School. An all Hmong school that influence Hmong culture and languages to all of the students. Not only that but a school to prep every one of their students to achieve a higher education after high school. The school had a program called C3, which stands for College, Care, and Career. Every morning before class started, we would go to C3. In this program our instructor would teach us how to fill out an application for college, make us take test about what kind of person we are and what not. They helped on how to prepare you for college. But one important thing that I did and took advantage of was my school counselor. I would always stay after school to ask questions how to fill out college applications and asked for advice.

(j) How would you say the college search process is different for you vs. another?**HM**

My college search was different because I got rejected from most of the college that I allied to. When I was in high school everyone in my class were talking about how they got accepted to a college and how they don't know which one to choose, but I was thinking about how I got reject and which college I didn't know I wanted to choose

(1) Why a public vs. a private school vs. a two-year school?**HM**

I chose a public school because I felt that public schools, especially University X , would show me a different side of America. I am from a cities setting, and just knowing that University X was predominantly a white school, I felt like it would give me an opportunity to see the suburban lifestyle. Saying this is because if the school is a predominantly white school, chances are that all those students come from the suburbs. It is often misinterpreted that just because you're an American, doesn't mean that you know all of America and culture. Since being that the United States cover so much land, there is not just only one culture that can define as the American culture but there are more to it than that. I told some of the Korean international students that just because it's America, doesn't mean that that is the only people and culture that are there, but many more.

(h) How did your cultural background/beliefs play a role in the college choice process?**SM**
My culture and belief were played a reasonable place I was searching that I believed it was interfering with my beliefs and culture

Gender

(k) Do you feel this process is different for males vs. females? How so?**HF1**

Yes, I do feel that the process is different for males and females. It seems that males have more freedom to go however far they want to go. The strictness on distance for women has lessened, but it is still around. However, it seems that women are more self-motivated in the college process. This is stereotypical, but we do see more women getting into college nowadays compared to men. Among women have been kept in the house more than men. Therefore, we are more motivated to explore and learn. Men on the other hand, had more freedom to do what they want during high school. Therefore, other factors come into play of whether or not they want to go to college or just go find a job after high school. Both men and women have to ask for permission, but parents are more lenient on men. Women's decision will be denied at first, but will eventually be approved due to the parents concern for her. This situation of course is not true for everyone, but it seems to me that it is often this way.

(k) Do you feel this process is different for males vs. females? How so?**HF2**

Yes, culturally. My dad was always there to help my oldest brother out with his college application and FAFSA, but when it came down to his oldest daughter who was next in line going to college, he did give me any help. Another reason why my dad did not want to help me was probably because of money and because he thinks I wouldn't make it through college. My brother made few mistakes during his college choice process. Originally he planned to go to a 4-year Public College, but chose Community College because he became a father. My dad helped pay for my brother's needs to go to a 4-year public and when he found out my brother couldn't because he soon became a father, my father was disappointed and angered.

(k) Do you feel this process is different for males vs. females? How so?**HM**

I think that it really depends on the individual themselves, saying that because in today's society, the gender thing has really just become equal. Patriarch is something that is not heavily influenced no more. Saying that it's all about what each individual has under their belts and what they've been through. Unless the school is an all girl/guys school then yes it would be different.

(k) Do you feel this process is different for males vs. females? How so?**SM**

No, I don't think there is a difference in gender when it comes to the process of college searching.

Family Educational Background

(d) Have either your mother, father, or a sibling attained a college degree? Where did they receive their education?**HF1**

My parents did not attend college. My only sibling that attained a college degree is my oldest brother. He received an associate degree from a College in Minneapolis.

(e) Do you have any other family members that have attended or are currently attending a two-year or a four-year college in MN or the continental U.S.? **HF1**

My older sister is also currently attending the College A. She is a sophomore this year. My oldest brother received his associate degree from College. However, he received it after a long break due to financial problems. My third oldest brother attended Technical school for a short while but stopped and has not gone back to get his degree.

(d) Have either your mother, father, or a sibling attained a college degree? Where did they receive their education? **HF2**

My mom has a high school diploma.

I know little knowledge of my dad's schooling, but I do know he went to college for a short period of time but dropped out because of his English class - he struggled to read, speak, and write in English, got frustrated and dropped out.

(e) Do you have any other family members that have attended or are currently attending a two-year or a four-year college in MN or the continental U.S.? **HF2**

My oldest brother, Davey, is attending Community College and is thinking about transferring to a 4-year college. Most of my aunts and uncles from my mom's side of the family attended college and they are always there to help me when I need help.

(d) Have either your mother, father, or a sibling attained a college degree? Where did they receive their education? **HM**

My parents have never attended college but my two older sisters have. The first one graduated from University X. And my other sister right now is currently attending University Y.

(e) Do you have any other family members that have attended or are currently attending a two-year or a four-year college in MN or the continental U.S.? **HM**

As in immediate family members yes, but since being Hmong, our families are big with so many aunts, uncles, and cousins that we don't even know about. I don't know whether or not any of them attend college. Only the really close cousin I know that went to the Business College and Community college.

(d) Have either your mother, father, or a sibling attained a college degree? Where did they receive their education? **SM**

No I am a first generation that is going to college

(e) Do you have any other family members that have attended or are currently attending a two-year or a four-year college in MN or the continental U.S.? **SM**

No I am the only one that is attending college now

Predispositions to Education

(c) How would you describe your college search process? When or how did you begin your college search? What criteria were used throughout your search process?**HF1**

I began my college search during junior year of high school. I was accepted into Admission Possible, which is a non-profit college prep program helping students during the second half of high school on ACT preparation, scholarships, financial aid, campus visits, and college applications. Throughout my education, I have always known that I wanted to attend college. However, I did not start considering colleges until I became a part of Admission Possible. Therefore, Admission Possible and my Admission Possible coach played a huge role in my college process. My search process was not difficult, because I already had in mind the distance and what type of college I wanted to go to. I knew that I did not want to go far from home which came to the range of at most 2 to 3 hours away. As for the type of college, I knew that I wanted to attend a small private college. There are so many colleges and universities in the Twin Cities and all around Minnesota. My sister is also at the College A. Since she attends College A, I have visited the campus many times and really liked it. The College A became one of my top choices aside from College B and College C. I also considered my mom's approval as well as my own choice. Being the youngest daughter of the family, there would be no other daughter to help my mom around the house if I live on-campus. However, I knew that no matter what, I wanted to live on-campus, because I wanted to experience the college life and knew that I would be able to perform better academically. Eventually, my mom approved of me choosing College A. It was a tough decision between my top two choices, College A and College B. However, it all boiled down to where I felt comfortable, welcomed, and could see myself attending the college. I felt more comfortable at College A.

(f) What role did your parent(s), siblings, teachers, counselors (college admissions counselor vs. high school guidance counselor) or others play in this process?**HF1**

The two people that most influenced my college process are my mom and my Admission Possible Coach. My siblings and teachers all encouraged me to go wherever I wanted to go. I felt like I needed permission or acceptance from my mom of my decision. Even though I knew that I only wanted to attend College A, I would not have felt content without her approval, because I also wanted her to be happy with my decision. My Admission Possible coach was the number one person I went to for help and questions about college and the college process.

(c) How would you describe your college search process? When or how did you begin your college search? What criteria were used throughout your search process?**HF2**

I began my college search when a friend of mine started to talk about which colleges he was thinking about attending. I really had no drive to search for the "right" college for me because I felt there were no colleges that suited me. I wanted to attend a private liberal arts school in the cities with a very high percentage of minorities (because I will be more comfortable to get involved). When I saw how serious my friend took his college search, he helped increase my interest in college. I knew I was going to college but I didn't know which college. I applied to colleges in MN and two out of state that were close to MN (College Y and a Wisconsin School). Although I got accepted to most of the colleges I applied to, I still did not know where to go. I chose College X because of the support I get from TRiO, my financial aid packet, and because it wasn't too close or too far from the Twin cities.

(f) What role did your parent(s), siblings, teachers, counselors (college admissions counselor vs. high school guidance counselor) or others play in this process?**HF2**

My guidance counselor and TRiO advisors were always there if I needed help getting information for my college apps. My parents didn't help me with anything. I had to find people who were willing and able to help me fill out my FAFSA and college application. Even College X's admission's advisor, {Name}, helped me with my FAFSA. My aunts and uncles were also very supportive and encouraged me to go to college. They would ask me how school is going and if I decided which college I will be attending in fall of 2010.

c) How would you describe your college search process? When or how did you begin your college search? What criteria were used throughout your search process?**HM**

My college search I would say, that it was different from the typical high school student. Regardless of race, gender, and where they are from. I say this because quoting from my Student Safety specialist; I was "A kid at risk." I just didn't care for college my first three years of high school. I just wanted to live life free and do whatever I want, which was just have fun and be a thug out on the streets care free from problems. But as second semester of my junior year came by I started to open my eyes. Coming from a Hmong family, my parents always influence the Hmong traditions and the expectation that I was to do. But what really made me consider college and a better future was one thing that they said and is something I think that not just Hmong teenager needs to know but also every teenager is that their parents also have expectation of their own from their children. My parents worked very hard and they have more expectations than I do and this was the real thing that set me fourth on to my search.

With saying this, how I began my college search, first was my school. I went to a Hmong College Prep Charter School. An all Hmong school that influence Hmong culture and languages to all of the students. Not only that but a school to prep every one of their students to achieve a higher education after high school. The school had a program called C3, which stands for College, Care, and Career. Every morning before class started, we would go to C3. In this program our instructor would teach us how to fill out an application for college, make us take test about what kind of person we are and what not. They helped on how to prepare you for college. But one important thing that I did and took advantage of was my school counselor. I would always stay after school to ask questions how to fill out college applications and asked for advice.

(f) What role did your parent(s), siblings, teachers, counselors (college admissions counselor vs. high school guidance counselor) or others play in this process?**HM**

I had help from all these people when it came to furthering my education. Everyone had their differences when helping me but one thing that was common for all of them was that they all motivated me. Whether is lecturing me or helping me fill out applications, they were my motivation.

(c) How would you describe your college search process? When or how did you begin your college search? What criteria were used throughout your search process?**SM**

My college search was fairly simple, I started searching for college when I was a sophomore in High school, I started visiting colleges and universities to ask questions if there were scholarships available and how the process of getting admitted was

(f) What role did your parent(s), siblings, teachers, counselors (college admissions counselor vs. high school guidance counselor) or others play in this process?**SM**

My family members helped a lot when it came to my search for college and they put a lot of effort asking those people who came earlier than we did to the United States which were the best colleges.

Secondary Contributor(s)

(f) What role did your parent(s), siblings, teachers, counselors (college admissions counselor vs. high school guidance counselor) or others play in this process?**HFI**

The two people that most influenced my college process are my mom and my Admission Possible Coach. My siblings and teachers all encouraged me to go wherever I wanted to go. I felt like I needed permission or acceptance from my mom of my decision. Even though I knew that I only wanted to attend College A, I would not have felt content without her approval, because I also wanted her to be happy with my decision. My Admission Possible coach was the number one person I went to for help and questions about college and the college process.

(g) Were you involved with a college prep program? (For example, Upward Bound, AVID, or Admission Possible.)**HFI**

Yes, I was in the Admission Possible program. I really appreciate what the program has done for me. It helped keep my focused on my college goals. Without Admission Possible, I would not have done as well on the ACT as I would have without it. I would not have visited so many colleges, and I would not have gotten through the application process so quickly. As a first-generation college student, my mom did not know anything. I had to rely on my siblings, friends, teachers, counselors, and programs like Admission Possible to help me. I believe that I would still have applied to college successfully without Admission Possible, but it would have been more difficult because I would not have a coach who is constantly reminding me to apply for scholarships and complete forms.

(l) Why a public vs. a private school vs. a two-year school?**HFI**

I chose a four-year private college, because I knew that I would function better in a smaller environment with smaller classes. I was not sure of which field or occupation I wanted to do. I did not know what I wanted to major in, but I have always wanted to go to a four-year college and live on campus to experience the college life. I always hear that it is the best four years of life. Even if I knew what I wanted to do in the future, I still would have attended a four-year college rather than a two-year college, because I want to have this experience. I can always go back to school in the future. For me, education is very important. I want to keep learning.

(m) Did college athletics play a role in your decision? If yes, how so?**HFI**

No, college athletics did not play a role in my decision. It did not matter whether the college I am going to attend was Division I or Division II. Competitiveness did not come into play. I knew that that I wanted to stay active, but not by joining a sport in college, because I am not good enough in any sport to make it on the team. I looked more for activities like intramurals and a very nice athletic facility where I can work out and exercise. College A and College B both have great athletic facilities.

(f) What role did your parent(s), siblings, teachers, counselors (college admissions counselor vs. high school guidance counselor) or others play in this process?**HF2**

My guidance counselor and TRiO advisors were always there if I needed help getting information for my college apps. My parents didn't help me with anything. I had to find people who were willing and able to help me fill out my FAFSA and college application. Even College X's admission's advisor, {Name}, helped me with my FAFSA. My aunts and uncles were also very supportive and encouraged me to go to college. They would ask me how school is going and if I decided which college I will be attending in fall of 2010.

(g) Were you involved with a college prep program? (For example, Upward Bound, AVID, or Admission Possible.)**HF2**

Yes, I was involved with TRiO (ETS), AVID, and MEP. AVID helped me by applying to scholarships. ETS helped me by keeping me on track with the due dates. MEP didn't play a big role because we would only meet as a group once ever one or two months.

(j) How would you say the college search process is different for you vs. another?**HF2**

Most students receive their parents support and I did not. I had to find a way to get my dad's information without him knowing so that I can fill out my FAFSA and college application. I had to step out of my comfort zone and asked people for help, which I did not like because I didn't want to lose my pride.

(l) Why a public vs. a private school vs. a two-year school?**HF2**

I like private schools because of their small class size and easy access to get help. On the other hand, I like public schools because there's more people to interact with and because it's a lot cheaper than private schools. I did not want to go to a community school because I wanted to get a real education. College X is recognized for their education since it's a liberal arts school.

(m) Did college athletics play a role in your decision? If yes, how so?**HF2**

No.

c) How would you describe your college search process? When or how did you begin your college search? What criteria were used throughout your search process?**HM**

My college search I would say, that it was different from the typical high school student. Regardless of race, gender, and where they are from. I say this because quoting from my Student Safety specialist; I was "A kid at risk." I just didn't care for college my first three years of high school. I just wanted to live life free and do whatever I want, which was just have fun and be a thug out on the streets care free from problems. But as second semester of my junior year came by I started to open my eyes. Coming from a Hmong family, my parents always influence the Hmong traditions and the expectation that I was to do. But what really made me consider college and a better future was one thing that they said and is something I think that not just Hmong teenager needs to know but also every teenager is that their parents also have expectation of their own from their children. My parents worked very hard and they have more expectations than I do and this was the real thing that set me fourth on to my search.

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higher education after high school. The school had a program called C3, which stands for College, Care, and Career. Every morning before class started, we would go to C3. In this program our instructor would teach us how to fill out an application for college, make us take test about what kind of person we are and what not. They helped on how to prepare you for college. But one important thing that I did and took advantage of was my school counselor. I would always stay after school to ask questions how to fill out college applications and asked for advice.

(g) Were you involved with a college prep program? (For example, Upward Bound, AVID, or Admission Possible.)**HM**

My school's College prep program the only thing I experienced.

(1) Why a public vs. a private school vs. a two-year school?**HM**

I chose a public school because I felt that public schools, especially University X, would show me a different side of America. I am from a cities setting, and just knowing that University X was predominantly a white school, I felt like it would give me an opportunity to see the suburban lifestyle. Saying this is because if the school is a predominantly white school, chances are that all those students come from the suburbs. It is often misinterpreted that just because you're an American, doesn't mean that you know all of America and culture. Since being that the United States cover so much land, there is not just only one culture that can define as the American culture but there are more to it than that. I told some of the Korean international students, that just because it's America, doesn't mean that that is the only people and culture that are there, but many more.

(m) Did college athletics play a role in your decision? If yes, how so?**HM**

Athletics didn't play a role because I was never really into sports because my school didn't really offer the typical American sports, such as football or soccer. But I do love sports, and you can say that UMD had the kind of sports that I like, that in which lead me to my decision. They had such sports as intramural volleyball and a great sports facility.

(f) What role did your parent(s), siblings, teachers, counselors (college admissions counselor vs. high school guidance counselor) or others play in this process?**SM**

My family members helped a lot when it came to my search for college and they put a lot of effort asking those people who came earlier than we did to the United States which were the best colleges.

(g) Were you involved with a college prep program? (For example, Upward Bound, AVID, or Admission Possible.)**SM**

No I was not involved in any kind of program

(j) How would you say the college search process is different for you vs. another?**SM**

I think college search is a very hard process for every one unless people take advantage of the resources they have. My high school advisors helped a lot and went to them with question literally every day.

(1) Why a public vs. a private school vs. a two-year school?**SM**

I chose public and a two year college because of the tuition and while attending the two year school, a student takes care of many of the courses required for any four-year program, and can earn an Associates Degree as well. For some careers, the two-year program is all that is needed.

(m) Did college athletics play a role in your decision? If yes, how so? **SM**

No not at all

The IRB: Human Subjects Committee renewed its approval of the referenced study listed below:

Study Number: 1006P84394

Principal Investigator: Bryan Karl

Expiration Date: 05/03/2013

Approval Date: 05/04/2012

Title(s):

The College Choice Process: Differences between Hmong and Somali immigrants

This e-mail confirmation is your official University of Minnesota HRPP notification of continuing review approval. You will not receive a hard copy or letter. This secure electronic notification between password protected authentications has been deemed by the University of Minnesota to constitute a legal signature.

You may go to the View Completed section of <http://eresearch.umn.edu/> to view or print your continuing review submission.

For grant certification purposes you will need this date and the Assurance of Compliance number, which is FWA00000312 (Fairview Health Systems Research FWA00000325, Gillette Childrens Specialty Healthcare FWA00004003). Approval will expire one year from that date. You will receive a report form two months before the expiration date.

In the event that you submitted a consent document with the continuing review form, it has also been reviewed and approved. If you provided a summary of subjects' experience to include non-UPIRTSO events, these are hereby acknowledged.

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. Unanticipated problems and adverse events should be reported to the IRB as they occur. Results of inspections by any external regulatory agency (i.e. FDA) must be reported immediately to the IRB. Research projects are subject to continuing review.

If you have any questions, please call the IRB office at (612) 626-5654.

The IRB wishes you continuing success with your research.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

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08/30/2010

Bryan R Karl
UMD Admissions
1117 University Dr
Duluth, MN 55812

RE: "The College Choice Process: Differences between Hmong and Somali immigrants"
TRB Code Number: **1006P84394**

Dear Mr. Karl:

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 recruitment letter and consent form, both received August 26, 2010.

The TRB 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 6 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 June 26, 2010 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. Unanticipated problems or serious unexpected adverse events should be reported to the TRB as they occur.

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

We have created a short survey that will only take a couple of minutes to complete, The questions are basic, but will give us guidance on what areas are showing improvement and what areas we need to focus on:

<https://umsurvey.utnn.edu/index.php7sid-36122&lang-um>

Sincerely,



Christina Dobrovolny, CIP
Research Compliance Supervisor
CD/ks

CC: Kim Riordan