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Publication Date

2021

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The Centrality of Culture in Hmong Parental Supports

By

YOU LOR
DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in

Educational Leadership

in the

OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

of the

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

DAVIS

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2021

Dedication

It is hard to imagine and realize the possibility of my current position without acknowledging the work people close to me have done. First, I want to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Yer Yang and Cher Pao Lor, for their decision to bring my siblings and myself to the United States despite the rumors surrounding America. It was their courage and determination for a better future for their children that allowed them to traverse the unknown journey from Laos, to Thailand, and to the United States. In America, as we navigated schools, my parents told stories of persistence and motivation. They modeled the behaviors and attitudes they wanted us to carry forward and, most importantly, they held high expectations.

I could not have completed this work without the support and encouragement from my wife, Kia Moua. I dedicate this dissertation to you for giving me the time and space to write late into the evening, leaving you to take care of our children and the family. You have always pushed me to do more and lead by example. Lastly, to my children Tabcuab Emily Lor and Limxeeb Alexander Lor for your understanding when I miss bath time, nightly readings, and when I am unable to put you to bed. I hope this dissertation becomes a legacy for you and your children.

Ua Tsaug

Kuv xav ua tsaug rau kuv niam thiab kuv txiv. Vim neb txoj kev hlub, kuv thia sau tau cov ntawv no. Kuv nco ntsoov kuv niam sawv ntxov ntxov ua tshias thiab npaj hmo tos kuv. Kuv xav ua tsaug rau kuv poj niam Kiab. Vim nws siab xyuas cov menyuum, tu tsev, npaj mov, thiab npaj peej lub neej. Yog tsis muaj koj, diam ntawv yuav tsis tiav. Kuv xav fij daim ntawv no rau kuv cov me nyuam, Tabcuab thiab Limxeeb.

Acknowledgements

I want to recognize my dissertation chair, Dr. Kevin Gee, for his commitment to me and patience for my work. This dissertation could not have been possible without your guidance and support. At times when I felt overwhelmed and wanted to give up, your positive encouragement saw me through. I also want to thank the Hmong parents who participated in this study. Your personal stories help shed light on the subject of Hmong parental academic support and help to counter the deficit perception of Hmong parents.

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Abstract

This qualitative study looked into the parental academic support Hmong parents provided to their children and whether generational differences amongst Hmong parents influenced the support Hmong parents provided. Interviews were held online through Zoom with seven Hmong parents. The following research questions guided this study:

1. How do Hmong parents support their children academically?
2. Are there generational differences in Hmong parental support; if so, how do those differences affect the types of support that parents provide their students?

The research questions allowed Hmong parents to share the different ways in which they provided academic support at home and provided insight into the values and beliefs that guided academic support.

The conceptual framework for this study drew upon Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to understand the social interactions between parents and students and how those interactions influence academic performance. The framework also recognized larger cultural influences that guided parent behavior and how those cultural values may affect the way in which parents and students interact. A review of the literature showed a history of deficit perception towards Hmong parents, the continued portrayal of Hmong students as a model minority, and the range of academic struggles and achievements of Hmong students since their arrival in the United States. Additionally, the literature review explains the paradox Hmong parents and students occupy under the Asian umbrella.

Qualitative coding occurred in two cycles. Initial coding drew upon preset codes gleaned from the literature and first impressions of interview transcripts done in vivo. For the second cycle, codes were grouped into categories and distilled into themes. The most relevant themes from the seven interviews were parent-teacher role, narrative storytelling, and modeling.

The first finding was that Hmong parents assumed a parent-teacher like role when providing academic support to their students. In this capacity, Hmong parents implemented routines that consisted of structured schoolwork, dinner, and bedtime rituals. During schoolwork parents provided direct academic support through assessing, reviewing, and re-teaching content. The second finding was that Hmong parents used narrative storytelling to convey expectations. Hmong parents told personal stories from their lived experiences and borrowed stories from relatives as a means to instill the value of persistence and to motivate their students academically. The last finding was that Hmong parents model expected behaviors. Hmong parents attended school functions, and at home worked alongside their children. Hmong parents also modeled their expectations through their life choices. Hmong parents' high expectations and the desire for their children to be good citizens are at the core of what drives Hmong parents to assume a parent-teacher role, use narrative storytelling, and model behavior.

The final chapter outlines implications of this research on policy, practice, and future studies. As schools continue to bridge the achievement gap, it will be coupled with calls to promote parental engagement. The policy, practice, and future research inquiries can help guide schools to better understand parental academic support from the perspective of Hmong parents.

Chapter 1

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

Parental engagement matters because of the research connecting engagement to student academic achievement (Barnard, 2004; Jeynes, 2007). According to a synthesis of parent involvement and motivational literature by Gonzalez-DeHass et al. (2005), parents are involvement is correlated to student concentration, attention, inherent interest in learning, perceive higher competence, take responsibility for learning, seek challenging tasks, persist through academic challenges, and experience satisfaction in schoolwork. Parental involvement is positively associated with a student's interest in learning new skills and improving their understanding and competence (Gonzalez, 2002), and parental monitoring is linked to extrinsic and intrinsic motivation (Gonzalez-DeHass et al., 2005). Within the immigrant community, monitoring, educational advice, and help with schoolwork is positively related to academic engagement (Plunkett et al., 2009; Fan & Williams, 2010). Overall, parental involvement has a positive impact on academic outcomes across race (Jeynes, 2003), yet not all communities are recognized by educators as supportive or having the ability to support their children.

Hmong parents have been characterized as having limited English, high rates of illiteracy, and inadequate or no formal education (Downing et al., 1984; Siu, 1996). This outdated characterization has contributed to a deficit perception of Hmong parents' efficacy to support their children academically (Ima & Rumbaut, 1989; Vang, 2003). Evidence to validate this paradigm — the observation that Hmong parents appear to be academically disengaged — exists when Hmong parental support is framed in a Western model of parental involvement (e.g., attendance at school functions, response to school obligations, involvement in schoolwork, and school advocacy and governance) (Cotton & Wikeland, 1989).

Viewed from U.S.-based standards of parental engagement by educators, Hmong parents are disengaged; this perception does not take into account the barriers that limit Hmong parent engagement. Hmong parents without a translator are less likely to engage with teachers and the school compared to more fluent Hmong parents (Thao, 2000). When schools do not provide services in their primary language, interactions between Hmong parents and schools can become stifled (Moua, 2015). In addition, because parental involvement at school is not required and schools have not explicitly requested parental involvement, Hmong parents are less likely to prioritize school engagement (Lee & Green, 2009; Moua, 2015) or interpret a school newsletter as an invitation to participate in school activities (Moua, 2015). At home, Hmong parents' efficacy to assist with homework is based on their perception that their knowledge and skills are not congruent with the expectations of schools. Despite this, Hmong parents still work to support their children academically (Mao et al., 2012). Within this context, Hmong parents rely on a general "faith in the system," a belief that schools and educators will protect, educate, and ensure the success of their children, and in the process sacrifice advocacy for their children and themselves (Ngo & Wahlstrom, 2007).

Regardless of these barriers, Hmong parents have shown a willingness to become involved (Yang & Nybrotten, n. d.). Researchers suggest that culturally rich curricula, bicultural staff, resources, encouragement, and methods that consider culture (Adler, 2004; Lee, 2016) coupled with appropriate training (Her & Gloria, 2016) engenders parental support at school and in the home. Specifically, parent involvement workshops are shown to positively affect Hmong parents' (1) perception of school, (2) involvement in their child's education, (3) ability to help their child, and (4) their success in helping their child (Hernandez, 2011).

Even though Hernandez (2011) provides some knowledge on how to reach Hmong parents, the model that Hernandez evaluates is still steeped in a Western model of parental engagement and does not tap into other cultural models of engagement that could leverage the assets that Hmong parents bring with them. Thus, additional studies are needed that focus on non-dominant cultural models of parent engagement coupled with an asset-based framework.

For Hmong parents, involvement encompasses providing food, shelter, and transportation (Yang & Nybrotten, n. d.). In addition to basic needs, Hmong parents have high expectations (Lamborn & Moua, 2008; Lor, 2008) and employ an authoritarian style of parenting (high levels of monitoring and low support) (Supple et al., 2010; Peng & Solheim, 2015). Ancillary research suggests that Hmong parents utilize storytelling (Lee, 1997; Lor, 2008) and lived experiences (Lee, 1997) as forms of encouragement in preparation for the “good life” (Lamborn & Moua, 2008). When researchers frame parental support to include a culturally relevant model of parental engagement and an asset-based perspective, studies can produce a more nuanced narrative regarding Hmong parents; and thus, can work to counter the perception that Hmong parents are disengaged (Ima & Rumbaut, 1989; Vang, 2003) and lack the necessary skillsets to support their children (Downing et al., 1984; Siu, 1996).

Understanding how Hmong parents engage is critical because Hmong students have struggled academically since their arrival in the early 1980s. Early studies, centered on deficits of Hmong community, show high rates of gang involvement for Hmong males (Xiong & Huang, 2011) and school age marriage for Hmong females (Wisconsin Policy Research, 1997) leading to a disproportionate high school dropout rate of Hmong students (Reder, 1982; Downey et al., 1984; Goldstein, 1985). On standardized assessments, Hmong students score significantly behind their peers on the California Standards Test (CST) (California Department of Education, 2015)

and on the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) in English Language Arts and math. Other studies have shown that Hmong students have made gains in degree completion (Xiong, 2012), but those numbers still lag behind other ethnic groups.

My proposed study explicitly addresses the gap in understanding Hmong parental academic support. Additionally, the study can expand our perception of Hmong parents and how they support their children from a U.S.-based perception (e.g., attendance at school functions, response to school obligations, involvement in schoolwork, and school advocacy and governance) (Cotton & Wikelund, 1989), and culturally relevant forms of parental engagement (narrative storytelling, role models, and the good life). Specifically, I proposed a qualitative study of first generation, generation 1.5, and second generation Hmong parents that have school-aged children. A qualitative study of parents can provide rich information on how Hmong parents support their children academically in a Western or culturally relevant model, and whether this support differs by parents' generational status. A qualitative analysis of the data was used to determine themes that helped to provide a better understanding of Hmong parental academic support. Additionally, findings will add to the body of literature, can contribute to a better understanding of how Hmong parents support their children, and can be utilized by educators to form new methods of engaging Hmong parents.

Research Questions

Through a qualitative study, my research addressed the following questions:

1. How do Hmong parents support their children academically?
2. Are there generational differences in Hmong parental support; if so, how do those differences affect the types of support that parents provide their students?

The remainder of the DISSERTATION examines relevant literature, explains the theoretical framework, describes the research design, reviews implications, and presents a synthesis of learning.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

In the literature review, I begin with an introduction to the past and current state of Hmong student academic achievement with an emphasis on California and the model minority myth. I will then review tenets of Hmong parental academic support and how culture shapes Hmong parents' perception of academic support.

Hmong Academic Achievement

A review of the literature depicts a bifurcated image of Hmong students. Predominantly, Hmong students are often seen as “at-risk,” exhibiting delinquent behaviors and underperforming in academics compared to their peers. Yet, since Hmong students are identified as Asians, they are also viewed as a “model minority,” a perception that Asian Americans are naturally gifted in math, science, and technology (The University of Texas at Austin, 2015; Lee, Wong & Alvarez, 2009), and despite lower socio-economic status and different cultures and languages, excel in academics beyond their White peers through hard work.

The lack of Hmong academic achievement is prevalent in the literature. Lim (2014) indicated that 40% of Hmong students dropped out of high school and do not fit the model of Asians who work hard, do not complain, and live with above average success. Lee (2001, 2005, 2007b) found that Hmong students in the Wisconsin area felt alienated from school and had low academic aspirations. According to Maganini (2000) “less than 10 percent of Hmong students in the Sacramento City Unified School District [were] reading at grade level.”

For Hmong male students, the “at-risk” label is often associated with gang affiliation. A search of news articles related to “Hmong gangs” and “Hmong crimes” in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota resulted in 20 articles, and of the “2,590 Southeast Asian gang members” it was

estimated that Hmong young adults made up 72% of the total Southeast Asian gang member population with 8% of the Hmong gang members being female (Xiong & Huang, 2011, p. 2). Hmong gangs have the fastest growing membership in the Sacramento River Valley and accounted for six shootings within four months. It is estimated that there are a dozen Hmong gangs with at least 270 members in the Sacramento River Valley (Maganini, 2000). Thao (1999) suggested Americanized Hmong youth are more susceptible to gangs, and according to Sullivan (2006) peer pressure contributes to delinquent behavior. Delinquent behavior is associated with antisocial attitudes, lack of academic achievement, and a lack of mother's monitoring (Xiong & Huang, 2011). Despite limited research, the media continues to alarm the public on growing "Asian gangs" (Haines, 1996).

A prominent indicator for Hmong female students being labeled "at-risk" is the high rate of school age marriage (Wisconsin Policy Research, 1997). Hmong girls who marry early and rear children experience high dropout rates, and among 60 female students at a local high school in the Sacramento, California region more than 20% were married (Goldstein, 1985). Similarly, Ranard (1989) attributes the academic shortcomings of Hmong female students to school age marriage. Reder (1982) noted that the 95% dropout rate of Hmong female students was primarily due to school age marriage, compared to 60% of total Hmong students. Downey et al., (1984) estimated the dropout rate of Hmong female students in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area at 90%.

California Context

Table 1 presents the California Standards Test (CST) scores for the 2011-2012 academic year in English for Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD). This table reveals that Hmong students had scores comparable to Blacks and Hispanics for 7th and 10th grade

(California Department of Education (CDE), 2015c). Hmong students scored 40 to 50 points lower than White students.

Table 1 CST English scores, 2011-12 by ethnicity

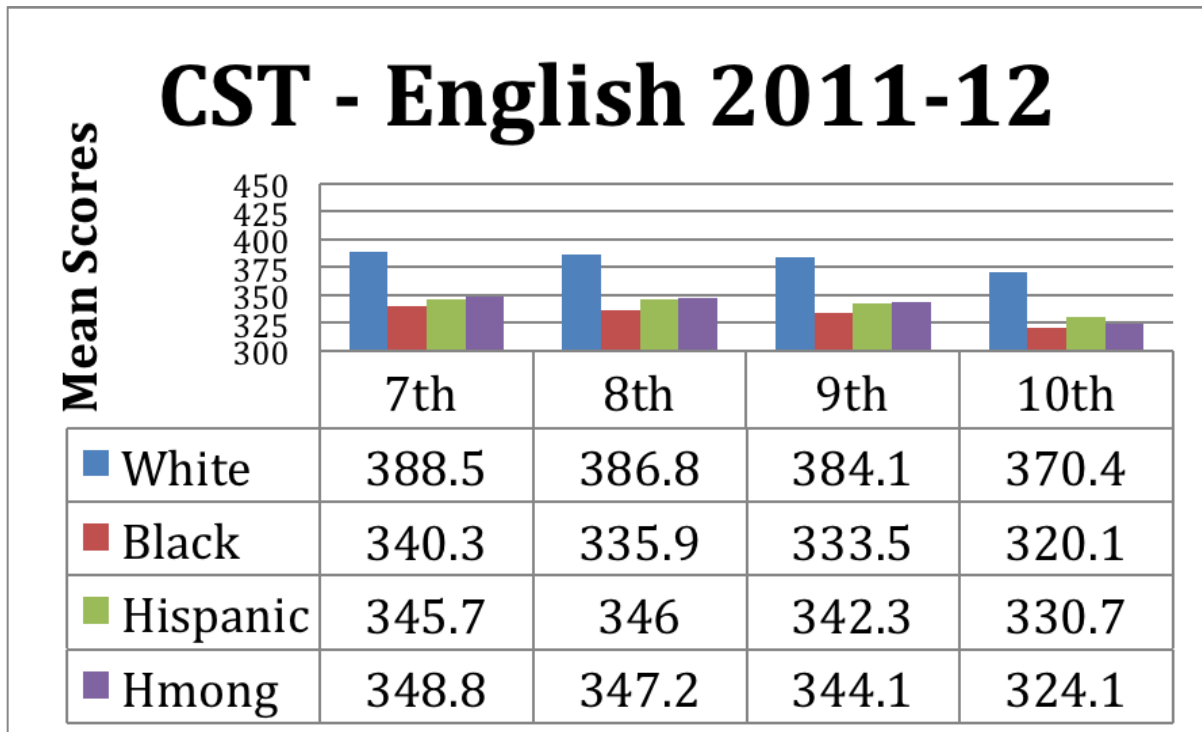
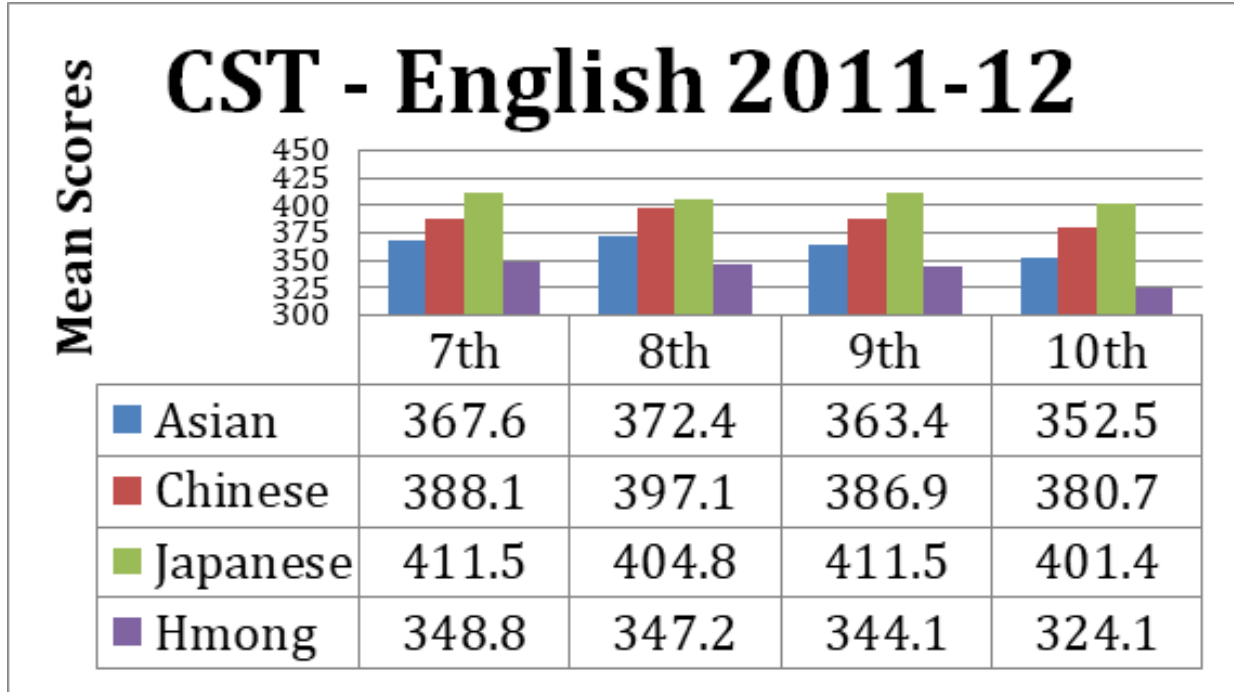


Table 2 present the 2011-2012 CST scores by Asian subgroups. When disaggregated by Asian subgroups, Hmong students’ median scores were 20 points below Asians, 40 to 50 points below Chinese students, and 60 to 70 points below Japanese students (CDE, 2015).

Table 2 CST English scores, 2011-12 by Asian subgroup



A composite report, capturing student data disaggregated by specific Asian subgroups for the 2014-2016 academic year from SCUSD, reveals a conflicted and incomplete view of Hmong student academic achievement. On the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) in English Language Arts (ELA) exceeded and met standards data set, Hmong students ranked last (25%) in 2014-15, last (32%) in 2015-16, and second to last (33%) in 2016-17 compared to all other specific Asians (Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Other Asian, Asian Indian, Cambodian, and Laotian). Additionally, Hmong students were below the Asian aggregate (42%, 47%, and 48%) and district average (35%, 39%, and 39%) in all three years. Table 3 contains the SCUSD SBAC ELA scores by specific Asian groups.

Table 3. SCUSD Cohort SBAC ELA Percent Exceeded/Met Standard Rate by Specific

Asian

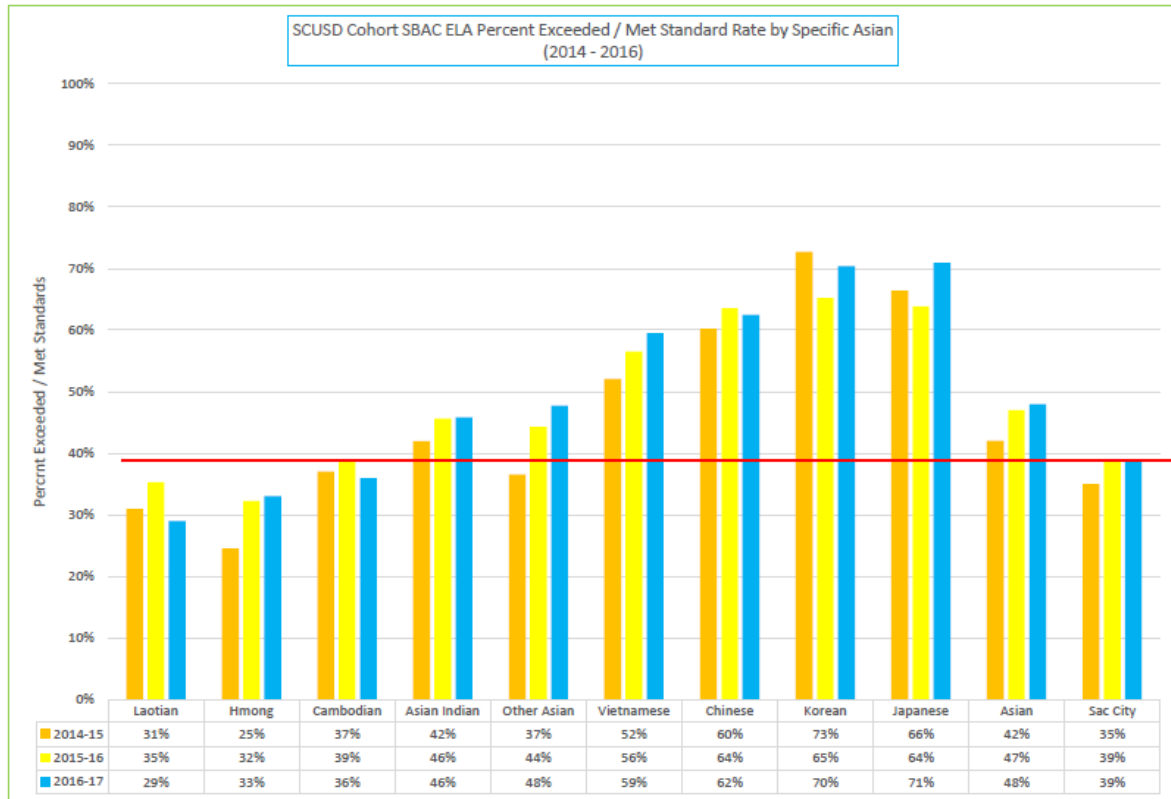
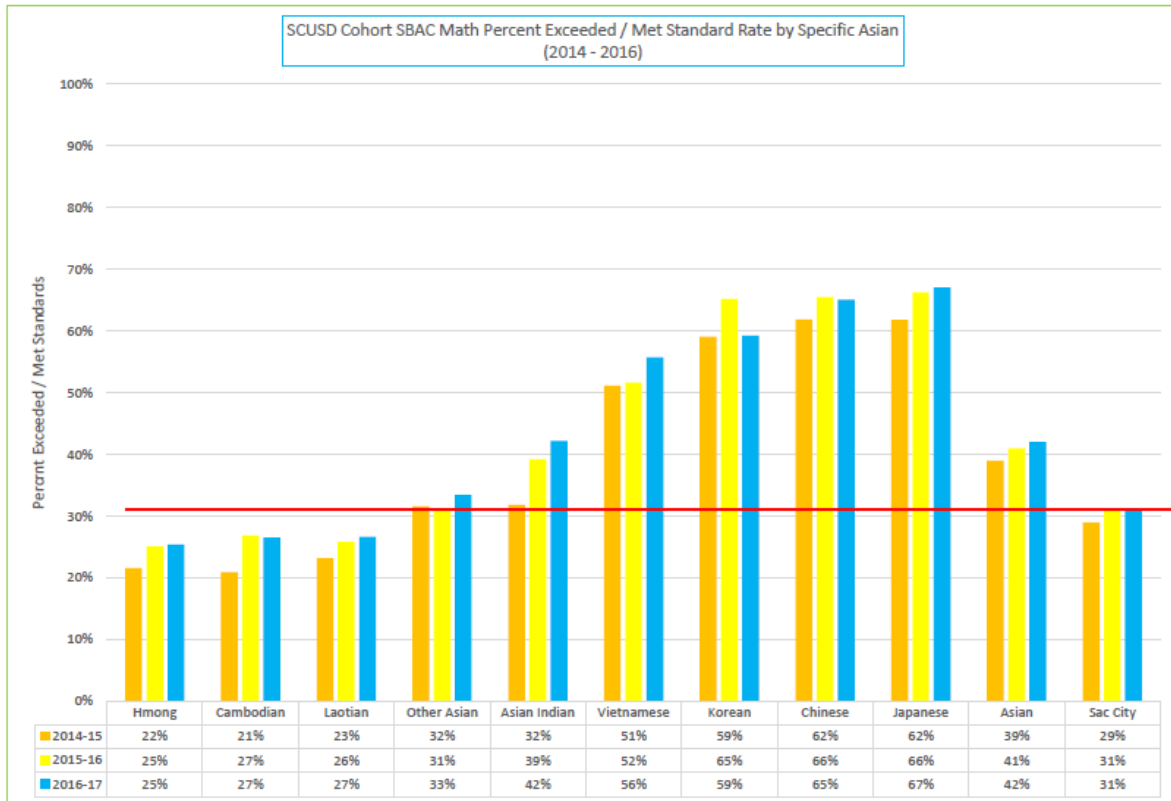


Table 4 is the SCUSD SBAC math exceeded and met standards data set by specific Asian groups. Hmong students ranked second to last (22%) in 2014-15, last (27%) in 2015-16, and last (27%) in 2016-17 compared to all other specific Asians, and were below the Asian aggregate (39%, 41%, and 42%) and district average (29%, 31%, 31%) in all three years.

Table 4. SCUSD Cohort SBAC Math Percent Exceeded/Met Standard Rate by Specific Asian



Despite low numbers of Hmong students exceeding or meeting standards, the Hmong graduation rate was second to last (84%) in 2014-15 and was 4th highest (out of nine) in 2015-16 — higher than the district average (80% and 81%), and California average (82% and 83%).

Table 5 presents the SCUSD cohort graduate rates for 2014-15 and 2015-16 by Asian subgroups.

Table 6 contains the numerical values from the table 5.

Table 5. SCUSD Cohort Graduation Rates (2014-15 & 2015-16) by Asian Subgroups

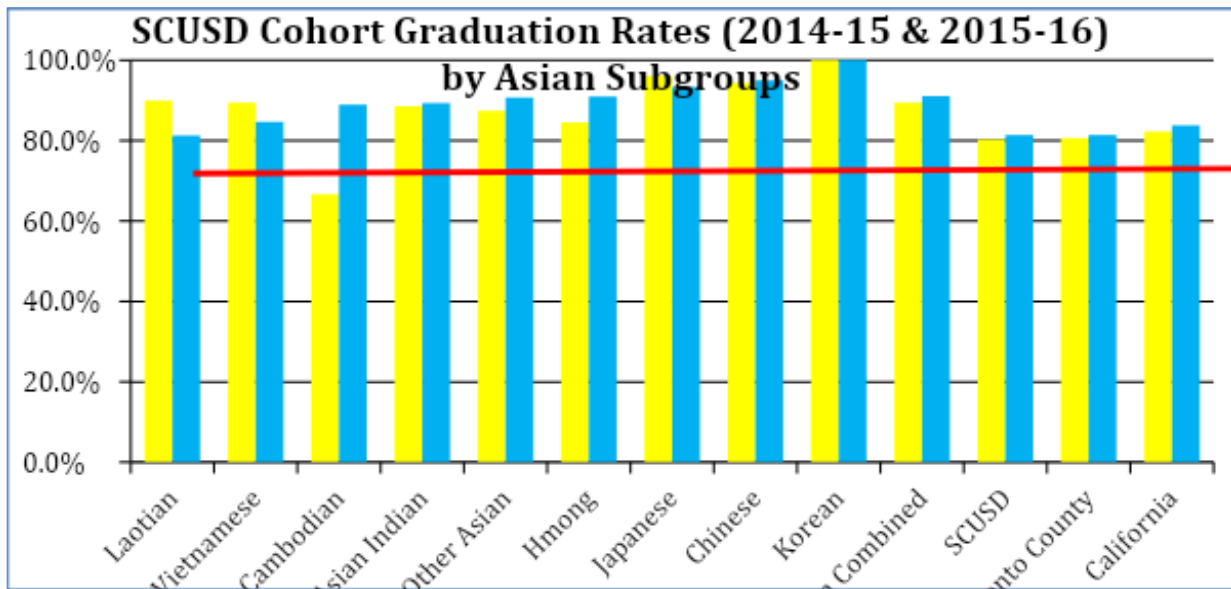


Table 6. SCUSD Cohort Graduation Rates (2014-15 & 2015-16) by Asian Subgroups

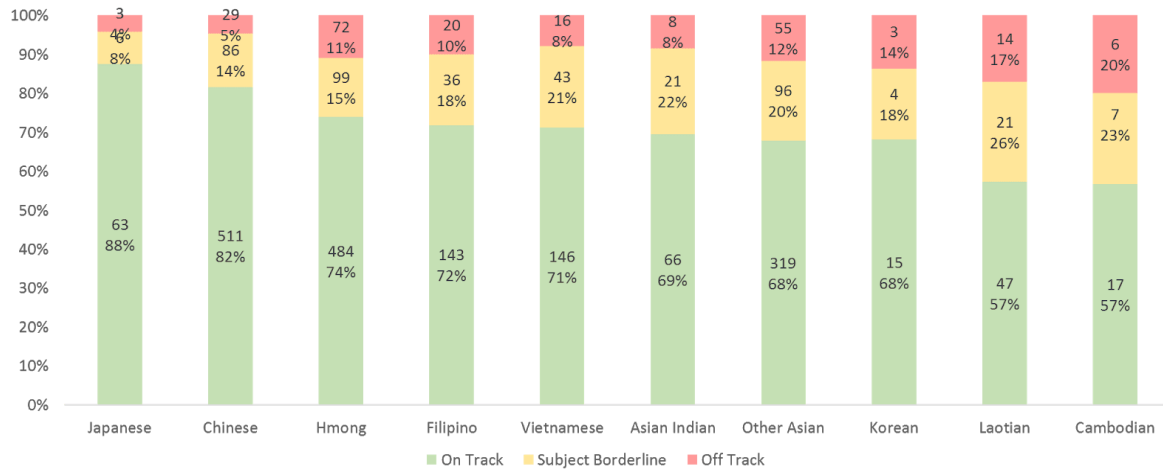
	Cohort Graduates	
	2014-15	2015-2016
Laotian	89	26
Vietnamese	34	50
Cambodian	*	*
Asian Indian	31	25
Other Asian	97	88
Hmong	109	142
	12	

Japanese	25	28
Chinese	182	171
Korean	*	*
Asian Combined	578	542
SCUSD	2,2741	2,2295
Sacramento County	14,698	14,952
California	401,957	4,072,018

Similarly, Hmong students, the second largest concentration of Asians in SCUSD, ranked 3rd in terms of A-G status behind Japanese and Chinese (the largest Asian subgroups). In the 2017-18 academic school year, Hmong students had 74% of students on track to meet A-G, 15% were subject borderline, and 10% were off track. Table 7 contains A-G status of SCUSD students by Asian subgroups.

Table 7. A-G Status of SCUSD High School Students by Specific Asian Race

A-G Status of SCUSD High School Students by Specific Asian Race
 Schools With Traditional Semesters and Scheduling Procedures
 (03.12.18)



Thus, while Hmong students are graduating high school and are averaging Cs or better in all A-G courses, they still fall short in statewide standards assessments in English and math, and potentially signal that Hmong students are not college ready.

Still Not A “Model Minority”

In spite of evidence corroborating the struggles of Hmong students (Reder, 1982; Downey et. al, 1984; Goldstein, 1985; CDE, 2015; Fox et al., 2004; Lee & Chang, 2012), Hmong students are still lumped into the Asian “model minority myth.” Generation 1.5 Hmong students born in Southeast Asia and educated in America were seen as the “model minority” while the second generation, Hmong students born, raised, and educated in America, were seen as “delinquents” (Lee, 2001). Hmong generation 1.5 were seen as the “good” students because they maintained their culture and traditions while still engaged academically, in contrast to second generation students who were seen as the “bad” kids (Lee, 2001). In addition to perceptions of “model” school behavior, signs of Hmong academic achievement can be drawn from 1990-2000 U.S. census data, which reveal significant improvements in English language

ability, increased college enrollment, and college completion (Xiong, (2012). When teachers perceive Asians as having more intellectual ability and emotional stability — a “model student” — teachers are more likely to have higher academic expectations (Wong, 1980).

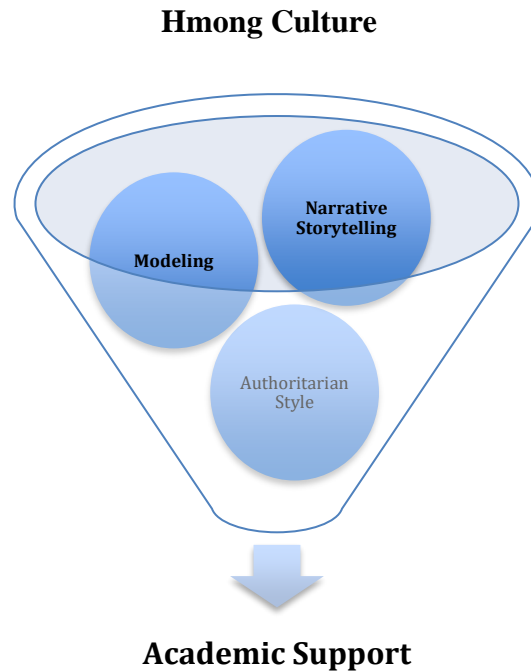
Asian success is attributed to parental support and cultural background (Barrozo, 1987; Peng & Wright, 1994), but this overlooks the critical role schools and society impacts Asian students. When students are unable to meet teacher expectations of the “model minority” teachers blame students and their families, attributing learning gaps to student behavior and family expectations, and steers the conversation away from learning barriers (Li, 2005). This dissonance between teacher and parent expectations can result in difficulties for minority students despite Asian family efforts to be involved at home (Li, 2003; 2005).

Tenets of Hmong Parental Academic Supports

The following section will discuss three ways in which Hmong parents (through narrative storytelling, modeling, and authoritarian parenting style) provide academic support for their children. Underpinning these three tenets is the Hmong culture. Culture is important because the perception that Hmong parents are disengaged can also be construed as a difference in culture, resources, and language (Boutte & Johnson, 2014). Often what is effective as a means of supporting students comes from the perspective of schools that reflect dominant culture (Bower & Griffin, 2011). Here, I will present the perspectives of academic support for the Hmong community.

Figure 1 below helps to conceptualize Hmong parental academic support.

Figure 1. Hmong Culture to Academic Support



A tenet of Hmong parental support is the use of storytelling as a form of academic support (Lor, 2008; Lee, 1997). Narratives can encourage academic persistence through positive examples and testimonies about siblings and relatives who have matriculated and graduated from universities (Lee, 1997). Sharing parental lived experiences of poverty, war, and lack of access to education in Laos obligate students to “mloog lus”, or listen, which parents leverage as a form of indirect academic support (Lor, 2008). Similarly, stories on failure are used to discipline, instill fear, and correct behavior when children show signs of falling short or fall short of parental expectations academically and non-academically.

Another tenet of Hmong parental support is modeling behavior as an indirect form of academic support. Hmong parents model desired values for their children, such as being industrious and placing the needs of the collective family unit over individual desires (Lamborn & Moua, 2008). Parents work hard and sacrifice time and resources for children and in return

children are expected to “rau siab” or work hard at school and model the same behavior for their siblings (Lamborn et al., 2013). Additionally, parents teach children to perceive education as an opportunity (Supple et al., 2010) and instill into Hmong children a belief that higher education is a means to “lub neej zoo” or a better life (Xiong et al., 2004). Through modeling, Hmong parents reinforce their high expectations and the responsibilities of children to advance families economically and socially through higher education (Her & Gloria, 2016).

Hmong parental supports have also come to include U.S.-based means of academic support (e.g. school governance). Research documents the efforts of Hmong parents to participate in Parent-Teacher Organizations or Parent-Teacher Associations (PTO/PTA) and School Site Councils (SSC) with varying levels of involvement (Adler, 2004; Moua, 2015; Lee, 2016). When schools had Hmong staff to limit cultural and language barriers, Hmong parents felt welcomed and supported, increasing the likelihood of Hmong parents engaging with the school (Lee, 2016). Additionally, when schools offered culturally relevant curricula that acknowledge Hmong people, Hmong parents felt empowered and were more likely to be involved in PTO/SSC (Lee, 2016). Consequently, the lack of Hmong staff, teachers or administrators present at PTO/SSC discouraged Hmong parental participation in school governance (Moua, 2015), and when cultural norms were not considered, Hmong parents felt out of place at PTOs resulting in decreased participation (Adler, 2004).

While what constitutes Hmong parental academic support has expanded for Hmong parents, engaging in homework assistance and tutoring is limited for first-generation Hmong parents (i.e. persons already parents in Laos who then immigrated to the United States). According to Mao et al. (2012), Hmong parents felt they were unable to provide academic homework support because of their limited English. Similarly, Lee (2001) mentioned that

Hmong parents lacked the educational background and language skills to support homework and participate in school activities. Overall, less educated Hmong parents were less likely to engage with schools, talk to teachers, and visit school sites (Thao, D. 2000).

The body of research on Hmong parental support underlines three key points. First, the forms of parental support utilized by Hmong parents exist within Americanized and culturally relevant definitions of parental engagement. That is, Hmong parents use culturally relevant means of parenting strategies such as storytelling and modeling to support their children academically but have adopted Americanized means of support such as participating in school governance, homework assistance, and tutoring. Secondly, the research is limited to first-generation Hmong parents and has not taken into account generational differences between Hmong parents, especially Hmong parents educated in America. Thus, it is not clear whether Hmong parents educated in America, when compared to first generation Hmong parents, provide more or less academic support at home through tutoring or homework assistance. Lastly, the research highlights the critical role culture plays in Hmong parental supports, whether parents are first or second generation.

Centrality of Culture in Parental Support and Engagement

For Hmong parental engagement, the research suggests that Hmong parents gravitate toward an Americanized form of parental support while also employing culturally relevant means to assist their children. To better understand how Hmong parental engagement is shaped by narrative storytelling, modeling, and authoritarian parental style, researchers must frame Hmong parental engagement within the context of the culture of the Hmong people.

Present within all major facets of Hmong daily life is the influence of oral language. Occurring three days after the birth of a newborn, families hold a soul calling ceremony or “hu

plig” to call the soul of the child to the body and to give the child a name. When the child's spirit is called, the caller thanks Niam Nkauj Kab Yeeb (a fairy godmother) and recounts the child's journey from the spirit world (ethonomed). The union of two families through a wedding is centered on the ritual songs and flowery speech of the “mej koob” or family representatives (Txhawb, 2008). Prior to the wedding ceremony and celebration, representatives from the groom deliver the intent to marry and make arrangements with the bride's representatives. This process called “fiv xov” is communicated through flowery speech or songs. The songs and speeches continue on into the day of negotiation, the celebration on the day of the wedding at the bride's home, and the ceremony on returning to her in-laws. Funeral rites are also strictly governed by oral customs and traditions. Most notably is the soul guider or “tawkev” who sings a song that guides the deceased into the afterlife (Lee & Tapp, 2010). The song or death chant not only contains instructions to the ancestral world for the deceased but also explains the creation of the world (Falk, 1996).

The prevalence of narratives is linked to how Hmong people transfer knowledge (e.g. traditions and history) from generation to generation (Hamilton-Merritt, 1993). Folktales function to entertain and educate while illuminating Hmong history, values, and beliefs — for example, The Promise or Lus Cog Tseg, a story of love and horror, teaches children to listen to their parents (D.C. Everest Area School District Hmong Site, 2016). At the same time, the folktales recount portions of Madman's War – a Hmong revolt on French taxation, reaffirms collectivist culture, and exemplifies Hmong connectedness to the spirit world. Besides folktales, “kwv txhiaj”, or poetic songs, tell narratives and traditions. These songs can also be sung with or without the use of musical instruments as a form of entertainment, for courtship at New Year's celebrations, or to fulfill cultural rites. Instruments may include a simple leaf, the qeej (an

instrument made of eight bamboo reeds), the *ncas* (a mouth harp), or the two-string violin (Hmong Cultural and Resource Center Staff, 2004-06). Recognizing the abundance of narratives in Hmong culture can help to explain Hmong parents' inclination towards stories as a support tool.

While stories are used to pass down knowledge, parents also explicitly teach their children skills and then lessons are reinforced through modeling. Fathers teach sons and mothers teach daughters the ways of Hmong life and as children grow, the complexity of the task increases. Once children have learned, they are expected to pass their knowledge to their younger siblings. Thus, parents model to children and children model to siblings. It should be noted that children are present at name calling ceremonies, weddings, and, once they become young adults, funerals, and have repeated exposures to songs, ceremonies, and customs that allow children to learn. Understanding how knowledge transfers within the Hmong community, can help explain why Hmong parents choose to model for their children.

Culturally, shame and respect play a pivotal role in governing behavior within the collective Hmong community. Losing face or “*poob nstej muag*” and disrespect or “*tsis hwm*” (more commonly “*saib tis tauj*”) pressures families and individuals to conform to social norms (e.g. gender roles, social habits, etc.). Families or individuals who do not abide by cultural norms are seen as ignorant, are feared, or are labeled as social outcasts. Coupled with shame and respect is the cultural concept of “*rau siab*” or diligence and its connection to “*lub neej zoo*” or the good life (Lamborn & Moua, 2008), and told through narratives. For example, if a daughter bears a child out of wedlock, this brings shame to the family. If a daughter listens and conforms to gender roles (diligently cooks, cleans, and is obedient), she is reassured her in-laws will favor her

and this will lead to a good life with her husband. Thus, Hmong parents tend to control and monitor their children's behavior.

The way that parents engage with and support their children is also influenced by Hmong parenting style. That style is typically one that is authoritarian (Lamborn & Moua, 2008; Moua, 2010; Supple & Small, 2006). Authoritarian parents hold exclusive power in the parent-child relationship, emphasize strict obedience (Spera, 2005), and are highly controlling and demanding (Keshavarz & Baharudin, 2013). Studies have shown that Hmong parents are authoritarian. According to Supple et al. (2010), Hmong college students describe their parents as highly controlling and restrictive. Authoritarian parents often closely monitor their students academically and this might be the case with Hmong parents. For example, in an interview by Lamborn et al. (2013), a Hmong female teenager describes that on school days she "can't go out." These parental strategies (controlling and restrictiveness) are designed by parents to promote academic success (Supple et al., 2010).

Recent Studies on Hmong Parental Academic Supports

Between 2017 and 2021, new research has emerged related to Hmong parental academic support. Vang (2019) indicated that Hmong parents still encounter barriers when engaging with schools related to communication and culture. Additionally, Hmong parents leverage cultural capital (aspirational, familial, linguistic, social, navigational, and resistant) to navigate the system as a form of parental academic support. Furthermore, Lee (2020) points to how Hmong parents hold high expectations and engage in storytelling as a form of motivation, with stories centered on values of persistence, perseverance, and learning from mistakes. Based on Xiong et al., (2019), Hmong female students, children who were easier to handle, and bilingual Hmong students reported higher levels of parental involvement.

For Hmong students in higher education, Vang (2017) revealed that parental support and motivation are related. While Hmong parents of children in higher education reported they had less knowledge about colleges, Hmong parents had knowledge about how their children were doing in school and reported providing emotional, cultural, and practical support to reinforce persistence.

Chapter 3

Conceptual Framework

In the theoretical framework section, I will outline two critical concepts that will guide this research. I will first discuss Epstein's model of parental involvement and offer critiques. Next, I will review Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1992) and explain how ecological systems theory can help to explain Hmong parental support. The last section will summarize my theoretical framework and restate the guiding questions.

Epstein's Model of Parental Involvement

Epstein et al. (1991) identifies six components of parental involvement: (1) parenting, (2) communicating, (3) volunteering, (4) learning at home, (5) decision-making, and (6) collaborating with the community. Through this framework, Epstein (1991) explains the importance of a nurturing educational setting and its connection to academic excellence. While Epstein is not alone in thinking about parental engagement, her work is widely used in parental involvement efforts at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Thus, this research will use Epstein's model of parental engagement to apply the conceptual model of how parents engage.

However, Epstein's model of parental engagement is limited. The conceptual model prescribes a school-centric, White middle-class cultural perception of parental involvement to Hmong families. Hmong parents are encouraged to redesign their home environment (parenting), communicate through conferences and newsletters (communicating), volunteer within classrooms (volunteering), provide homework assistance (learning at home), and join PTA/PTO

(decision-making). The underlying principles of the framework recognize differences between the culture, resources, and language of the school to Hmong parents, how they contribute to a parental engagement, and then problematize Hmong parental support (Bouttte & Johnson, 2014). Instead of accounting for ways in which non-dominant cultures (e.g. Hmong families) may be engaging (Bower & Griffin, 2011), it reinforces a deficit perception of Hmong parents.

Thus, Epstein's Model of parental involvement is unable to fully capture how minority parents engage with their children academically and further studies are needed (Bower & Griffin, 2011) to better understand the complexity of parental involvement (Bouttte & Johnson, 2014). Educators must consider cultural differences that affect parental engagement and may need to redefine parental involvement from a purely academic support role towards a method that fosters relationships among families, increases parental involvement efficacy, and empowers parents for advocacy (Bower & Griffin, 2011).

Funds of Knowledge

The concept of Funds of Knowledge is founded on the premise that people are competent and through their lived experiences have gained knowledge (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2006). Communities, through social relationships and community development, exchange resources, and draw upon the accumulation of historical and cultural body of knowledge to function as they interact in social and economic settings (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992). In academic settings, funds of knowledge can be understood as a parent or student's academic and personal background, their lived experiences, the skills in which they navigate social systems such as schools, and their point of view shaped by culture and history.

I originally considered funds of knowledge as a framework to understand Hmong parental academic support. My thoughts were that the academic support Hmong parents provided were shaped by their experiences in public education, the ways their parents parented, and their culture. This framework is reinserted here because participants often discussed how their positions as educators, their parents, and their faith influence the ways in which they provided academic support.

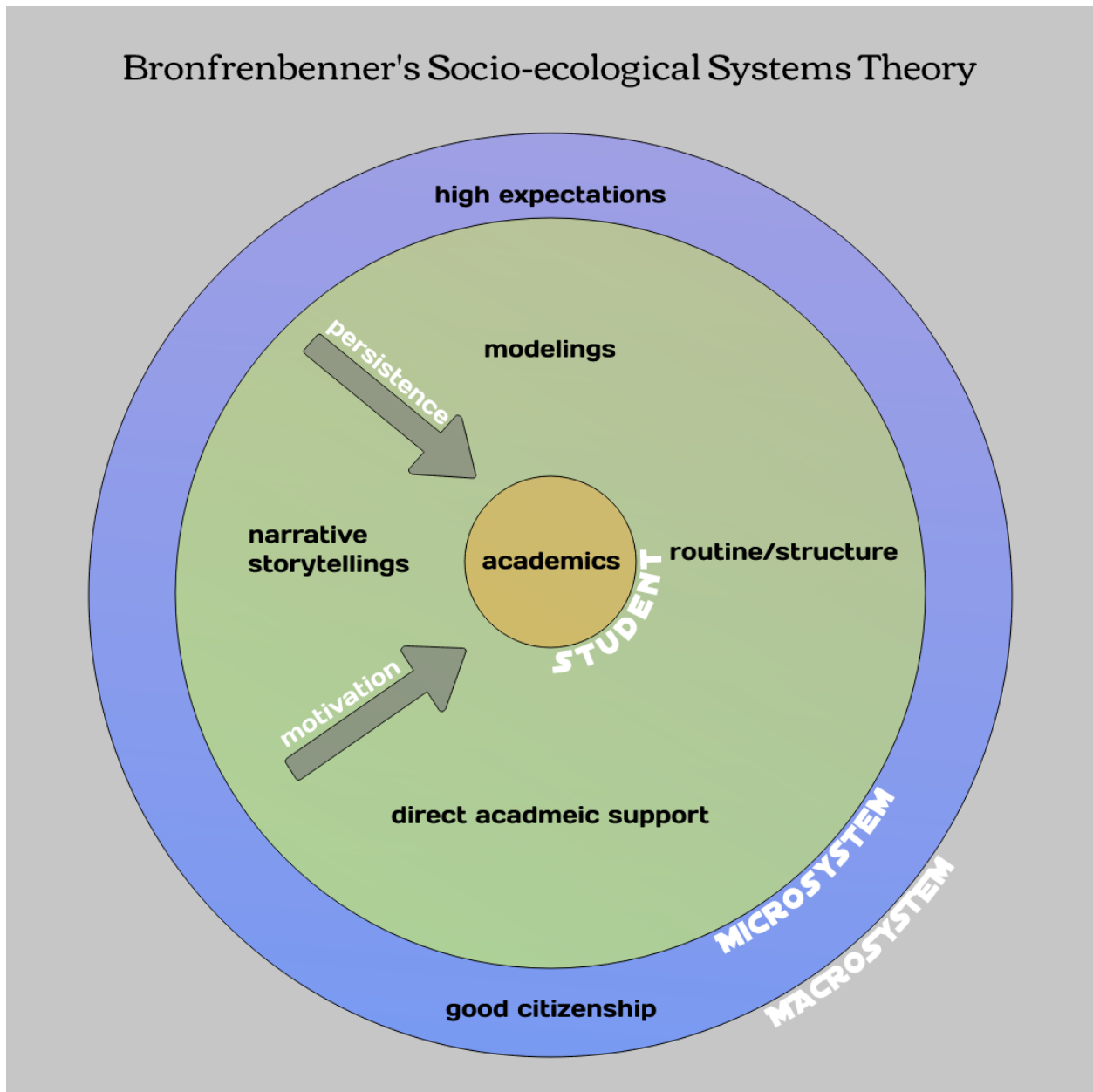
Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1992) posits that multiple systems (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem) affect the development of children, and that these vibrant and complex environments are largely defined by social and cultural practices. Bronfenbrenner suggests that the ongoing and frequent interactions that occur with people, social settings, and cultural symbols (values) provide the "engine that drives" developmental changes in children.

The microsystem level would be the relationship a child has with their parents, siblings, and immediate family. The surrounding second layer, the mesosystem, encompasses the interactions between the microsystems. For example, this could be the relationship between the family and the school. The interactions between home and school have a direct influence on the development of the child. The third layer, the exosystem, may not influence the child directly but encompasses parental employment settings, family networks, the media, or community resources. The macrosystem covers broader cultural values, laws, and governmental resources. Lastly, the chronosystem looks at how changes in a child's life over time, such as birth, death, or war, can affect their development.

In order for me to understand Hmong parental support, I will use Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and examine the interactions between Hmong parents and Hmong students, their relationship between school and families, and the impacts of culture related to academic support. The study does not look at children's experiences directly but hears from Hmong parents about the home environment or microsystems they attempt to create for their children and do so by drawing upon other systems. Figure 2 represents a Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory.

Figure 2. Ecological Systems Theory¹



¹ This figure represents an adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory that highlights key systems that were extracted from the study. Among parents discussed the different ways in which they interacted with their students (microsystem) and through their retellings, revealed the larger cultural (macrosystem) values that influence their decision making.

Summary

Early Hmong students who had immigrated to the United States struggled academically, and Hmong students still struggle today. With the increasing awareness of how parental engagement can impact student learning, it is critical that schools do more to support Hmong students by engaging Hmong parents, understanding how they engage, mirroring those methods, and reaching out to the larger Hmong community to support Hmong parents. Thus, this research works to address the gap in literature on Hmong parental engagement in supporting schools as they make efforts to engage Hmong parents.

Accordingly, my two research questions are:

1. How do Hmong parents support their children academically?
2. Are there generational differences in Hmong parental support; if so, how do those differences affect the types of support that parents provide their children?

Chapter 4

Methods

My qualitative study attempted to understand how Hmong parents support their children academically, and whether Hmong parental support differs by generation. Since the research questions were designed to develop a deeper understanding of Hmong parents and Hmong parental support from the experiences of Hmong parents, a qualitative study was the most appropriate design method (Creswell et al., 2007). The study leveraged the lived experiences of Hmong parents to understand how they support their children. Interviews were pre-structured to allow future researchers to compare data and answer questions that deal with differences (Maxwell, 2009).

The following sub-sections contain information regarding my data analysis. First, I explain my rationale for the selection of my sample site. Second, I detail how I collected and analyzed data. Finally, I share limitations and the implications of the study.

Positionality Statement

For the study, I identify as a 36-year-old first generation Hmong man, born in Laos and educated in America, who is working towards a doctorate in educational leadership. I recognize that my experiences as a Hmong male English Learner (EL) bears similarities to the target population: low socioeconomic background, culturally relevant forms of parental education, social-cultural obligations, encounters of racial and language bias, and acculturation. Yet, outside of a shared historical and cultural experience in Laos, the Hmong community lacks the homogeneity often attributed to the Hmong people by outsiders. The experiences of the Hmong

people of Laos, France, Australia, America, and other countries have been vastly different since the Secret War in Laos. Within America, exposure to western society and ideologies has worked to redefine what it means to be Hmong-American. Hmong-Christians, a community of Hmong people who have adopted “kev cai tshiab²” or new tradition, exemplifies the Hmong people’s evolving identity. Thus, the study leans on this understanding as it looks into the unique experiences of Hmong-American parents and their students.

Additionally, I am an educator in the public school system. I have worked with ELs in English Language Development (ELD) programs as well as Specially Designed Academic Instructions in English (SDAIE) courses for over a decade. I hold the view that ELs are endowed with assets and are as capable as their peers. However, not all educators hold this view or recognize the unique biases and challenges ELs encounter. These biases and challenges include but are not limited to racism, language, culture, social obligations, and trauma from experiences of violence at home or in their home country. Lastly, I am a parent of two Hmong children who will enter the public school system and am aware of the stigma associated with being labeled EL, Hmong, and attending a low-income low-performing urban school similar to the setting in which I plan to conduct my study.

Site and Sample

Mountain View Elementary (MVE) is a Hmong dual immersion school located in California. MVE offers a mainstream track and a single strand Hmong dual immersion program from kindergarten to 6th grade. Instructions are delivered at 90% Hmong and 10% English in kindergarten, and gradually reduce to 50/50 by the fourth grade. According to their 2017-18 School Accountability Report Card, Asians make up a majority of the student body with more

² Literally translated as “new tradition,” the phrase connotes the adoption of Christianity versus maintenance of Shamanism, and with it new social norms that blend both Christian and traditional Hmong beliefs.

than half of the students grouped as ELs, and with close to 90% of students as socioeconomically disadvantaged. MVE's Single Plan for Student Achievement stated that the school is funded by Title 1 Part A: Allocation, Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Limited English Proficient, and LCFF Free and Reduced lunch. Unique to MVE is the large number of Hmong educators at the school and in the surrounding Hmong community. Originally, I planned to only interview Hmong parents from MVE, but through my informant, I expanded the scope to include any Hmong parent of school age children.

The concentration of Hmong students and the existence of the Hmong dual immersion program increased the possibility of acquiring Hmong parents to participate in the study. Also, generational differences existed for Hmong parents with children in the dual immersion program. Some were first generation parents (born and raised in Laos) and others were generation 1.5 parents (born in Laos but educated in America). In addition, the level of parental academic support was significantly higher in elementary school compared to high school (Zill & Nord, 1994). Therefore, MVE was well suited for studying how Hmong parents support their children and whether parental support varies by generation.

Prior to conducting interviews, I sought approval from the University of California, Davis Institutional Review Board. Once approved, I worked with an informant to gather Hmong parents who were willing to participate in my study. Through my informant I was able to secure seven Hmong parents who were willing to be a part of my study and were able to conduct interviews through Zoom because of COVID. Originally I planned to only interview Hmong parents from MVE, but decided to expand my scope to include any Hmong parent with school age children.

Data Collection and Analysis

To answer my research questions, I utilized snowball sampling to acquire Hmong parents for the study. Snowball or chain referral is a method in which participants are acquired by personal referral (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). This method was well suited for my research because of the Hmong people's minority status in California and the personalized nature of parental practices. Thus, through the referral of one parent, I interviewed seven parents in total. Three were parents of MVE students and four had school age children.

Interviews took place over Zoom because of COVID. I connected with parents through text, arranged a date and time, and provided the Zoom link. All parents were proficient with Zoom either through their work or personal use. There were occasional connectivity issues such as dropped calls or delays. In those instances, I texted parents, and attempted to reconnect or repeated myself slowly and typed my questions into the chat.

The study required participants to answer questions related to how they support their child academically. Protocols generated questions that centered on parental style, narrative storytelling, and modeling. Prior to the interview I shared with the participants the purpose of my study, asked for their consent to participate, and asked for their consent to record the interview. One participant requested the questions before the interview, and they received the questions through email. Each interview averaged 45 minutes, and questions were semi-structured to allow parents to expand on topics that arose during the interview. The process occurred over the span of two weeks. Because we connected through Zoom, I was able to record all sessions through the program including the chat. The recordings were then transcribed using an online application called Sonix. The transcription did not accurately capture the exact conversation

between myself and the participant. I had to listen through all the recordings and make necessary changes. All interviews remained confidential and were stored on a secure device with password protection.

Coding of the interview transcript occurred in multiple cycles. Initial coding provided “first impressions” and allowed me to draw out themes that were coded in the right column as descriptive, in vivo, or value coding (Strauss, 1987). Based upon the literature review and conceptual framing, pre-set codes included concepts around parental style, modeling, shaming, and narratives. After the second cycle, the codes were grouped by appropriate categories or families based on patterns. Because of the interpretive nature of coding, recoding was necessary to review and reorganize the data. Finally, themes or concepts were extracted from these categories. A sample of the coding matrix is provided in the appendix.³

Limitations

There were several limitations. First, Hmong parents from the study may not necessarily reflect the larger Hmong community. Hmong parent participants made a conscious decision to enroll their children in the dual-immersion program. The six year commitment for the program could be influenced by parental values of speaking the Hmong language, knowledge, and resources related to dual-immersion programs, socio-economics, or access to the school site. Second, snowballing methodology compounds the previously mentioned limitations. Data by reference may not capture a wider range of Hmong parental experiences or might produce biased samples. Third, Hmong parental support at the elementary level may not reflect how Hmong

³ The coding matrix provided is a representation of the overall coding conducted for the study. It represents one interview and the thought process I went through to pull themes from the transcript. The farthest left column are significant quotes with page numbers mirroring a printed hard copy. Quotes are sorted into codes, codes into categories, and categories into themes. All seven matrices are compared to each other to form the final themes that appear in the findings.

parents could engage in middle school, high school, or at the college level. Finally, my position as a Hmong community member may skew Hmong parental responses. Hmong parents may be more forthcoming about their experiences with me compared to other researchers because Hmong parents view me as an insider. Additionally, as an insider I may feel more empowered to probe deeper into participant responses or participants may give me more leeway because of my status.

Implications for Policy and Practice

The purpose of this study was to investigate how Hmong parents support their children academically and whether generational differences among Hmong parents affect parental support. Information extracted from this study may add to the body of literature surrounding Hmong parental engagement. First, findings may encourage schools to act in countering the narrative that Hmong parents are disengaged and are limited in their ability to support Hmong students academically. Second, findings may propel schools to seek alternative methods of parental engagement that is more reflective of Hmong values and practices. For example, school outreach to parents may include modeling as an effective and culturally sensitive means of support, such as the use of personal narratives or modeling behavior. Finally, findings may engender further research into Hmong parental support. Future studies may look into variances in Hmong parental support by the gender or age group of Hmong students (e.g. high school or college students).

Directly related to the research site, findings may offer educators alternative methods of parental support besides asking parents to speak to students in Hmong. While reinforcing the Hmong language at home provides opportunities to practice the language, parents have requested additional means to support their children in addition to school governance and communication

with the teacher. Illustrating the benefits of what parents already do culturally (authoritarian parental style, narrative storytelling, and modeling) may make Hmong parents more conscious and intentional in their practices and support they provide to their children.

Chapter 5

Data Analysis and Findings

Participants

To be considered for the study, interviewees had to be Hmong and a parent. The goal was to select Hmong parents of different generations with school age children who were enrolled in the Hmong dual immersion program. Participants were obtained through snowball sampling from an initial subject who recruited acquaintances who met the criterion of the study. All seven participants met the criteria of being Hmong parents with school age children.

“Mai”

Mai is the primary informant that I used to connect to other Hmong parents, and she recruited all the participants. Her personal relationships and background as an educator helped to shape this study. Through Mai, I was able to connect with Xai, Mai’s younger sister, Kiab, a childhood friend, and Chee, a close relative. Hnub and Dawb are close colleagues that Mai worked with as an educator. All participants were drawn from her close network of people.

She and I first met as teenagers through the Upward Bound Program, a program targeting low-income high school students whose parents do not hold a bachelor’s degree. She later became a teacher at an independent Hmong dual language charter. We reconnected as educators

when she moved over to public schooling and occasionally saw each other at professional development trainings where we talked about school, students, and our personal education. When I learned that she was well connected to the Hmong dual immersion community, she became one of the primary candidates to interview for my research.

Mai is an active participant at her children's school. She sits on the school site council, has a positive relationship with the principal, and knows the Hmong teachers in the dual immersion program professionally through her participation at school, or knew them as teachers of children. Mai was born and raised in California and identifies as a second generation Hmong parent.

Mai shared that education was important to her parents. Her parents came to the United States at an older age and did not attend college, but their siblings attended. Her mother's siblings went to college, and half of her father's siblings went to college. Mai shared that she grew up thinking college was the only path after high school.

“Xai”

Xai was my first contact I made through Mai. We exchanged information and agreed to using Zoom to conduct the interview because of COVID. For all interviews, I shared that participants have the option to turn off their cameras and Xai elected to do so. Surprisingly, during the interview I noticed striking similarities between the parental engagement Xai shared and those initially presented by Mai. Both parents had high expectations, used narrative storytelling, monitored their children and leveraged their experiences as educators to the benefit of their children. It was not until I concluded the interview and ended the recording that I learned Xai and Mai were siblings.

Having a shared background with her sibling, it was not surprising Xai pursued a career in education. Xai holds a multiple subject credential and teaches elementary age students. She has a child in the sixth grade from her first marriage. Throughout the interview, Xai indirectly hinted at the challenges she encountered as a single parent while teaching full time, and discussed how her son recognized her efforts balancing being a professional and a parent. Xai's marriage has also tempered her parenting style. While she still retained the primary role of overseeing her son's education, she has had to defer to her husband. One change has been that her son was able to play video games on school days if he finished his school work.

Of all the participants, Xai exhibited the highest level of parental control in the interest of her son. Academically, she wanted her son to continually excel. One achievement would spark the next goal, and Xai persisted in pushing her son.

“Hnub”

Some participants were reluctant to turn on their cameras during the Zoom interviews or had connectivity or technical difficulties that prevented them from using their cameras. Hnub was my first and last interviewee to have her camera on and allowed me to record. After her, only the audio was recorded because participants seemed hesitant to do interviews when I discussed video recordings.

Hnub was born in Thailand in 1984. She considers herself first generation. Hnub has a bachelor's degree and a teaching credential. She has four children, a baby, a fifth grader, a sophomore, and a senior. At the time of the interview, I was not aware of this but it is important to share that Hnub worked at the targeted school site and later would become my daughter's

teacher. Since the research protocols centered on parental academic support and not the site, I felt it was acceptable to keep her responses.

Throughout the interview Hnub spoke fondly of her father and like other participants, spoke to how she modeled her parenting style after his. Hnub was engaged in all aspects of her children's education and used positive reinforcement to motivate her children. She often acted as a teacher at home, worked alongside her children, and worked with her children on school assignments.

“Dawb”

Dawb was born in Thailand in 1980. She came to the US at years old and considers herself first generation. Dawn has a bachelor's degree, teaching credential, and a master's degree. Dawb has four children. One is a first year college student, a seventh grader, a second grader, and a preschooler. The seventh grader attended a Hmong dual immersion program and the second grader is currently enrolled in the same school.

It was not clear during the interview that I had met Dawb before. She had just finished a Zoom session, was experiencing technical difficulties and thus, could not turn on her camera for our interview. Afterwards, Mai confirmed that Dawb worked as an instructional math coach in our district and we had met prior after a professional development. Knowing Dawb's background as a curriculum coach helped to explain her references to systems and prior knowledge when she discussed parental academic support. Dawb drew upon her and her husband's lived experience through narrative storytelling to teach her children. She felt it made concepts more real and concrete.

Among all participants, Dawb stressed the importance of shared parenting. Her statements on parental academic support were accompanied with the pronouns “we” or “us” in reference to her and her husband's mutual involvement in their children’s education. Sometimes, Dawb would respond with “I” but she should shift back to include her husband without being prompted. This is not to say that the other participants did not share parenting responsibilities when it comes to academic support, but to highlight the ways in which Dawb supports her children.

“Kiab”

Kiab was born in Yuba City, California in 1987. She considers herself second generation. Kiab completed two years at the community college. She has a second grader, a first grader, a kindergarten, and two babies.

As a student, Kiab maintained high academic marks but as a parent has sought to maintain a balance between her expectations and those placed upon her as a student. Through her lived experiences, she has found success without the academic accomplishments of a four year degree and does not want to be a “drilling parent.” Kiab, instead, is more focused on her children doing their best without the burden of excessively high expectations as in always obtaining straight As.

Kiab did talk about generational difference. She notes that her parents had to be asked to participate in school activities but the current Hmong parents take the initiative to be involved as a means of showing support for their children and the teachers. Kiab believes that current Hmong parents have a better understanding of schools because they went through public education and are not hindered by a language barrier.

“Ntsuab”

Ntsuab was born in Fitchburg, Massachusetts in 1986. She considers herself second generation. Ntsuab has a doctorate degree and attended a pharmacy program. She has two children, a pre-kindergarten and a younger daughter.

Like other participants, Ntsuab discussed how her faith influenced her parenting. As a Jehovah’s Witness, Ntsuab talked about raising good children with morals reflecting teachings from the Bible. This included routines that drew from their faith such as worship nights. Ntsuab sought to find a balance between the important things, placing them first, and not the peripheral distractions.

Also like other participants, Ntsuab talked about how the pandemic has increased her involvement in her children’s academics. She has taken a bigger role in teaching her children academic content at home. Ntsuab works with her son to complete worksheets sent in by his teachers and she has created a routine that balances academics with structured play.

“Chee”

Chee was born in Fresno, California in 1989. She considers herself second generation. Chee has a bachelor's degree. Chee has a child in the ninth grade, fifth grade, fourth grade, second grade, and a kindergarten.

Our conversation reflected some of the challenges with the pandemic. At times the connection broke out and Chee had to repeat herself multiple times. Since her children were at home doing school, she had to conduct the interview and attend to her children. Like Hnub’s

interview, the children were recorded in the background and at times, the interview was paused to address the children.

Similar to other participants, Chee talked about the language barrier that impeded first generation Hmong parents' involvement at school. Her comments about a new world and society alluded to cultural differences. Despite the differences in language and culture, Chee's parents stressed the importance of an education and Chee was aware of the need to adapt.

Participant Summary

The interviews provided personal narratives into the lives of seven Hmong women, all parents, with six of the seven having school age children. Participants identified as either generation 1.5 or second generation. Two were born in Laos or Thailand and the others in the United States. All participants were married at the time of the interviews and shared the responsibility of supporting their children academically with their spouse. All participants attended some college, with three obtaining their bachelor's degree, one obtaining a master's degree, and another her doctorate degree. Four of the interviewees were current educators at the time of the interview. One parent taught at a Hmong dual immersion program, one taught elementary school, another middle school, and another was a teacher on special assignment. Three of the parents, who identified as educators, had their children enrolled at a Hmong dual immersion program. All the participants were connected through Mai, my primary informant. Six of the participants currently reside in California.

Initial questions in the interview revealed consistent patterns in the background of the participants. All expressed that their parents had high expectations for them academically, their parents engaged in conversations surrounding academic excellence and college, their parents

provided encouragement and support as they navigated schools, and all earned high marks in school. All participants’ perspectives on providing academic support to their children were modeled after their parents, with modifications based on their educational experience and training. Three of the participants were mindful of being too overbearing, but all parents discussed providing their children emotional support. Table 8 summarizes the participants’ background information.

Table 8. Participants

Participants	Generation	Children’s grades	Education	Profession
Mai	2nd	2nd, Kinder, & infant	BA	Educator
Xai	2nd	6th	BA	Educator
Hnub	1.5	12th, 10th, 5th, & infant	BA	Educator
Dawb	1.5	College, 7th, 2nd, & pre-K	MA	Educator
Kiab	2nd	2nd, 1st, kinder & two infants	AA	Medical assistant
Ntsuab	2nd	Pre-K & toddler	Doctorate	Pharmacist
Chee	2nd	9th, 5th, 4th, 2nd, & kinder	BA	IT

The next sections will discuss themes revealed through the narratives with participants. The first section will outline underlying beliefs or values that help to understand Hmong academic support. The second section will discuss specific academic support Hmong parents enact based on their beliefs or values.

Beliefs That Drive Academic Support

Prior to addressing the questions on how Hmong parents support their children academically, this first section will look into two beliefs shared amongst Hmong parents. These beliefs — high expectations and good citizenship — explain why Hmong parents support their children, and influence the ways in which Hmong parents provide academic support.

“We Hold Really High Expectations”

Throughout the interviews, Hmong parents consistently expressed that they held high expectations for their children. When asked to describe how she parented, Dawb explained her expectation and also gave insight into its origin: She shared:

“We hold like really high expectations because we went through it ourselves. We hold that expectations of our children. We expect them to succeed and excel and to take failure as a way to learn from and to use that to gain more success and to not give up.”

High expectations for Dawb meant academic success, academic excellence, and a persistence mindset. Through this descriptive self-perception, Dawb explained that she and her husband were held to similar standards. Consistent with Dawb’s experience, Xai’s high expectations also came from her upbringing. She pointed to high expectations when recalling how her parents supported her as a student. Xai recalled:

“When I was growing up, it was like, you have to get an A. If you didn’t get an A, then it was not acceptable. And if you get an A, why didn’t you get an A plus? And so I’ll admit it, I treat my child like that.”

Similar to Dawb, high expectations for Xai meant obtaining academic excellence as measured by grades. Xai made it clear that she was held to high expectations, and now as a parent she held her son to the same standards. Xai’s example showed how she pushed her son beyond those standards:

“I mean, when I see him get threes, because they grade by number points right now, I’m like, why didn’t you get a four? Or if you get a four, then why didn’t you maintain your four? Or during CAASPP testing, if he scores standards, why didn’t you score above standards. That’s my expectations for him and he knows.”

Additionally, Xai’s narrative of her childhood suggested high expectations included high effort. Hnub reinforced these themes when she shared who influenced her parenting style and added good attendance to the definition of high expectations. Hnub reflected:

“I think my dad influenced me because he just played a big role model in my life, because he just always the one that motivates me, like reminds me every day. He takes me to school so he always, like always, reminds me: go to school, do the best you can, even though it’s hard don’t give up, just keep trying every day. So he motivates me and he’s just a great dad and that motivates me to do the same thing for my kids.”

Hnub’s narrative about the impact of her father on her, along with the other evidence, underscored a key point to understanding high expectations among Hmong parents. It tells us that the attitudes and beliefs of Hmong parents influence the attitudes and beliefs of Hmong children. Specifically, the high expectations of Hmong parents are passed down to their children. These three pieces of evidence also work to solidify our understanding of high expectations. High expectations for Hmong parents means holding students to high standards of success, excellence, attendance, persistence, and effort. It is through their attitudes of high expectations that lead Hmong parents to support their children academically.

“Good People, Good Citizens, and Good Decisions”

Considering parental aspirations also contributes to our understanding of academic support. Hmong parents expressed a strong desire for their children to make good decisions, be good citizens, and be good people. Through Mai’s explanation of a good life, she gave a clear definition of being a good person. She said:

“All I want is for them to be good people, good citizens, and make good decisions... A good people is somebody who, you know, follows the rules.”

Interwoven into this definition were ideas of having “goals to strive for more and helping other people and the Earth.” Mai stated she did not need her children to show appreciation for her efforts in raising them “as long as they turn out to be good people. And, you know, they can help themselves.” In other words, besides complying with social norms, a good person contributes to society by being able to help themselves and others. Hnub reinforced this theme when she discussed how she and her husband model being good people. She said:

“We try to live a very healthy life where our kids can see that, oh, like my parents are good people. They don’t go out all the time or they don’t drink. You know, they try to be here for us. They’re here with us most of the time.”

Some of the time Hnub and her husband are out of the home is for “cousin events.” Cousin events should be understood as cultural events that Hnub and her husband “have to go to.” In Hnub’s evidence, a good parent follows socially acceptable norms and devotes time to the family and child rearing. Hnub also added that she just wants them to be a “good citizenship, a good human being with knowledge.” Further evidence to support good citizenships appears when Dawb discussed academic motivation. She explained:

“That we just expect them to do good, do well and to succeed. And I think it’s just the expectations that we hold of them. And they just do it like it’s just a natural part of their habits. As a scholar, as a child, as a sibling, like, I’m going to treat people with respect because I expect that of me and I just do it and it just becomes a natural part.”

Whether Dawb’s children are in an educational setting or at home, she expects her children to treat others with respect. Respect means respecting the person, their authority, and social position. Dawb held herself to this belief and expected it to become a natural part of how her children identify themselves.

Some participants discussed the influence of religion on their perspectives. Ntsuab specifically noted how being a good person was tied to her religious belief. She states:

“So that’s really where we get our main focus [the Bible] about like focusing on like being a good person and trying to really busy yourself with good things.”

Collectively, this evidence works to define a good person. Hmong parents believe a good person follows the rules, is respectful, has knowledge and uses this knowledge to support themselves and contribute to others. Underlining academic support is this idea of raising a good person. When they construct academic supports for their children, Hmong parents are reinforcing perceived social norms and expectations that will ensure success in a school setting and beyond.

Academic Supports

The academic support Hmong parents provide is guided by their belief in high expectations and good citizenship. Having high expectations leads Hmong parents to take on a parent-teacher role, use narratives as a teaching tool, and model expected behaviors. Within this role and tools, Hmong parents develop structures and routines with consideration given to the belief of good citizenship. This section will highlight these strategies Hmong parents use to support their children academically: parent-teacher role, narrative storytelling and modeling behaviors.

“The Substitute Teacher”

When questioned about their self-perceived role in supporting their children at home, most Hmong parents identified themselves as parent-teachers. Chee made this revelation when she discussed her role in providing academic support. Chee shared:

“I’d like to look at myself as the substitute teacher to a sense that if they’re not learning or, you know, everything that they learn at school when they come home, it’s like a different setting. And so I actually like to understand what they’re going through and

what they're being taught at school so that when they come home, I can reiterate back to them and see where they need help."

Chee assumed the role of a teacher to meet her children's learning needs. She learned the content, assessed their understanding, and engaged in re-teaching the content. When Kiab provided homework assistance and reviewed content with her children, she also stepped into a parent-teacher role. She said:

"And then at home, I just like to go over all their stuff with them. Ask them how their day went so that we kind of review what they learned in school or what they did at school, or if they have any questions, they can ask me."

In both cases Hmong parents acted in the place of the teacher, driven by a desire to assist. They monitored student learning, retaught, and managed students.

Instead of taking the place of a teacher, Hmong parents who are educators maintained that role at home when providing academic support. Mai made it clear about the impact of her role as an educator on her parenting when she explained the differences between herself and other Hmong parents who are not educators. Mai stated:

"I think as an educator. I know what's ahead. I'm teaching in middle school so I know what they need... Like, I purposely chose my district for my own children so that I know what's going on and what's expected."

Mai's purpose was to "have those resources that [she] can also use for [her] own kids." Besides institutional knowledge as a resource, Hmong parents also spoke to providing essential resources for their children much like a teacher. Hnub shared:

"Whatever resources they need, we always try to get it for them. For example, if they need textbooks or materials to do projects, whatever they need. We tell them, we let them know. We tell them that, you know, they can always come to us for anything, that we'll support them, their education, their learning."

We have additional evidence of thinking like a teacher when Hmong educator parents built structures and routines that mirror a classroom setting. Xai gave an overview of a common occurrence in her household:

“When he comes home, he does his homework. That’s the first thing he does. And he can’t watch TV or can’t play games and stuff... Seven o’clock is just when he starts getting ready for bed. As in brushing teeth, taking a shower, getting changed and putting things away because at 8 p.m., he needs to already be in bed.”

Similar to school, Xai’s son was on a schedule when he came home. The expectation had him prioritizing schoolwork in preparation for Xai and her husband to check. By the time Xai got home from work, her husband had “already check his [their son’s] homework for him” and Xai reviewed if necessary. Xai’s example of monitoring echoes previously mentioned strategies by non-educator parents. She stated:

“ And so when I was a single mom, then I checked everything constantly. I made sure I looked in his backpack and things like that.”

Xai and her husband consistently checked and provided homework assistance, communicated with teachers, and monitored their child’s grades as a means to support their son academically. What followed was dinner and then his bedtime routine. Also like school, there were rules. Xai placed restrictions on leisure activities on school nights.

Thinking as a teacher, Dawb created a system that outlined what her children were to do upon stepping through their front door when they came home, similar to expectations a teacher may have when their students enter the classroom. She emphasized “time management, about not being late,” and being prepared. Dawb explained:

“Coming home, here’s the landing station. Put your materials here, put your backpack here. All the forms that we need to sign and look at, put it in this basket. So I think it’s having a system that’s in place and everybody in our family understand the system.”

In addition to direct academic support and routines, Hmong parents also provided emotional support. We see a combination of direct academic and emotional support employed when Hnub described a time in which her son struggled with an assignment. Hnub narrated:

“You’re a good writer. You can do this. You’re so smart. Why don’t you go and write. Just start writing. When you’re done, I’ll read, I will edit, and if it’s good, then we’ll keep it. If it’s not good, I’ll ask you to add more.”

Hnub reassured her son by listing his good qualities and potential in absolute terms, while at the same time stating her part in completing the essay. Along with words of affirmation, Kiab stated that “physically being there” was a way in which she supported her children. In describing how she provided academic support, Kiab stated:

“So I make sure to always let me kids know that if they need me at any school function, I will make myself available to them.”

Being a parent-teacher means, as Mai stated, a willingness for Hmong parents “to spend time” to ensure their children are meeting their expectations. Thus, Hmong parents get involved in their student’s schoolwork at home, and when they do this, they construct routines and systems to help facilitate these interactions. As the needs of the students come to include emotional support, Hmong parents respond by being physically present at school functions and using words of encouragement.

“Storytelling Makes It Really Alive For Them”

Outside of assuming a parent-teacher role, Hmong parents engaged in storytelling as a way to teach lessons and as a motivational strategy to support their children academically. The stories that Hmong parents tell are drawn from their lived experiences and the stories they heard as children. According to Dawb, personal stories made lessons and morals “more real and concrete for them” and allowed children to “make connections.” Dawb explained:

“You can connect because you know that your grandpa went through this... or like we went through this and when this happens, you’re gonna go through this.”

When Dawb mentioned “we went through this,” she was referring to the academic challenges she and her husband experienced obtaining their master’s degrees. Dawb used stories to guide her children away from “doing something wrong” and only intervened before it was too late. One story Dawb shared that taught a lesson and explained her decision making was when her family decided against buying a sharp cornered desk. Dawb recalled:

“Remember when you were five years old, you had fallen on a corner and that’s why you got that scar right there.”

Mai used stories as a warning. A story she heard from her brother-in-law that she retold to her children was about a “10-year-old Indian girl from a family that was keeping her there as a slave.” The girl came to America with the intention of going to school and working on the side, but ended up being used by the host family as their servant. Eventually she was rescued by Child Protective Services. When Mai told this story, she stated to her children:

“That’s why it’s important to learn how to read, because we want to be able to help ourselves and we don’t want to end up like that.”

Mai’s intent was to motivate her children towards literacy. She encouraged her children to avoid a similar situation by stressing the importance of an education and how an education provided the skills for her children to help themselves.

Mai also told stories that model desirable attitudes. She told her children the story of the rabbit and turtle, a story her father told her. When Mai shared this story, she made a connection to her uncle, an intelligent man, and her father’s first cousin, a hard-working man. The uncle did not live up to his potential but the first cousin became successful. When asked what she wanted

her children to learn, she hoped “that they are the turtle” because “hard work pays off.” After the story, Mai prompted her children, “so which one do you think is doing well? Which one do you want to be?”

Hmong parents also use stories because, as Xai stated, they help to “build a good rapport” because they sound less like a lecture and are less intimidating, and she admits stories motivate. Like Xai, Hnub recognized the ability of stories to motivate. Hnub recalled her father telling stories of his childhood in Laos and the risk he took to bring his children to the United States for a better life. Hnub stated that her father’s stories impacted her. She said:

“Just listening to his stories and his struggles very motivated me to have a higher education and a better life for myself and my future children. So then I always try to do my best in school.”

As a parent, Hnub and her father continued to tell his stories to Hnub’s children in an effort to motivate them to push for a better life through academic excellence.

Hmong parents draw upon their lived experiences and personal knowledge within their kinship group to tell stories. They use stories to teach lessons, to provide examples, to retain cultural knowledge, to reinforce expectations, and to motivate. At times organic and intentional, stories are a part of a Hmong parent’s toolkit, used to support their children academically outside of structured direct academic support.

“I Always Show Them All The Time”

Another way in which Hmong parents provided academic support was through modeling the expectations that they set for their children. Having high academic expectations, Mai was constantly trying to “add stuff to their curriculum.” She stated:

“When the kids wake up and their dad goes and gets breakfast or prepares breakfast, we watch science videos while we wait.”

Mai felt her children “don’t get enough science” and had to supplement. Supplementing had come to include watching the History Channel and nightly Bible study as a family. These activities stressed family values and Mai reinforced them through modeling.

Other participants also spoke to modeling. Kiab provided moral and physical support by joining school activities. She stated:

“I often join a lot of their activities at school so that they know that school is just as important to me as it should be to them.”

Kiab showed through her participation how her actions aligned with her attitudes and beliefs. Her goal was to motivate her children “to do good in school” and reinforce the values she had taught them. Likewise, Hnub explained that she supported her children’s education by showing “them all the time.” She showed interest by contacting her children’s teachers and revealed that she also modeled when discussing routines. Hnub explains:

“Because I work at home too, like, I don’t bring work home, but I do a little prepping, and do stuff like that for school. So then I’ll sit, and then she sits, and we’ll both sit. And she does her work and I do my work. Whenever she needs help, she’ll ask me. Then I just quickly check or help her.”

Both parents modeled the behavior and attitudes they wanted their children to emulate. In addition, Hmong parents used their lived experiences as a model for their children. Dawb provided evidence for this theme when she talked about motivation. Dawb explained:

“Ok, look how far your dad and I had to come from. Like, trying to show them, how hard work pays off. Trying to teach them about values and instill values.”

Xai echoed Dawb’s statement. She shared:

“I already got a bachelor’s degree. So he needs to go beyond me. I’ve told him he needs to get a master’s if not better and then his kids need to be able to get a doctor’s degree.”

By using their lived experiences as a model, both parents outlined an educational path for their children to follow. Dawb and Xai laid a foundation based on hard work and education and expected their children to do the same.

Hmong parents modeled their expectations by taking action. They attended school functions that reinforced the values of schooling. They worked alongside their children at home during homework time to display expected behavior and live a lifestyle that reflects their values. Through modeling, Hmong parents provided an additional means to support their children academically.

Generational Similarities/Differences

One goal of the study was to secure multi-generation participants to see if there were generational differences amongst Hmong parents in regards to parental academic support. Although I could not secure participants that matched this criteria, we can make inferences about generational differences based on the stories shared by generation 1.5 and second generation participants about their first generation parents.

We know that first generation Hmong parents held high expectations. Evidence for this comes from participants who spoke of how their parents held high expectations of them. We also know that these values were passed from one generation to another. This is evidenced in how participants impart their values to their children. Additionally, we know that first generation parents used narrative storytelling as a form of academic support. Participants provided examples of how their parents who were first generation Hmong parents told stories to motivate them.

When asked about differences and similarities between participants' parental style and their parents, they often mentioned similarities. Xai mentioned:

“It’s similar. I used to not want to be like my parents but I ended up kind of being like my parents.”

Xai attributed her change in perspective to the multiple bachelor's degrees obtained by her and her siblings due to her parents' methods. Xai reasoned that if her parents were able to do that for them, then she'd treat her "child the same way." Xai's sibling Mai mentioned her mother would help with homework "to the best of her ability... with as much English as she knew" and her father would help her with her projects. Now as a parent, Mai shared:

"I did the same thing as well. I do a lot more of the academic work and long pieces. And then Tub [her husband] does a lot of the project-based stuff."

In the same manner Hnub stated her style is "very similar" to her father's, except he was more patient.

Participants also noted differences in parental styles. When she compared her parental style to that of her parents, Chee noted:

"They were strict on, you know, getting their homework done, less involvement outside of the home... I kind of picked up on that for my children to have like a routine of when they should do homework when that time is, but I'm more lenient as I want them to experience life outside of just the homework."

Similar to Chee, Kiab noted differences. Kiab felt she is stricter than her parents. Her parents checked on homework completion, but once they received affirmation of completion

"then that was the end of it." When Kiab monitored her children's homework, she said:

"I have to check your homework. I have to go over. We all have to sit down. We all have to talk about it."

Some of the differences had less to do with style and more to do with personal circumstances. Dawb felt she had more experience "with how to get our children to the

educational level they need to build their career” and “more resources financially,” yet she elaborated on similarities with her mother. Dawb stated:

“My mom took us everywhere... She went to our parent conferences... She enrolled us in sport... and she’s supportive of us.”

For Ntsuab, there were not a lot of “parallels.” Ntsuab noted she grew-up in America and has a doctorate, while her parents were immigrants without an education. They were not able to “sit down and do homework” but did advocate for their children and put a focus on “how important education is.” Ntsuab felt she takes more of a “hands on role.”

Collectively these personal accounts on generational parental support shows that first generations Hmong parents provided academic support. Some first generation Hmong parents provided direct academic support with homework, some monitor homework completion, some participated in school activities and others structured routines. All generations valued education and held high expectations.

Figure 3. Generational Differences Amongst Hmong Parental Academic Support

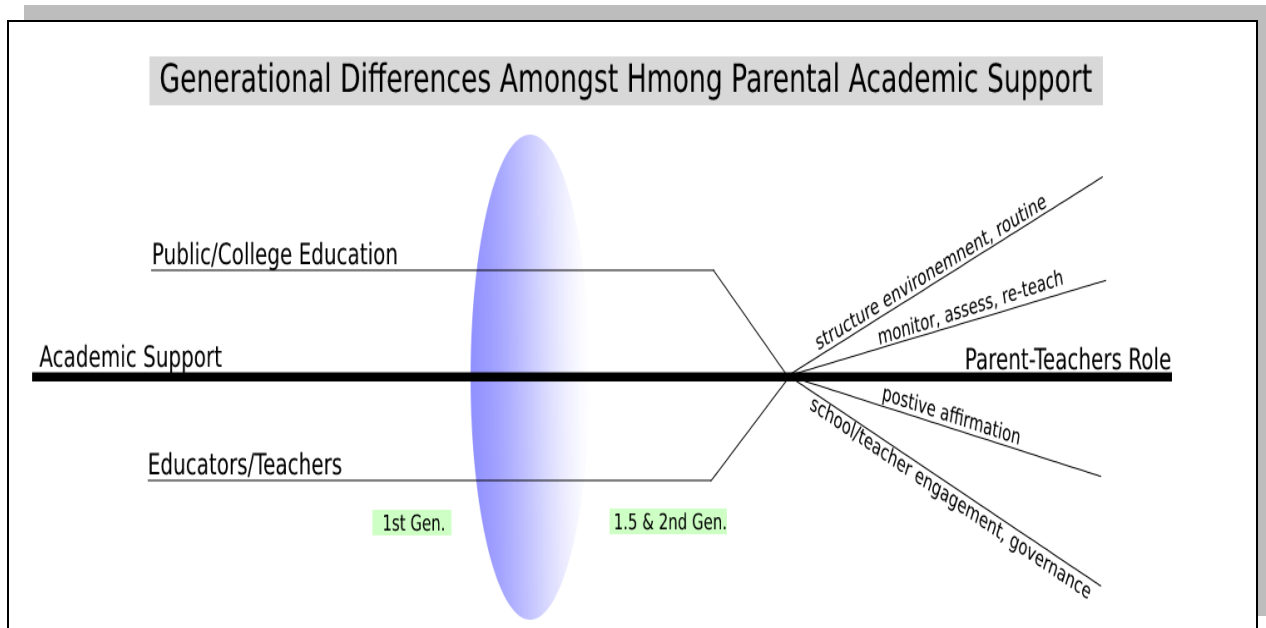


Figure 3. displays generational differences amongst A notable difference between first generation, generation 1.5 and second generation is the way in which Hmong parents provide direct academic support. This difference could be attributed to the educational experience generation 1.5 and second generation have had in the United States, and that most participants were educators or teachers. Assuming a parent-teacher role, Hmong parents constructed structures and routines that resembled the classroom and reported active communications with teachers and engagement in school governance. Similar to teachers, participants reported monitoring, assessing, and re-teaching their students. When needed, Hmong parents also provided positive words of affirmation and encouragement.

Summary

In their own words, Hmong parents shared that the ways in which they provided academic support was guided by high expectations and wanting their children to be good citizens. Hmong parents expected their children to follow school rules, have good attendance, and achieve high academic scores. Hmong parents raised their children to be good citizens that follow the rules and contribute to their community. These guiding principles influenced Hmong

parents to act in a parent-teacher role at home, use narratives to motivate, and model expected behaviors. Across generations, parental academic support was consistent. The difference between first generation and later generations was that later generations have the lived experience of public school and higher education institutions along with increased financial resources to support their children academically.

Chapter 6

Discussion and Implications

This chapter will identify and discuss the major findings from the study followed by implications for practice, policy, and future studies.

Summary of Major Findings

This study looked into the ways in which Hmong parents supported their students academically and whether generational differences amongst Hmong parents may have impacted the supports provided. I used Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to look at the microsystem of the family and the ways parents interacted with their children to support their academic development. By interviewing Hmong parents, I sought to provide a counter narrative to the literature on Hmong parental support with the voices of Hmong parents. The interviews highlighted the influence of Hmong culture and lived experiences that are critical to understanding Hmong parental support. With this study, I sought to understand what is happening in Hmong households between students and parents to add to the research on how a child's home environment influences their development.

Three major findings surfaced from analysis of the data based on the following questions:

1. How do Hmong parents support their children academically?
2. Are there generational differences in Hmong parental support; if so, how do those differences affect the type of support that parents provide their students?

The first finding was that Hmong parents assumed a teacher role when providing academic support. Parents who were not teachers saw themselves as substitute teachers, while parents who were teachers maintained their role when working with their children. Through this

role, Hmong parents constructed a structured home learning environment with routines and rules. Time was set aside for Hmong parents to provide direct academic support in which parents assessed, reviewed, and re-taught content. When necessary, Hmong parents engaged in emotional support.

The second finding was that Hmong parents employed narrative storytelling to reinforce expectations. Stories were drawn from parents' lived experiences, and stories shared to parents by family members. Stories could occur organically or intentionally with intentions to motivate, teach a lesson, or reinforce an expectation. Hmong parents felt stories were a more concrete alternative to a lecture and allowed children to make connections.

The last finding was that Hmong parents modeled expected behavior. Hmong parents modeled for children in the home environment by working on job related tasks while children completed homework assignments. Hmong parents also used their lived experiences as a framework for their children. These findings came from Hmong parents' high expectations of their children and aspirations for their children to become good citizens.

Discussion

Hmong parent's narrative on academic support did highlight alignment with Epstein's framework, particularly the ways parents can help with homework and other curriculum related activities. Hmong parents monitored and discussed homework in ways that mirrored what occurred within the classroom. It is likely Hmong parents learned these strategies from teachers or were strategies they used as educators. Additionally, Hmong parents discussed various forms of communication they used to maintain a connection to the school or classroom. Participants discussed receiving newsletters, calling the school, and email exchanges with teachers. Lastly, participants also reported involvement within the classroom and on the School Site Council as

board members. Although crossovers existed between Esptein's model and Hmong parental academic support, Hmong parents use of narratives and the infusion of Hmong culture showed we have to look deeper on assumptions of parental support models. A school centric model of parental support leaves out important aspects that are unique to Hmong parents.

The study was unable to secure participants who identified as first generation, but we can make inferences about generational differences based on the narratives of the participants. Through the narratives of the participants, we can infer that first generation Hmong parents held high expectations for their children. These expectations included high academic marks, good attendance, persistence, and effort. To help their children meet these expectations, first generation Hmong parents monitored academic performance, provided encouragement, modeled expectations, and motivated their children through narratives.

While this study used Bronfenbrenner as a framework to understand Hmong parental academic support, it did not look at the experiences of the child but the ways in which Hmong parents drew from other systems to shape the microsystem or family environment. Participants talked about engaging in school activities and being present for school functions as a way to show their children school was important. This constitutes Hmong parents leveraging the mesosystem between school and home to increase the children's value of school as a microsystem. By modeling this behavior, Hmong parents reinforce the importance of school and in turn contributed to the children internalizing it themselves. Hmong parents, especially Hmong educators, drew upon their exosystem - the knowledge and experiences in public education - to shape their children's microsystem. Hmong parents instituted routines, worked collaboratively on school assignments, and monitored their children's school work. More broadly at the macrosystem level, Hmong parents identified values of good citizenship to instill in their

children. Good citizenship is then explained and made concrete through narrative storytelling at the microsystem level. Thus, the systems that work to shape Hmong parents exert a lasting influence on the microsystems that Hmong parents provide for their students.

Generation 1.5 and second generation Hmong parents' descriptions of assuming a parent-teacher role indicated high levels of involvement, with the necessary skills to support their children. This runs contrary to older literature that suggests Hmong parents are disengaged (Ima & Rumbaut, 1989; Vang, 2003) and lack the educational background to support their children (Downing et al., 1984; Siu, 1996). This points to a younger, educated Hmong demographic that is taking on the role of parents. While Hmong parents are leveraging their educational experience to support their children, they still retain high expectations consistent with the literature (Lamborn & Moua, 2008; Lor, 2008). In addition, Hmong parents described themselves as strict yet maintained high levels of support. This was contrary to the literature that attributes an authoritarian parental style to Hmong parents with high levels of monitoring but low support (Supple et al., 2010; Peng & Solheim, 2015). This difference could be attributed to participants being educators or having a higher education background.

The concept of Funds of Knowledge is founded on the premise that people are competent and through their lived experiences have gained knowledge (Gonzalez et al., 2005). Communities, through social relationships and community development, exchange resources and draw upon the accumulation of a historical and cultural body of knowledge to function as they interact in social and economic settings (Moll et al., 1992). Here it is important to note that when Hmong parents talk about the use of narrative storytelling to motivate their children or reinforce values, they are drawing from a rich cultural knowledge shared amongst their kinship group or from their parents. In the same way, Hmong parent educators draw upon their professional

experiences as educators to help their children navigate the school system and provide the direct academic support necessary to ensure academic excellence.

One inherent limitation of the study was that it looked into parental academic support from the perspective of the parents but did not include voices of the children who received the support. Thus, we can only speculate on how children received the support and what impact supports may have had on student academic performance. We know from the interviews that both parents shared in the role of supporting their children's academics. Another limitation of this study are the missing voices of those partners or fathers. Additionally, the selective group consisted mainly of educators which could have contributed to the parent-teacher type of academic support implemented in the home. A more diverse group of parents may have led to different findings.

Another limitation could be the impact of state mandated distance learning. The study was originally designed to include in-person interviews during in-person instruction and did not account for the emphasis on parental academic support during remote learning. Although one participant organically discussed a support strategy she implemented during distance learning, it is unknown how much distance learning may have impacted Hmong parental academic support.

Implications for Practice

To better support Hmong academic achievement, schools must re-evaluate their perception of Hmong parents. Within the literature, Hmong parents are still seen from a deficit perspective by educators while holding onto racialized perceptions of Hmong students (Li, 2005); this study points to the active involvement of Hmong parents in their children's education and the strategies they employ to provide academic support at home. Thus, schools need to re-assess their views of Hmong parents, identify strengths within the Hmong community, and

follow CDE guidelines on effective family engagement centered on building trust (CDE, 2017). When Hmong parents are seen as assets, then they will be more likely to be included in discussions surrounding student achievement.

The study reveals that Hmong parents include structures and routines similar to those seen in a classroom setting in an effort to reinforce academic achievement. Schools, in a similar manner, must incorporate strategies used by Hmong parents. By doing so, schools acknowledge the asset Hmong parents possess and can uphold Hmong home values. In particular, schools need to look at narrative storytelling and modeling as a means to motivate students, because students see these methods at home and parents attest to their effectiveness.

Schools need to build and maintain a positive relationship with Hmong parents. Hmong parents must be seen as equal, invested, and skilled partners in their children's education. This process begins with school. Teachers and schools can invite Hmong parents to participate actively in school activities (career day or by sharing their lived experiences) and school governance (SSC or PTO/PTA). Teachers can better engage with Hmong parents by establishing clear channels of communication to convey the needs of the school and to hear the needs of the family. Hmong student academic success becomes achievable when schools and Hmong parents partner together, and when schools see themselves as a part of the larger Hmong community. This is consistent with CDE guidelines around connecting to student learning, in which family and educators engage in two-way communication around student learning.

Research consistently points to the correlation between parent engagement and student academic achievement (Barnard, 2004; Jeynes, 2007), and has led to policies with an emphasis on parental engagement. While CDE guidelines on parental engagement are a step towards equity, the implementation of parental engagement programs are still lacking (Mapp & Kuttner,

2013). Policy makers need to fully fund parent engagement programs and provide necessary training to staff to be able to engage with the Hmong community. Trust between schools and communities must be built and family voices must be included and honored. This research demonstrates that Hmong parents are highly invested in their children's academic success and have the necessary skills to contribute at home and school.

Recommendations for Research

The study shows that professional expertise, especially Hmong parent educators, heavily influenced parental perception of academic support at home and how support was enacted. Future studies into Hmong parental academic support can tease out this element further and highlight how Hmong parent educators are providing academic support compared to non-educator Hmong parents. The target audience was Hmong parents of students in dual K-6 immersion schools and the academic support provided at home. Other studies can look into how parental support may differ as students enter into high school or college. Both suggested studies can lead toward a broader understanding of how Hmong parents support their students academically.

Future research can also look at the legacy of beliefs and values surrounding education. We know that participants held onto their parents' beliefs and values surrounding education, and utilized similar methods to provide academic support. Further studies can look at current Hmong students and investigate if and how they will hold on to their parents' beliefs and values. Results can lead to a better understanding of the legacy of beliefs and values over time.

Conclusion

The core of what drives Hmong parental academic support is high expectations and raising good citizens. Hmong parents expect their children to be good people who follow the

rules and contribute to their community. These expectations are also applied in educational settings. Hmong children must follow the rules and perform well academically in order to contribute to the classroom. Doing well in school is closely linked to being good citizens.

Generation 1.5 and second generation Hmong parents in this study have the lived experiences of public school and higher education. This knowledge has shaped how they view their role as parent-teachers, and Hmong parents draw upon this capital as they provide academic support for their children. Most notably, Hmong parent educators in this study mirrored a classroom-like environment at home with structures and routines. These practices include managing their children's time, setting limits, and engaging in the teaching process of assessment and re-teaching. Like first generation Hmong parents, 1.5 and second generation Hmong parents support their children academically through narrative storytelling in order to motivate and teach values. Lastly, Hmong parents show the habits and practices of success by modeling appropriate behaviors for their children.

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APPENDIX A: RESEARCH PROTOCOL

The purpose of this study is to gather information about how Hmong parents support their children academically, and what role generational differences amongst Hmong parents plays in the type of parental support provided to children. Your responses and the experience you provide will help inform schools on how Hmong parents support their children. If you no longer wish to participate, you are welcome to stop the interview at any time.

Good day, my name is You Lor and I am a graduate student at UC Davis. The research that is being conducted will be used to inform my dissertation.

Today, I will ask you questions about your background, your parental style, and how you support your child academically. I am interested in how you parent and the support you provide to your child related to your child's education.

Although this project will focus on Hmong parental support, you are welcome to discuss other topics that can contribute to the research. The interview will be recorded and all information will be kept confidential. With your permission, I will turn on the audio recorder.

Let us start with some questions regarding your background.

Background

1. Where and when were you born?
2. What generation do you consider yourself? First generations are those born and raised in Laos. Generations 1.5 are those born in Laos but raised in America, and second generations are born and raised in America.
3. Describe your educational background. How many years of education have you had in the U.S. or other country in total?
4. How many children do you have and what grades are they in?
5. What do you think is your role in providing academic support for your children?

Probe: Whom or what has influenced how you see your role?

Probe: Describe the resources and or supports you use to carry out this role.

Parental Style

Now I will be asking you a few questions about how you parent when it comes to your child's education.

1. How would you describe yourself as a parent when it comes to your children's schooling?

Probe: How similar or different is the way you parent your children's education to your parents?

Probe: How similar or different is the way you parent your children's education to that of other Hmong parents?

2. At home, what aspects of your children's education do you manage?

Probe: During school nights, what school related routines are in place for your children? Is there a certain time they have to go to bed?

Probe: During school nights, what must your children do for school? What can't they do because of school?

Probe: When your children don't listen or are not meeting your expectations for school nights, what do you say or do?

Modeling and Narratives

The next set of questions will be about what you do or say to support your child's education.

1. Describe what you currently do to support your children's education.

Probe: Describe what you plan to do in the future to support your children’s education.

Probe: How are the things you are doing or plan to do similar or different to other Hmong parents?

2. If your child is struggling academically, how might you support them?

Probe: What might you say and do in this situation?

Probe: Tell me what you plan to say or do to ensure your child excels academically.

3. What might you say or do to motivate your child academically?

Probe: What might you say or do so your children listen?

Probe: What might you say or do so your children work hard?

Probe: What might you say or do so your children have a good life?

Probe: Where might you get this knowledge from to motivate your children?

Thank you for your time. Is there anything else you would like to share about how you support your children academically before we conclude?

Appendix B: Coding Matrix

In Vivo Coding Response	Code	Category	Theme
I'm trying not to hover over them (2). ... be there for them and support them (2).	Restrictive vs supportive	Parental styles	
I try not to be a helicopter parent but I feel like sometimes I am (5)	Helicopter parent		

<p>I feel like I hope my kids, you know, appreciate all of this and understand why I spend so much time (6)</p>	<p>Appreciation; parental role</p>		
<p>I'm very particular... they don't see the need to complete all the check boxes (8)</p> <p>They probably think I'm too strict (9)</p>	<p>strict</p>		
<p>I learned to let go a little bit with my older son because he's in the second grade now (9)</p> <p>...the stuff I know that they can do on their own, I let them do on their own (9)</p> <p>The stuff that I feel they need help whenever they need a system (9)</p> <p>First grade, I was there constantly as well. Second grade, he's been doing pretty well independently (10)</p> <p>loosen the leash a little bit (10)</p>	<p>Gradual release</p>	<p>Parental strategies</p>	
<p>I like structured play (11)</p> <p>They'll see their cousins, you know, videos of their cousins playing hopscotch and, you know, and so we'll go and draw hopscotch (16)</p>	<p>Structured play</p>		
<p>The sooner you finish this, the sooner you get to go do whatever it is that you want to do (12)</p> <p>Go sit in your room until you're ready to let me know you're ready (12)</p>	<p>Rewards and consequences</p>		
<p>Do you think this would make God proud? (19)</p> <p>When we pray at night, I definitely remind them... depending on what they need (19)</p> <p>Let's have God helps us, you know, be harder workers (20)</p> <p>I pray a lot for them and definitely encourage them verbally (20)</p>	<p>Prayer</p>	<p>Religion</p>	

Parental Practices

I feel that education can also be you know like join the military (2).	Expectations after high school	Parental expectations	
You had to go to college after high school (3).	Parental expectations		
They were all educated (4)	Background		
I have high expectations for them (5)	High expectations		
I have higher expectations and I'm just on them (9)			
Truly did not realize you did not have to go to college, that there were other options out there (3)	Experience	Lived experiences	Cultural beliefs/values
I feel like when they grow up in the working world that, you know, sometimes they have to do more than what they need (8)			
A lot of personal experience (20)			
I feel language is really important (14)	Language	Culture	
For them to be good people, good citizens and make good decisions (20)	Long term goals	Good citizens	
So I can better try to help them pick the correct school (15)	School matching	Teacher knowledge	

I grew up with both parents being educational driven (2).	Generational	Background	
Always pushing education (2)			
I do see that being embedded in me as well like even when I have conversations with my own kids (3).			
Like I told you my parents did it for us (3)			
Definitely my role as the educator (4)	Educator	Profession	
The fact that I am an educator has you know kind of help me push my own kids as well (4)			
My mom was able to go to school. Her older sister was able to go to school in the town in the city (4)	Mother	Parental influence	Cultural/familial influences

<p>Her parents kind of pushed education (4).</p> <p>I could see that it comes to my mom because of her upbringing (4)</p> <p>My uncle's an educator and his wife is not so all the educational conversations happen through him (5)</p> <p>My grandfather and pushing his kids for education (5)</p> <p>Growing up, my mom would help us with our homework to the best of her ability... and then my dad would sit there and help us with our project (7)</p> <p>Did your mom or dad or family structure kind of your after-school sessions too? yes (11)</p>			
Conversations from other people (20)	Knowledge	Knowledge	

<p>Our normal conversations like we see like you know a college logo or symbol...just any time it comes up (3)</p> <p>We talk about it like it's a normal thing (3).</p> <p>I think it was more organic where I didn't realize I was doing it (3)</p> <p>Focus my attention on being able to point it out a little bit more (3-4)</p>	Conversations	Family conversations	
<p>Definitely a conversation we have a lot of time (13)</p> <p>If he's working with the kids and he noticed something he'll bring it up to my attention (14)</p> <p>I have this conversation all the time about where our kids are going next (15)</p> <p>We definitely talk about God a lot (19)</p>	Parent talk		
<p>What's going on or do you understand this?... what can I do? (16)</p> <p>Having an ongoing conversation with them... constants check-ins (16)</p>	Check-in		Storytelling/ conversations

<p>We share a story (11)</p> <p>I do tell stories, share stories about things we see (17)</p> <p>My brother-in-law is a cop and he tell stories (17)</p> <p>Why do you think or how do you think these people got there? (17)</p> <p>Because she doesn't speak any English, you know? And that's why it's important to learn how to read (18)</p> <p>I tell a lot of stories. Some of them I make up. I don't tell them that, but I make them up to try to build some morals (18)</p> <p>Are these families' stories. Ah hum. These stories your parents may have told you? Yes (18)</p> <p>I tell my kids this story all the time...my dad's told this story many times to (18)</p> <p>I try not to tell them that this is the moral of the story (19)</p>	<p>Stories</p>	<p>Narrative storytelling</p>	
<p>This is actually a good thing and it's impacting my kids really well because they're responding to it very well (3)</p> <p>I don't need them to tell me that they appreciate me as long as they turn out to be good people. And, you know, they can help themselves. Then that's a sign of them appreciating me (6).</p>	<p>Positive child response</p> <p>Good people</p>	<p>Outcomes</p>	<p>Positive outcomes</p>

<p>I wanted to make sure my kids went to school in my district (5)</p> <p>I mimicked their normal day (6)</p> <p>I think as an educator, I know what's ahead (15)</p> <p>I purposefully chose my district for my own children so that I know what's going on and what's expected (15)</p> <p>I am willing to spend my time making sure that they do or</p>	<p>Profession/educator</p> <p>Time</p>	<p>Educator background</p>	
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<p>they complete the task that they are supposed to or they get what they need to (6)</p> <p>I started making my own home schooling...so that they don't fall behind and so that they stay on task and so that they have some kind of normal routine (6)</p> <p>I spend so much time trying to, you know, help them succeed in their education (6)</p>			
<p>What we've been doing during homeschooling is watching science videos (12)</p> <p>We just started the science videos (13)</p>	<p>Distance learning</p>		<p>Academic resources</p>
<p>We do a nightly Bible study (12)</p> <p>I was telling my husband that I wanted them to start watching, you know, some kind of, history channel (12)</p> <p>I kind of want the kids to pick up Spanish as well (14)</p>	<p>Supplemental</p>	<p>Religious background</p>	
<p>Hey what do you think of that school? (15)</p> <p>I'm kind of waiting and seeing, but I'm definitely checking out all my options (15)</p> <p>I definitely want to speak with their teacher (16)</p>	<p>School choice</p>	<p>Resources/supports</p>	