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Cultural Hybridity: A Case Study On Hmong Teen Identity

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CULTURAL HYBRIDITY: A CASE STUDY ON HMONG TEEN IDENTITY

by

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A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in English as a Second Language

Hamline University

Saint Paul, Minnesota

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“I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed.”

Booker T. Washington

“THE ULTIMATE MEASURE OF A MAN is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”

Martin Luther King Jr.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to my mother who inspires me to be more than I can ever imagine; my husband for his endless trust and faith in me; my children who are the light of my life; my committee for their guidance, dedication, and commitment in building culturally competent teachers; to all the educators in my life who give me the courage and strength to keep moving forward; and above all, to my God who has brought me to a country where education, knowledge, and opportunities are accessible.
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Chapter One

Introduction

They assured us that there wouldn’t be any Hmong men that would date us because we were Poj Laibs [gangster girls] due to our newly dyed hair. Even if there was someone who would, their parents would not approve because they can immediately distinguish that we were Poj Laibs. My mom immediately dragged us to a local Hmong hair salon to undue this treachery. It was one of the most embarrassing moments of our lives....I am a Poj Laib because my hair is brown, my eyebrows are on fleek, my lips are bright red, and the list goes on. You get the point here, everything I have done in the past to discover my individuality, skills, and strengths were considered “POJ LAIB” moves. Vang (2015)

The Researcher’s Background

While growing up I was identified and negated by my race, ethnicity, gender, and status. I was rejected, discriminated, and stereotyped by those who share my culture and those that did not. Through the death of my father in the Secret War, I was identified and perceived as an orphan girl. I didn’t bring honor to my dad’s family. My low status and gender did not assist much. Being raised by my widowed mother, I was suppressed, segregated, and marginalized by those I loved and those that hated me. The identities I developed and buried deep inside my heart, mind, and soul became the driving forces of my future. This is why racial and ethnic identities in adolescent Hmong girls is such an interesting topic for me to investigate.

Using the Four Fold Ways, as a base, this research brings to the forefront the

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1 Mai Der Vang (MD) is the founder of Hmondern which develops and sells modern Hmong apparel and accessories online. She developed the popular Poj Laib t-shirt that inspires Hmong girls to find their identities. In her articles, The Inspiration Behind Hmodern’s Poj Laib Label T-shirt, MD explained how she found the courage to overcome the poj liab [gangster girl] label. The word “poj liabs” [gangster girls] is a term used in the 1990s to identify and negate Hmong girls who were perceived not meeting the culture norms. Retrieved from https://hmondern.wordpress.com/2015/06/11/the-inspiration-behind-hmonderns-poj-laib-label-t-shirt/

2 The Four-Fold Ways is proposed by Angeles Arrien. The framework consists of four guiding principles on how to lead a life of quality and integrity.
impact of educators’ beliefs, dedications, attitudes, and visions that impact culturally and linguistically diverse students’ racial and ethnic identities and successes. While there are many types of identities, racial and ethnic identities are an important part of how adolescents see themselves and how others see them. In John Hattie’s book (2013), he proposed that the success of students is about who teaches where and how, and what teachers know and do. After years of research, his conclusion was very different. It’s not what teachers know and do, but rather what they think that leads to certain behaviors and practices. The deficit perceptions can impact students’ intellectual and identity development (Hattie, 2013). This is even more evident when race and ethnicity are introduced into the picture. As a result of this research, a coalition of past, present, and future educators who are willing to forsake colorblindness is gaining ground. These educators move toward cultural proficiency by examining their beliefs, attitudes, dedication, and vision that are inhibiting inequities for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Increasing awareness will lead educators to engage in courageous and transformative conversations to examine schools’ programs, practices, procedures, and policies and ensure they are more equitable for all students. This is morally imperative.

**Becoming Self-Aware**

Understanding how cultures shape who we are and where we fit in society is the first step in developing awareness about our racial and ethnic identities. In developing our

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3 Cultural proficiency is an approach that demonstrates the practitioner the self-awareness to recognize how practitioners—because of ethnicity, culture and life experiences—may affect others, as well as what the practitioners offer to others. By building on the practitioners contextualized knowledge of themselves and that of the communities and the identities of children and families, the practitioners possess a multi-cultural competence that “incorporates a deep understanding of race, racism, and the contemporary contexts of schooling.” (Murrell & Wisconsin Response to Intervention)
awareness, we consciously examine the way cultures shape what we value, what we assume to be right or wrong, and how we act on those values and assumptions over time that shift our perceptions about who we are positively or negatively (Wisconsin RtI Center, 2013). The values and assumptions we inherit become the powerful sources of our beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, and affect our awareness regarding our racial and ethnic identities and, ultimately, our interactions and relationships with other people. Constructing our own racial and ethnic identities is not a final destination but rather an on-going process. The more aware of who we are and the extent to which we have been influenced by our experience, the more we can take responsibility to examine those values and assumptions and test them against the reality of what we have been conditioned not to see or think. For we see the world, not as it is, but as we are - or as we are conditioned to see it (Covey, 2004).

**Colorblindness**

For culturally and linguistically diverse students, being immersed in a society made up largely of members of the same racial group will influence adolescents to engage in exploration of their own cultural and racial identities at a later age (Moua, 2014). Without accessing opportunities, the lack of developmental progression toward racial and ethnic identity awareness can lead to systemic and systematic colorblindness impacting all students, families, and communities.

Colorblindness is the racial ideology that posits the best way to end discrimination is by treating individuals as equally as possible, without regard to race, culture, or ethnicity (Williams, 2011). While systemic and systematic colorblindness go hand in hand, systemic colorblindness extends beyond the classrooms, the teachers, and the
students. Systemic colorblindness is the inter-relatedness and interdependency of how race is perceived based on the system’s beliefs, values, and practices. According to the Cultural Proficiency Continuum (see Appendix B), systemic colorblindness explicitly and implicitly exhibits certain characteristics (e.g. stereotyping, blaming, tolerance, exclusion, avoidance of cultural dissonance, etc.,) toward students and families. This thinking encourages educators not to perceive racial and ethnic identities as relevant in their policies, programs, practices, and procedures. The institutional practices and beliefs create large gaps in students’ abilities to access experienced teachers and enrichment courses. An analysis done by the OTL Campaign of the Civil Rights Data Collection reveals the fact that 3,000 schools do not offer Algebra 2 classes—thus excluding some 5,000,000 students; 2 million students do not have access to calculus classes and 15% of English learners in grades 9-12 enroll in algebra as the highest-level math courses taken by the final year of their high school career (Schott Foundation, 2011). The dangers of systemic colorblindness are a) educators and educational systems do not place the onus on themselves to change this discrepancy but rather perceive students and families as a problem to be solved; b) educators who are not “multiculturally competent” about their students and families do not have the knowledge and skills to incorporate a deep and sophisticated understanding of race, racism to the contemporary contexts of schooling and will continue to perpetuate racism (Murrell, 2007) and c) colorblindness does not allow for educators to recognize culturally and linguistically diverse students’ negative racial experiences, rejects their cultural heritage, and invalidates their unique perspectives (Williams, 2011). For culturally and linguistically diverse students in US Midwest mainstream culture, the lack of exposure and engagement in their racial and ethnic
identities leads them to (a) feel shame or disconnect toward their own racial and ethnic identities; (b) generate misconceptions about their racial and ethnic identities inhibiting self-awareness; (c) allow themselves to be conditioned and colonized by US Midwest mainstream culture’s beliefs, values, and practices instead of exploring their native cultures; and (d) underperform in various academic areas due again to a low level of self-awareness. In 1995 Claude Steele (as cited in Skelton, 2012) found that when a student’s social identity is attached to a negative stereotype, that student will tend to underperform in a manner consistent with the stereotype.

In order to eliminate the colorblindness that continues to segregate and marginalize culturally and linguistically diverse students, educators who are culturally competent must draw from a deep and sophisticated understanding of race and culture (Murrell, 2007) and use a range of inclusive teaching strategies and assessment tools that go beyond the traditional (Wisconsin Department of Instruction, 2013). These educators support and encourage students to become critically conscious and knowledgeable about their own cultures. They also draw from multiple perspectives to help their students relate respectfully to cultures other than their own (Hollie, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

**Why Racial and Ethnic Identities Are Morally Imperative**

With the rapid changes in the racial and ethnic composition of our nation, understanding racial and ethnic identities’ construction has gained increasing theoretical, empirical, and practical salience. With each passing year, the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students continue to increase, and may soon outnumber European American students. This demographic shift makes the issues relating to the development of culturally and linguistically diverse students central themes in education today. The
U.S. Census (2010) reported that two-thirds of all American children are projected to be students of color by 2050 who will speak over nine dominant languages including Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Hindi, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Arabic (REL Mid-Atlantic, 2005; Shin, H.B. & Ortman, J.M, 2011; Wong, 2011). Educational systems have a tremendous responsibility to work collaboratively and cohesively for the better good of our children. It is critical that educational systems change. They must respond to the demographic shifts in society that have caused major changes in student population and in the needs of the students’ families (Wisconsin RtI Center, 2013, Nuri-Robins et al, 2007, p. 18).

**Achievement Gaps**

Achievement gaps of culturally and linguistically diverse students in K-12 are among the worst in the nation. In the US Midwest region, nearly 50,000 English Learners, over 100,000 students with disabilities, a quarter of a million students of color, and more than 350,000 students receiving free and reduced lunch are underserved and as a result underperform when compared to mainstream students (Wisconsin RtI Center, 2013). Out of the 50,000 English Learners, 9,000 English Learner are Hmong students, making them the second largest ethnic subgroup to receive language acquisition services across the 424 school districts. Appendix C illustrates the disproportionalities among these various subgroups (Wisconsin Department

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4 Achievement gap refers to the academic disparity or the inequitable distribution of educational results and benefits. This means one group of students outperforms another group and the difference in average scores for the two groups is statistically significant. The opportunity gap refers to the disparity in access to quality schools and the resources needed for all students to be academically successful. The opportunity gap puts the responsibility back on the system and educators to close the academic achievement gaps that separate one group of students from another group.
Critical Consciousness Regarding Racial and Ethnic Identities. In 2014 of 66,702 educators, 94% are white educators, 72% are white female, and 76% are female educators (Wisconsin Response to Intervention, 2015). Now think about the culture and values of an educational institution. How does it operate? Does it operate under the practice of inclusiveness and acceptance of diversity within its walls? Educators need to make the conscious choice to see students not as they are stereotyped as a generalized group, but as unique, experiential individuals (Hollie, 2012). For culturally and linguistically diverse students who are not from the US Midwest mainstream culture, constructing strong racial and ethnic identities is critical in their journey of self-knowledge and understanding. As students continue to construct their racial and ethnic identities, their confidence increases and leads to positive self-image and self-esteem (Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine, & Broadnax, 1994). For students from the US Midwest mainstream culture, racial and ethnic identities are invisible and unconscious because societal norms have been constructed around their racial, ethnic, and cultural frameworks, values, and priorities (Chavez & Guido-DiBrito, 1999). Therefore, it is essential for educators to understand their own cultural and racial identities as a catalyst to understanding the individual identities of their students and families. When educators understand and validate the families and communities they serve, they’re likely to (a) commit to eliminate race as a predictor of success or failure, (b) develop awareness about their frames of reference as well as their students and families, and (c) recognize and treat each person as a “dynamic blend” of cultures and roles with vastly individual differences (Zion & Kozleski, 2005). Rather than culturally and linguistically diverse students and
their families abandoning who they are in order to be successful in the US Midwest mainstream culture, educators and schools who are demonstrating cultural competency in their day-to-day interactions with students and families operate by the mantra that all staff are responsible for all students. (Wisconsin Department of Instruction, 2013).

**Overview of the Research**

Standing on the shoulders of culturally responsive practices and equity scholars, the research is designed to examine how historically marginalized and underserved second-generation adolescent Hmong girls in high school, who are immersed in US Midwest mainstream culture, construct their racial and ethnic identities. This research seeks to examine the unique exploration component that may influence the different developmental pathways of racial and ethnic identities in Hmong adolescent girls.

**Research Questions.** The two research questions stemming from the study are:

(1) How do adolescent Hmong girls construct their own racial and ethnic identities within the Hmong and dominant White cultures?

(2) How does exposure to Hmong women of influence impact their racial and ethnic identities?

**Summary of the Chapter**

Chapter One focuses on (a) why racial and ethnic identities need to be examined particularly for students who are underserved and underperform in current educational systems; (b) what data reveal the achievement gaps in the United States, particularly in Wisconsin; and (c) what adult behaviors are perpetuating segregation and oppression for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

The upcoming chapter focuses on systemic root causes, culturally responsive
practices framework, the historical journey and transition of the Hmong people, and the literature review of multiple racial and ethnic models.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

Chapter 2 provides the background necessary to (a) understand systemic root causes that have a profound impact on racial and ethnic identities’ construction; (b) examine research-based framework that is shown to have a positive impact on student identities and achievements; and (c) review and analyze multiple racial and ethnic models. The following paragraphs delve into the six Dynamics of Domination, culturally responsive practices and multicultural education, the history of the Hmong people, and the racial and ethnic models. The purpose of engaging in this process is simple: if educators do not understand deeply one’s own realities, it is very hard to help students successfully negotiate their own realities, much less their racial and ethnic identities (Linton, 2011).

Institutional Systems’ Impact On Racial and Ethnic Identities

The Unintentional Six Dynamics of Domination. The Midwest has the highest achievement gaps in the nation for students of color, specifically for Black, Native Americans and English Learners who are predominantly Hispanics/Latino/a and Hmong. In Dr. Asa Hiliard’s six Dynamics of Domination (as cited in Hudson & Versalles, 2016), he explains systemic processes that are implemented and sustained to segregate and eliminate the history, culture, and language of minority groups. In integrating the research design, it is critical to examine the Six Dynamics of Domination. The purpose of using the Six Dynamics of Domination is to peel back the layers of educators’ lenses and
fill in the gaps where the six Dynamics of Domination exist in educational systems. The subsequent paragraphs attempt to examine the six Dynamics of Domination that exist intentionally or unintentionally in schools’ policies, procedures, practices, and programs, and that influence the racial and ethnic identities of underserved students.

The first Dynamic of Domination is “Erasure of Group Memory.” This is the act of erasing the historical memory of Black people. It prevents Black people from engaging, interpreting, and responding to social, political, and cultural stimuli in the interests of their own culture and thus depriving them of their own cultural narratives. In various interpretations, without a consistent and coherent history that make sense, it can be challenging to find one’s place in the world.

The second dynamic is “Suppressing the Practices of Black Culture.” In this dynamic, the effort is to destroy group unity by preventing and suppressing the practices of Black culture from building and maintaining cultural institutions that would enable group unity, which then engenders economic and political power.

The third dynamic is “To Teach White Supremacy.” After the historical memory of the Black population has been erased and replaced with a white supremacist narrative, the Black population is placed in a position where it begins to reject its own image and becomes less Black in conscious behaviors. Black people who have been victimized by these processes tend to identify themselves primarily with European and Arab cultural institutions in religion, language, nation state, etc. These behaviors are passed down to

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5 Disclaimer: The Six Dynamics of Domination pertain to Black Americans of African descendants who spanned centuries of slavery and almost 100 years of Jim Crow. However, despite demographic shifts, the Six Dynamics of Domination continue as the mechanism of racial exclusion that supports structural inequalities, institutional practices, and racial ideologies for all culturally and linguistically diverse students and families.
their descendants even though they may not have experienced actual physical oppression.

The fourth dynamic is “To Control the Institutions of Socialization.” This is the prevention of Black people from re-learning, teaching and practicing their own cultures and cultural narratives. The fifth Dynamic is the “Control of Wealth” that prevents Black people from controlling the economic resources necessary to finance their own development. Finally, the sixth Dynamic is “Physical Segregation.” The effort is to prevent Black people from gaining access to developmental resources otherwise made available to the oppressors’ group.

The six Dynamics of Domination described here can be considered one of the root causes of why colorblindness permeates our educational systems’ visions, beliefs, and practices about educating the whole child. Whether educators are conscious of this or not, educational systems influence racial and ethnic identity development. Phinney states “attitude toward one’s ethnicity is central to the psychological functioning of those who live in societies where their group and its culture are at best poorly represented….and are at worst discriminated against or even attacked verbally and physically” (1990). Moreover, in Garcia Coll et al.’s Integrative Model, school, church, and neighborhood, etc. interact with the children’s individual characteristics, affecting their identity development. These contexts can either support the growth of children and protect them against harmful encounters with racism, prejudice, and discrimination, or present challenges, obstacles, and hurdles to optimal development (Garcia Coll & Szalacha, 2004; Moua, 2014). As educators, we all need to be aware that historically and traditionally, the current beliefs, practices, policies, and curricular materials have been reflective of European American thought, knowledge, and perspectives which continue to
dominate present society (Sleeter, 2010). But the purpose of free public education is to make sure all students have equitable access to learning opportunities that prepare them for life opportunities.

The next paragraphs will focus on culturally responsive practices; how educators can implement and sustain equitable practices to meet the needs of all the students.

**Culturally Responsive Practices**

Culturally responsive practices are defined as practices that account for and adapt to the broad diversity of race, language, and culture in Wisconsin schools and prepare all students for a multicultural world (Wisconsin Responsive to Intervention, 2013). By engaging in culturally responsive practices, educators demonstrate proficiency by (a) honoring students’ cultural beliefs and traditions; (b) thinking of all their students as capable learners by examining and instilling high expectations and goals with and for their students; (c) drawing on the students’ own experiences to assist in their learning; (d) using a variety of teaching strategies and skills to engage the students; (e) helping students deal with inequitable treatment by becoming critically conscious and knowledgeable about the students' culture; and (f) creating a bridge between the students’ home and school lives while meeting district and state curricular requirements. These critical features provide space and time for educators to transform their passions and commitments (known as the will), knowledge, and skills to implement and sustain a multicultural education that empowers all students to become knowledgeable, caring, and active participants in their communities. Education that is multicultural is inclusive and

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6 The Wisconsin Model to Inform Culturally Responsive Practices elaborates the recursive process of becoming culturally responsive.
respectful of all ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds and engages staff, families, students, and communities (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Wisconsin Response to Intervention, 2013).

Expert scholars, such as Richards, Brown, & Ford (2007), Sleeter (2010), Ladson-Billings (1995) and Gay (2009), et al., (as cited by Great Lakes Equity Center, 2015) have proposed the need for culturally responsive practices and culturally sustained curriculum. They stress culturally responsive educators must (a) question whether the curriculum represents the students they serve, and raise their social and political consciousness to critique cultural norms, values and institutions that produce and maintain inequities (Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Paris & Alim, 2014); (b) engage students to gain deeper understanding of the world around them; (c) provide instructional strategies to support teachers in meeting the needs of all their students when traditional curricula reflect cultural and linguistic insensitivities, omissions, and biases (Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2007); (d) provide teachers and students a more comprehensive and authentic profile of history, life and cultures in the United States and around the world, thus preparing them for a more multicultural world (Gay, 2009); and (e) use the realities, histories, and perspectives of students as an integral part of educational practice (Ladson-Billings, 1995). These strategies ensure that the sharing of knowledge (known as co-share) occurs in a culturally supportive, learner-centered environment in which historically marginalized students see themselves included and reflected in the lessons.\(^7\) (Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2007; Sleeter, 2010;

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\(^7\) The practice is known as windows and mirrors: reimagining the learning environment and curricular materials where students see themselves. More information available from Wisconsin Response to Intervention and the National SEED Project.
To pursue culturally responsive practices and multicultural education, educators within the system must possess unwavering beliefs, attitudes, dedication, and vision in making sure all student have equitable access and resources to learn at high levels. This is the work of eliminating racial inequities in education systems. This grass-root movement is not a method, program, standard or checklist, rather it is a mind-set. It must be the institution’s will, knowledge, and skills examining what must be in place to match and support students’ academic and behavioral needs. Curtis Linton (2011) says it best, “…educators will personally and collectively embrace the purpose of their work to individually support and instruct each student so that all learn what they need, when they need it, and in the way each student learns best.”

A Community in Transition

Honoring Hmong cultural assets and increasing comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the Hmong people can influence current and future educators to develop the will, knowledge, and skills to examine systemic practices, policies, and programs that are negatively impacting racial and ethnic identities. The following paragraphs attempt to elaborate on the historical and current demographics of the Hmong, the acculturation difficulties they experience, and the historical and current inequities faced by Hmong adolescent girls in the United States.

The Historical and Demographics of the Hmong. In an effort to prohibit communists from taking control over Southeast Asia, the Hmong were recruited to engage with the United States in a Central Intelligence Agency-led ground operation in Laos from the early 1960s to 1973. The Hmong were in charge of disrupting communist
supply lines, engaging in battles, rescuing downed pilots, etc., (Lloyd-George, 2011). A majority of the historical documents reflect Hmong men and boys engaging in the war. Women and children were left in villages to care for the youngest children, elders, and the homes (Leary, 2007). In 1973, the United States pulled out of Laos leaving the Hmong to fend for themselves; this was one of the catalysts for continuing the historical immigration of the Hmong people. The earliest Hmong refugees were mainly soldiers and their families. Due to post-war hardships, including declining economic conditions, crop failure due to ineffective communist farm collectivization schemes and drought, and repression of past and ongoing resistance activities Hmong found the need to escape Laos. By December 1975, approximately 3,500 Hmong settled in the United States. Today 250,000 Hmong have settled in the United States residing heavily in California, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Wisconsin. Minnesota is home to the second largest number of Hmong with over 63,000 individuals. Wisconsin has a total Hmong population of 48,000 with Milwaukee having the greatest number followed by Wausau, Madison, Sheboygan, and Green Bay (Moua, 2014).

**Acculturation Difficulties & Intergenerational Conflicts.** While the foreign-born Hmong make up less than one-half of one percent of the foreign-born population in the United States, they account for approximately 10 percent of immigrants in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Of the 31.1 million foreign born in the United States, 30 percent identified themselves as Hmong in 2000 (Yau, 2005). In comparison, approximately 42%-44% of Asian American youth under the age of 18 are Hmong and this continues to rise. (Pfeifer, Sullivan, Yang, & Yang, 2013; Pfeifer & Thao, 2013; Center for American Progress, 2015). Hmong adolescents continue to define, redefine, and construct their
racial and ethnic identities and at the same time, adolescent Hmong compete for cultural space among the definition of who is “Asian American” or specifically who is “Hmong or Hmong American”. This leads the researcher to examine acculturation difficulties and intergenerational conflicts between Hmong parents and adolescents in the United States.

Racial and ethnic intergenerational conflict and intersectionality are still relatively new concepts. Researchers in the field describe how these concepts influence racial and ethnic identities between first generation foreign-born parents and their younger children. Tang and O’Brien (1990), Tatman (2001), Dominico, Bautista, Crawford and Wolfe (1994) explain that while younger Hmong generations are gradually embracing the US mainstream culture and identities over their racial and ethnic identities, foreign-born Hmong parents continue maintaining their own distinct identities. With more exposure and opportunities in the US Midwest mainstream culture, Hmong adolescents are likely to be influenced by the mainstream culture, which could lead to cultural clash or tensions with older generations. Scholars explain cultural tensions may “occur when parental cultural values clash with children’s internalization of the new society’s cultural expectations and values” (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008, p. 70). Some of these tensions may include, but are not limited to, some of the cultural precepts\(^8\) such as family obligations, cultural understandings and expectations, marriages, beliefs, values, and practices. For instance, Phinney, Ong and Madden assessed adolescents and parents’ endorsement level of family obligations as an indicator of intergenerational conflict. For U.S. born adolescents and their foreign-born parents, the value discrepancy between parents and adolescents was larger. Parents generally reported a strong sense of family obligation but

\(^8\) Cultural precepts can be found in Appendix H
the adolescents did not have the same strong sense of family obligation (Moua, 2014).

**Marginalization of Hmong Women.** Despite the disadvantages and challenges that arise from intergenerational conflicts and intersectionality, Hmong women and adolescent girls have benefitted from their US Midwest mainstream culture personal liberties to obtain resources and opportunities such as higher education, achieving careers of their choice, and becoming increasing independent. However, in the conceptualization that America is the “land of opportunities,” Hmong girls’ advantages and self-determinations continue to be undercut, undermined, and devalued in their traditional culture. This historical trend can be traced back to China, Vietnam, Laos, and many other Asian countries where agriculture was the dominant economic resource and large families were needed to supply for high demands. Although the underlying causes may vary, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2010) child labour, the affordability of education, discrimination and low expectations, and traditional cultural practices and beliefs contributed to the marginalization of Hmong girls. Many girls were restricted from attaining educational opportunities and were forced to engage in early marriages and/or arranged marriages. Historically, Hmong women and girls have expressed limited access to equitable resources. In the early 1970s and 1980s, many first and second generation Hmong girls dropped out of school and engaged in early marriages even as they emerged in the US Midwest mainstream culture. Traditional cultural practices and marriage expectations were also common and passed down from generation to generation. Today, many Hmong adolescent girls are expected to manage household responsibilities, embrace the Hmong culture, demonstrate academic excellence, and submit to marriage suitors bound to discontinue carrying on their family
name but much needed to uphold the family’s honor. The legacy of dominance stripping away the identities of Hmong girls is too organic, current, and real in the communities as a high percentage of Hmong parents still embrace the belief and practice that Hmong girls are raised to become “nyab” or “wives/daughter-in-laws”. This deficient mindset perpetuates the cycle of oppression and segregation not only on the first generation of Hmong women, but more harshly on today’s Hmong adolescent girls who are taught to embrace such belief.

**Summary of Studies on Racial and Ethnic Identities**

Racial and ethnic identities’ construction is a complex evolutionary process. The following paragraphs define the manifestations of racial and ethnic identities from various dimensions. However, keep mind in that particular dimensions of identities are not seen as separate and distinct but rather as interrelated or interconnected to all other facets of one’s identities. They depend on contextual influences including the unequal power distribution and structural inequities that exist for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

**Racial Identity.** Race is a social construct based on visible physical features. In the United States the general public tends to recognize five primary racial groups: Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, White, Hispanic/Latino/a, and American Indian/Alaskan Native. Since race is categorically manufactured or socially constructed to distinguish a group of people based on physical characteristics and not origins, racial identity can derive from a biological dimension (Spickard, 1992) or a social dimension (Helms, 1995). Under social dimension, racial identity is based on the individual's’ perceptions that they share a common heritage with a particular racial group (Helms, 1993). The
biological dimension argues that racial identity can be categorized based on skin color (O’Hearn, 1998; Linton, 2011). The use of skin color is one of several labeling tools that permit individuals and groups to identify, classify, and categorize themselves from those they consider different from themselves (Chávez, Guido-DiBrito, and Mallory, 1996 & 2003). Although racial identity is a surface-level manifestation, it has deep implications in how society constructs our identities, how we interact with the world, and how the world interacts with us.

**Ethnic Identity.** Ethnicity identity is viewed as an individual’s identification with “a segment of a larger society whose members have a common origin, share segments of a common culture, and participate in shared activities in which the common origin and culture are significant ingredients” (Yinger, 1976). To expand upon Yinger’s definition, ethnic identity refers to the individual’s complex level of personal, social, and historical relationship, identification and interaction with their ethnic communities. Ethnic identity includes common ancestries, shared histories, shared traditions, and shared cultural traits such as language, beliefs, values, music, dress, and food. Through ethnic identity construction, individuals explore what it means to be a member of an ethnic group and to develop a strong sense of ethnic pride (Moua, 2014).

**Models on Ethnic and Racial Identity Development**

Much of the credit for the definition of racial and ethnic identities should be attributed to W.E.B. Du Bois. In 1903, W.E.B. Du Bois developed the double consciousness concept in his publication, The *Souls of Black Folk*. Du Bois spoke of this within the context of race relations in the United States. He asserted that Black Americans lived in a society that historically repressed and devalued Black identities,
making it difficult to unify their identities. Du Bois’ contribution around identities influenced the psychosocial research Erik Erikson and his perception of the African American identity movement (Hud-Aleem, R., Countryman, J., & Gillig, P., 2008).

**Racial Identity Development Models.** Many scholars such as Cross, Helms, and Kim have explored racial identity and proposed constructive models throughout the years. Their research and projects have continuously influenced our understanding of how identities are constructed in various racial groups in the United States. In the following paragraphs, the researcher will elaborate on the models they present as well as identify the gaps within the models.

**Nigrescense Model of American Identity.** Cross (1971) developed the Nigrescense Model of African American Identity; a “resocialization experience” that was later revised in 1991 to the People of Color Racial Identity Model (1995). Racial identity construction is a progressive transformation. Under the proposed model, Black individuals transform from complete unawareness of race (non-Afrocentric) to confidently embracing Black culture (Afrocentric) and exclusively committed to many cultures by addressing the concerns of all oppressed groups and not judging people based on race but rather on the content of their character (multicultural identity) (Hud-Aleem, R., Countryman, J., & Gillig, P., 2008). Cross’s early work is problematic in that began from the premise that racial construction is linear. Once individuals transition through the stages, they reach the final stage of race utopia - the acceptance of all races.

Unfortunately, we know that racism and implicit biases are alive and well in our policies, procedures, practices, and structures and continue to perpetuate segregation and oppression. This is why there is the existence of learning disparity and disproportionality
for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

**White Racial Identity Model.** Helms (1993 & 1995) developed one of the first white racial identity development models. Her model presupposes the existence of white superiority and institutional racism. The White Racial Identity Model involves two phases and six sequential stages. Phase one is abandoning racism. Under this phase, individuals transition from being oblivious to their racial identity to acknowledging their white identity, to accepting the belief that White is superior and then begin to question their own racial identity. In phase two, individuals move from accepting their own race, to recognizing racism and the significance of Whiteness, to internalizing a multi-cultural identity. Helms’s model is helpful in outlining interracial exposure as a powerful trigger for the development of racial identity. The challenge in the model is that white identity is highly valued. Individuals belonging to a highly valued group do not perceive the urgency and relevancy of examining their identities when socially and politically they have been insulated from the need to examine or talk about race (DiAngelo, 2011).

Further guidance around the model is needed to increase educators’ awareness.

**Asian American Identity Development Model.** Kim (1981) developed the five stages of Asian American identity development. In Kim’s interviews with Japanese American women, she proposed that Japanese Asian Americans developed their identities by resolving initial identity conflicts through the process of the five stages. In the first stage, the individual's’ interactions with families and friends lead to ethnic awareness or a consciousness of their Japanese’s descent. In the second stage, contact with white society results in a sense of being different from peers leading to alienation from self and other Asian Americans. In the third stage, Japanese Asian Americans develop sociopolitical
consciousness - a new awareness of themselves and of their rights as minorities with a feeling of alienation from whites. The fourth stage involves the redirection of experiences toward Asian American consciousness and the gradual emergence of an Asian American identity. This is characterized by the women’s ability to relate to different groups of people without losing their identities as Asian Americans. The challenge in the model is the premise that individuals develop the feelings of alienation from whites when they get to stages three and five. But the feelings of alienation from whites can occur spontaneously and in any stage based on the sociocultural context in which the individuals are immersed or acculturated in and regardless of their ethno centric or multicultural acknowledgment. Moreover, the third stage coincides with the sociopolitical movements of the 1960s and the 1970s. An individual's consciousness of his/her rights depends on his/her level of engagement in social-political movements and in his/her racial and ethnic self-awareness.

**Ethnic Identity Development Models.** Erikson’s Psychosocial Theory and Marcia’s Personal Identity Developmental models have been central to the developmental framework that current scholars have relied on to conceptualize and measure ethnic identity. These developmental models are described in the below paragraphs to ground the research. Next, the current models of ethnicity are presented including Marcia’s Personal Identity Development, Perry G. Horse’s consciousness framework, Phinney’s Three Stages Model of Ethnic Identity, and Sue’s five different stages of a progressive development.

**Marcia’s Personal Identity Development.** James Marcia set forth his four-status model of ego identity development on the basis of Erikson’s theory. Each status is
determined by one’s degree of exploration and commitment (Kroger, 2003; Marcia, 1980). Exploration involves the extent to which individuals search and explore identities and experience crisis or no crisis. Commitment represents the degree to which individuals make decisions regarding their identities. The four identity statuses are: (a) identity diffusion: have not experienced an identity crisis nor made identity commitments; (b) foreclosure: make an identity commitment based on external influences without exploration; (c) moratorium: explore and experiment with options but have not made a commitment (identity crisis); and (d) achievement: explore options and make a commitment. The issue with Marcia’s model is that it focuses on individual and/or ego identity rather than racial and ethnic identities, which are more dynamic and nuanced. Moreover, recently researchers have begun examining identity development in terms of continuous growth as opposed to discrete changes as emphasized in the four stages. Finally, due to experiences, backgrounds, knowledge, accesses and resources, this model best fits individuals from US Midwest mainstream culture and do not help define diverse ethnicities.

**Five Influences.** Perry G. Horse (2005) developed a framework to describe Native American cultural identity based on collective and individually shared common ethnics and experiences. He refers to this framework as collective consciousness and identifies five influences that affect Native American “consciousness”. The five influences affect Native Americans in terms of their ethnic values, beliefs, and practices including the meaning of tribe and family, spirituality, harmony, balance and humor. These five influences include (a) “the extent to which one is grounded in one’s Native American language and culture, one’s cultural identity”; (b) “the validity of one’s Native
genealogy”; (c) “the extent to which one holds traditional Native American philosophies and worldviews (e.g. emphasizing balance and harmony, and drawing on spirituality)”;
(d) “one’s self concept as a Native American”; and (e) “whether or not one is enrolled in a tribe”. This framework is important in terms of addressing triggers for the development of ethnic identity. However, it is important to understand that people experience their cultural connections in unique ways. The variation of cultural identity in Native American individuals is a collective orientation and can be viewed as a continuum that ranges between one who views himself or herself as “traditional” and lives their traditional cultural daily, to one who views himself or herself as “Indian” or “Native” but has little knowledge or interest in their traditional cultural practices. Furthermore, an individual’s consciousness may change throughout their lifespan as they are exposed to different experiences, circumstances, and connections to one’s elders, tribes, family, and community.

**Phinney’s Three Stages Model of Ethnic Identity.** Drawing on the basis of Marcia’s (1980) conceptualization of Erikson’s (1968) theory of identity development, Phinney (1989 & 1990) proposed a model of ethnic identity development for members of all ethnic groups in which individuals progress through three parts. The first part is called unexamined ethnic identity. This is the affective component which measures how strongly the individual feel a sense of belonging and commitment to their ethnic community. This component is associated with how positive people’s feelings are toward their ethnic identities. The second part of the model is called ethnic identity search (or exploration). This is the cognitive component, which focuses on the extent to which individuals adopt or demonstrate interest in their cultural and ethnic identities: their
histories, traditions, and values. In this stage, ethnic minority children become aware of cultural values and actively search for learning opportunities. The third part is the achieved ethnic identity. This is the behavioral component where individuals reach clear meanings of their ethnic identity.

**Five Stages of Progressive Ethnic Identity.** Sue (1981) suggests there are five stages of a progressive development of Asian American ethnic identity. The first stage is the conformity period. During the conformity period, individuals experience a reflective time of focusing on the negotiation of one's' ethnic identity in the broader context of the value the US Midwest mainstream culture has placed on one's’ group membership, which often results from media bias. The second stage is dissonance. Individuals recognize contradictions between the negative external conceptions and the positive personal perceptions of their ethnicity identities. Chun's (2000) explanation of Asian Americans' period of identity crisis describes this stage well: "Asian Americans, who no longer wish to ascribe to white norms and values ... realize that self-contempt and confusion were natural responses to the disciplining and defining gaze of white America." It is during this phase that individuals realize their status as minorities and the racial and ethnic prejudices that accompany their positions. As a result, individuals enter the third stage of resistance and immersion where the individual proactively seeks to immerse him/herself in their ethnic cultures and traditions. It is during this stage that individuals actively search for instances of racial or ethnic prejudice against their ethnic groups. However, as resistance and immersion continues, a fourth stage of introspection occurs. In the introspection stage, individuals realize the negative aspects of full immersion and outward resistance. Integrative awareness eventually surfaces and individuals are able to
reconcile the conflicts within the US Midwest mainstream culture and their own culture as they transition to bicultural.

**Challenges to Phinney’s & Sue’s Models of Ethnic Identity.** There are several challenges with Phinney’s three stages model and Sue’s five stages of Asian American ethnic identity model. All ethnicities and cultures are uniquely different in terms of their origins and experiences with oppression and marginalization. The historical experiences influence the way adolescent Hmong perceive themselves and how society perceives them. When educators disaggregate data for Asian Americans, certain Asian American adolescents do not need to negotiate their ethnic identities intensively because the negotiation of their identities, in the broader context of the value society, has placed their group members at a higher value level as compared to other Asian American subgroups. This is very prevalent among Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Hindu students as compared to Hmong, Laos, Karen, Cambodian, etc., Tajfel (1978) predicted that groups held in low regard by society would internalize these negative attitudes and characteristics and are adversely affected. Additionally, the dynamics of family beliefs and cultures play a significant role in the ethnic identities of the individuals. In Moua’s (2014) ethnic socialization subscales, cultural heritage has the strongest association with ethnic identity for Hmong adolescents than any of the other six ethnic socialization subscales. Developing a sense of ethnic identity can occur from shared culture, religion, geography, and language that are connected by strong loyalty and kinship as well as proximity (Torres, 1996). Furthermore, while Phinny ‘s and Sue’s models focus on linear and progressive approaches and the behaviors of individuals in constructing their own identities through self-determination and commitment, there is an increasing effort to
examine the whole individual including their cultural assets through a continuum identity development process. Moreover, Phinney’s model needs further examination and expansion. Each part contains valid information that is valuable and critical to understanding racial and ethnic identities. More research is needed to strengthen the model and its parts.

Summary of the Chapter

Chapter Two elaborates on systemic beliefs, values, practices, programs and policies that intentionally influence the way adolescent Hmong girls construct their racial and ethnic identities over time. Culturally responsive practices as well as understanding the transition of the Hmong community are discussed to provide educators the knowledge and skills to take the onus in pursuing a multicultural education where cultural differences are honored and strengthened.

The upcoming chapter will explore further into the research process and how the process is connected to the literature review found in this chapter.
Chapter Three

Methodology

Introduction

The intention of the research process is to build upon Phinney’s exploration concept and expand the understanding of what is and how do adolescent Hmong girls construct their racial and ethnic identities. In the following paragraphs, the researcher attempts to address four critical questions: (a) what kind of data is needed; (b) how will the methods yield the data needed to address the research questions; (c) how will the data link to the literature review; and (d) what is the method of inquiry.

Types of Data Needed

This research design requires both quantitative and qualitative data to capture the dynamic process of racial and ethnic identities’ construction and provides a holistic view of the adolescent Hmong girls’ experiences and perspectives. The purpose of collecting quantitative and qualitative data is to (a) collect and measure a baseline of information to guide the in-depth interviews; (b) measure the racial and ethnic identity growth and awareness over time; (c) explore the racial and ethnic construction and processes; and (d) articulate what the constructional process looks, sounds and feels like at the individual level.

Quantitative Data. Based on the premise of the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) theory, the quantitative data is collected using the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity\(^9\) (MIBI) (Sellers et al., 1997). The

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\(^9\)The model is a theoretical approach for studying other racial identities which is subject to situational influence. The model attempts to address a) How important is race in the individual’s perception of self? and b) What does it mean to be a member a racial group?
Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity provides guidelines in collecting the necessarily baseline data and identifying the next step in the interview process. Although the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity concentrates on the Black cultural group, the inventory is also adapted to examine the racial and ethnic identities of the Anishinaabe people including the Ojibwe, Potowatomi, Odaawa, Menominee, and Cree (Gonzalez & Benett, 2011). While racial and ethnic groups have their own experiences, the experiences of Black Americans, Native Americans and Hmong may share similarities in terms of forced relocations, specifically forced immigration and cultural suppression. These concepts are explained in Chapter 2. The researcher concludes that the MIBI will serve as a valuable instrument for collecting reliable data in examining racial and ethnic identities for adolescent Hmong girls. Therefore, the MIBI is modified to develop the Multidimensional Inventory of Hmong Identity (MIHI) (see Appendix D), an instrument that is useful in assessing multi-dimensions of Hmong identities including natal, subjective, behavioral and situational. Natal measures include birthplace and ethnic origins of self and family members. Subjective measures include self-identification, acculturation status, ego-involvement in group, and attitudes towards out-groups. Behavioral measures include language use, music and food preferences, and participation in cultural and religious activities. Situational-context measures include home-family, work and school settings.

**Qualitative Data.** Qualitative research is “exploratory or descriptive, that assumes the value of context and setting and that searches for a deeper understanding of the participant’s lived experiences of the phenomenon” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Further, decolonizing methodologies suggest that the voices and lived experiences of
colonized subjects, as well as subjugated, oppressed and marginalized peoples, need to be centered in and valued by social research (Smith, 1999). This research is grounded in collecting qualitative data through the implementation of in-depth interviews to capture the adolescent Hmong girls’ lived experiences and their counter narratives. The qualitative data considers how the participants’ identities are shaped by their family backgrounds, past experiences, political consciousness, peer groups, and interactions within the US Midwest mainstream culture as well as how family structure, diasporic ties, and community experiences contribute to the individual’s sense of self.

**Connections Between Method, Data, and Research Questions**

The research design is guided by two research questions:

1. How do adolescent Hmong girls construct their own racial and ethnic identities within the Hmong and dominant White cultures?
2. How does exposure to Hmong women of influence impact their racial and ethnic identities?

As a Hmong American woman scholar, I’m consciously aware of the reality that individuals who belong to highly valued groups do not need to modify or enhance their racial and ethnic identities. White individuals in the US Midwest mainstream culture do not need to modify their racial and ethnic identities because they are the majority in the mainstream culture and are perceived as highly valued. Individuals who do not belong in the highly valued group, when faced with a context that devalues one's group, the individuals will need to engage in a process to negotiate the meaning of their identities. It is unclear what racial and ethnic identities’ construction authentically looks, sounds, and feels like particularly for Hmong girls. As a result, a good research design centering on
racial and ethnic identities is needed first to capture the complexity of the construction, but more importantly, to capture the personal counter narratives instead of just the interpretations of the researcher.

I approach this research from the implementation of in-depth interviews and guiding questions. This approach seeks multiple, dynamic truths that can vary across time, context, individuals, and interactions. In addition, these in-depth interviews delve into knowledge and experience as socially constructed by individuals and groups within specific socio-historical and socio-cultural contexts. This approach is borrowed from the principles of decolonizing methodologies in indigenous studies (Smith, 1999). Smith argues that in order to recognize the agency of oppressed or marginalized people, issues of voice and representation are critical. Qualitative research, and interviews in particular, allow for the centering of students’ voices and experiences using their counter narratives and insights, thus acknowledging the power of students of color to speak to, define, and interpret their own identities. While honoring the Hmong adolescent girls’ historical and current experiences and the assets they bring to the research, the method is set up specifically to yield both the quantitative and qualitative data that would capture the dynamic process of racial and ethnic identities’ construction by considering how the participants’ understandings, voices, and perspectives are affected by institutional environments and their interactions with others.

Connections Between Data and Racial and Ethnic Models

As I have discussed in Chapter 2, the racial and ethnic models incorporate multiple perspectives from psychological, sociological, and ecological fields in order to increase the understanding of racial and ethnic construction among adolescent Hmong
girls. These models emphasize the participants’ development of autonomous selves in terms of their relation to their racial and ethnic identities. They also explore connections to social, cultural, and historical contexts including how members of a group define themselves and how their racial identities are ascribed by others (Cross, 1971; Kim, 1981). Identity threats such as racism, marginalization, stereotyping, microaggression, and personal rejection of one’s racial and ethnic identities are variables within the negotiation and construction process and influence the participants’ political, historical experiences, consciousness, and meanings.

Phinny’s definition of ethnic identity is that it “is a dynamic, multidimensional construct that refers to one’s identity, or sense of self as a member of an ethnic group” (2003, p.63). Working from this definition, the ethnic identity models examine the individuals’ psychological and social consciousness in terms of their beliefs, values, self and group esteems, and practices and/or behaviors within an ethnic group (Marcia, 1980; Phinney, 1989 & 1990; Sue, 1981). The self-exploration and sense of impact by the individuals’ ethnic groups are critical components embedded within Phinney’s Three Stages Model of Ethnic Identity and Marcia’s Personal Identity Developmental models.

Standing on the shoulders of multiple racial and ethnic identity scholars (i.e., Phinney, Sue, Cross, Kim and Marcia), the data attempts to critically reveal the salient experiences students identify as having impact on their racial and ethnic identities, and uncovers the social influences that may affect their sense of self. These primary experiences, which multiple scholars make reference to as exploration, can be found in Phinney’s model as well as in Cross’, Kim’s, and Marcia’s models. While Cross and Kim focus intensively on racial social interaction and consciousness, Phinney’s ethnic identity
search indicates the importance of minority children actively searching for learning opportunities to increase their racial and ethnic identities/consciousness. Moreover, Marcia’s exploration involves the extent to which adolescents search and explore their identities and experiences.

Delving further in exploration, specifically learning opportunities, the data collected was able to provide reliable and valid information regarding where adolescent Hmong girls are within their journey of constructing their racial and ethnic identities and to identify what learning opportunities are needed to have the greatest impact on Hmong adolescent girls. The data also provided insight into how Hmong adolescent girls transform their identities consciously through designed learning opportunities.

The authentic connection between the models and the data deeply examines the radical personal transformation that happens when individuals have the knowledge, skills and habits to be whomever and whatever they desire to become, and to find happiness and a sense of purpose. It also articulates that race is not and should not be a predictor of success or failure.

**The Method of Inquiry**

**Demographics: City and School Selection.** The demographic of the city is 93% being white alone, 1% Black or African American, 0.6% American Indian or Alaska Native, 4% Asian, 0.1% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, 2% Hispanic or Latino, and 2% two or more races (US Census Bureau, 2010). Within the city limit, there are two public high schools. The demographic chart below illustrates the enrollment of students according to race and ethnicity, English proficiency, economic status, and graduation rate.
Demographics of Students in the School District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment By Race &amp; Ethnicity</th>
<th>English Proficiency Level</th>
<th>Economic Status</th>
<th>Graduation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• White, 80%</td>
<td>• English Proficiency, 93%</td>
<td>• Not Economic Disadvantage, 63%</td>
<td>By race and ethnicity in a 4-year rate in 2014 cohort:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• American Indian, 1%</td>
<td>• English Learners, 3%</td>
<td>• Economic Disadvantage, 36%</td>
<td>• White, 88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Asian, 10%</td>
<td>• Unknown, 3%</td>
<td>• Unknown, 1%</td>
<td>• Asian, 86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Black, 2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Black, 71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hispanic, 4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Hispanics, 65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Multi-racial, 3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prior to the Research. First, Hmong adolescent girls were identified and sought out from the two high schools. The researcher contacted the adolescent girls by phone and provided a short detailed summary of the research. Once the researcher received verbal commitment from the participants, a home visit appointment was set up to meet with the families. During the home visit, the researcher provided a clear, descriptive summary of the research, identified action steps implement throughout the research, and informed families of upcoming meetings and locations that would require their presence. Hmong families who agreed to permit their child to engage in the research were asked to sign consent forms. The consent forms were written in both English and Hmong. See Appendix K.

Participants. The participants selected for the research have different backgrounds, experiences, and knowledge about Hmong and US Midwest mainstream cultures. How the participants were selected is based on several criteria. One, adolescents Hmong girls are either the second or third generation of United States native-born Hmong girls within the family. Two, they are between the ages of 15-17 and are identified as a sophomore or a junior in high school and engage in extra-curricular activities in their school. Three, the main caretakers are Hmong, including parents,
grandparents, older siblings or relatives. Four, they are raised to honor, practice and carry on Hmong culture, values, beliefs and traditional ways of life. For instance, for adolescent Hmong girls whose parents or guardians practice Shamanism, it is required that they take on active roles in completing specific parts of the ceremony. For other adolescent Hmong girls dressing up in their traditional Hmong clothes and attending the Hmong New Year are ways of demonstrating respect to their elders and sustaining the Hmong culture. Five, they demonstrate proficiency in the Hmong language to an extent, including speaking or listening or both. Appendix A contains the descriptive summary of each participant. See Appendix A: Descriptive Summary of Participants for further information regarding age, native language, education and career aspiration, family background, and pseudonym name.

**Materials.** Various resources are implemented throughout the research. The resources range from inventory to interviews. These resources include the Multidimensional Inventory of Hmong Identity (MIHI) (see Appendix D), the Pre-Interview Guide (see Appendix E), the Hmong Women of Influence Interview Guide (see Appendix F), and the Post Interview Guide (see Appendix G). Other materials such as voice recorder, paper and pencil, personal journal, and computer are utilized when most appropriate. Individual gifts such as bus tickets, t-shirts, and certificates are also essential part of the research design. The gifts are critical for the researcher to demonstrate her appreciation for the girls’ time, commitment and engagement with the research design.

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These tools are implemented to obtain a baseline of racial and ethnic identities and consciousness and measure the growth over time. The Pre and Post Interview Guides are implemented to gain authentic information regarding racial and ethnic identities and consciousness from the participants’ experience and perspective. The Interview Template is used to guide the participants’ interviews with their Hmong women of influence.
The Multidimensional Inventory of Hmong Identity (MIHI). The MIHI is the first assessment tool implemented in the initial stage of the research design. The MIHI consists of three major scales: Centrality, Regard and Ideology.

The first major scale is Centrality. Centrality is a measure of the extent to which race is a core part of the individual’s self-concept. Eight line items made up the scale (1R, 6, 9, 13R, 19, 33, 48, 51R).

The second major scale is Regard. Regard is the affective and evaluative judgments of one’s own ethnicity. Regard consists of two subscales: Private Regard and Public Regard. Private Regard is the extent to which one feels positively or negatively about his/her own racial/ethnic group. Six line items (4, 7, 8, 24R, 54, 55) make up the subscale. Public Regard is the extent to which an individual believes that others evaluate his/her ethnic group positively or negatively. Six line items (5, 15, 17, 52, 53, 56) make up the subscale.

The third major scale is Ideology. Ideology measures the person’s beliefs regarding how he/she should interact with his/her own and other groups in society. Ideology consists of four subscales: Assimilation, Humanist, Oppressed Minority and Nationalist. The first Ideology subscale is Assimilation. Assimilation is the view that integrating one’s own ethnic group into the rest of society is important. The nine line items (10, 18, 37, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 46) relate to adolescent Hmong girls’ perceptions of integrating into US Midwest mainstream culture. The second subscale is Humanist. Humanist is the commonalities among all humans regardless of race or ethnicity. There are eight line items (23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 35) that make up the subscale. The Oppressed Minority subscale is the emphasis of solidarity and communalities across
many oppressed groups. There are ten line items (20, 34, 36, 8, 42, 45, 47, 49, 50, 38) relating to the adolescents’ sense of solidarity with other oppressed groups. The last subscale is Nationalist. Nationalist refers to the importance of one’s own racial descent. There are nine line items (2, 3, 11, 12, 14, 6, 21, 22, and 25) included in the Nationalist subscale.

According to the research design, and to obtain comprehensive data regarding adolescent Hmong girls’ current understanding and perceptions of their racial and ethnic identities’ construction, the fifty-six questions that make up the scales and subscales are collected, examined and analyzed. However, in order to examine the first research question effectively and efficiently, it is imperative to narrow down the question by focusing on the four major subscales, which influence and contribute to increasing the understanding of racial and ethnic identities’ construction. The four major subscales examined in the research design include Centrality, Public Regard, Humanist and Minority. The four subscales are listed along with critical features:

- **Centrality Subscale** items emphasize on the importance of and satisfaction with being Hmong. It includes the adolescent Hmong girl’s self-image, how confident she is about herself as a Hmong girl, how she views her Hmong people, and how she interacts and relates to other Hmong. Centrality also includes the use of Hmong language and engaging in Hmong culture, practices, and beliefs. The higher scores indicate a strong sense of being Hmong or that Hmong culture is a central part of the individual’s racial and ethnic identities.

- **Public Regard Subscale** relates to how an adolescent Hmong girl believes non-Hmong perceive the Hmong and their racial and ethnic identities either positively
or negatively. The higher the scores indicate a strong sense of Hmong being positively viewed by non-Hmong.

- **Humanist Subscale** involves an adolescent Hmong girl’s relationships with other non-Hmong. It is based on the girl’s beliefs and perceptions that there are more commonalities among humans regardless of racial and ethnic differences. The sense of goodness creates interdependence on one another. The higher scores indicate a strong sense of humanism.

- **Oppressed Minority Subscale** relates to the sense of solidarity with other oppressed people through shared racial injustice and indignities. The high score indicates a strong sense of solidarity with other oppressed non-Hmong.

**Interview Materials.** The Pre-Interview Guide (Appendix E), the Post-Interview Guide (Appendix G) and the Hmong Women of Influence Interview Guide (Appendix F) were resources implemented to collect qualitative information. The Pre-Interview Guide was adapted from multiple researchers (i.e., Kim, Jean. (1981), Seller, etc. (2013), & Wong, Siu. (2011)) and modified to meet the needs of the participants. The Pre-Interview Guide measured the participants’ current perceptions regarding their families and community background, institutional factors, social cultural factors, and individual factor. The Post-Interview Guide measured the participants’ perceptions after they were exposed to Hmong women of influence. The guiding questions were open-ended questions such as “After engaging with a Hmong woman of influence, what did you learn about yourself that you didn’t know before?” The guiding questions were implemented to guide the researcher in gathering and examining emerging themes and evidence that may existed during the research process. The final resource was the Hmong Women of Influence
Interview Guide. The template was used as a guide to scaffold participants during the interviewing process.

**Research Design.** The research is designed to collect the baseline and growth data twice from the Multidimensional Inventory of Hmong Identity and the pre- and post interviews. Baseline data is usually collected in the beginning of the research design. The baseline data consists of the earliest information regarding adolescents’ current beliefs and perceptions about their racial and ethnic identities. The baseline data addresses the research question: How do adolescent Hmong girls construct their own racial and ethnic identities within the Hmong and US Midwest mainstream cultures?

The growth data is the progress data that measures adolescent Hmong girls’ beliefs and perceptions based on their interactions and engagements with Hmong women of influence. It consists of the qualitative data collected from adolescent Hmong girls’ personal narratives and examines how the experience of being exposed to Hmong women of influence impact adolescent Hmong girls’ racial and ethnic identities. The growth data addresses the second research question: How does exposure to Hmong women of influence impact their racial and ethnic identities?

The first phase is the implementation of the Multi-Dimensional Inventory of Hmong Identity. The MIHI is a paper and pencil version. The survey takes approximately 60 minutes to complete the 56 questions. Time will vary among participants. Upon completion of the MIHI, the baseline data are analyzed so that the researcher has a better grasp of the types of questions to focus during the pre-interview.

In the second phase, participants engage in a face-to-face pre-interview. The interview questions derive mainly from the Pre-Interview Guide (Appendix E). Some
questions are modified based on responses given in the MIHI. The anticipated interview time is approximately sixty minutes. As part of phase two, participants will select, research, schedule and conduct an interview with a Hmong woman of influence. This woman of influence is an individual who skillfully navigates various systems and significantly influences the Hmong and US Midwest mainstream cultures. To accommodate individual needs, the interviews may occur in the form of a conference call, email, onsite visit or online meeting. It is suggested that participants utilize the Hmong Women of Influence Interview Guide (Appendix F) and modify the questions as needed based on their understanding of the interviewee.

Phase three is the implementation of the last interview. The intent of the last interview is to collect growth data in order to measure the interviewee’s knowledge and perception of her racial and ethnic identities. In the last phase of the research design, participants are asked to answer questions and reflect upon their most recent perceptions. Information gathered from the final interview will be analyzed. The duration of the final face-to-face interview will take approximately sixty minutes.

**Summary of the Chapter**

Starting with the research questions as a foundation, Chapter 3 outlines the skeleton of the research methodology so that necessary information is accessible, shifting the minds, hearts, and hands of educators to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students that are underserved and underperform. Delving into the types of data and the relationships between the method, the research questions, and the racial and ethnic models, Chapter 3 articulates, identifies, and analyzes critical concepts such as racial and ethnic exploration and consciousness that are found in multiple models.
and with various Asian American subgroups. The purpose of Chapter 3 is to clearly articulate how these critical concepts play out for Hmong adolescent girls who are recursively constructing their racial and ethnic identities as well as to explore and create more space for Hmong adolescent girls to define, refine, and express their identities in their own voices.

In the upcoming chapter, the researcher examines the results of the research process and the data collected. A description of the information collected, emerging patterns, and explanatory synthesis of the data collected are identified and discussed.
Chapter Four

Data Analysis

Introduction

Chapter 4 focuses on the analyses of the collected data based upon the implementation of the Multi-Dimensional Inventory of Hmong Identity (MIHI) and pre- and post-interviews that address the research questions:

(1) How do adolescent Hmong girls construct their own racial and ethnic identities within the Hmong and dominant White cultures?

(2) How does exposure to Hmong women of influence impact their racial and ethnic identities?

The first half of the chapter focuses on the baseline and growth data. The baseline data contains adolescent Hmong girls’ current perceptions of their racial and ethnic identities as they relate to Centrality Scale, Public Regard Subscale, Humanist Subscale, and Oppressed Minority Subscale. The growth data is a collection of adolescent Hmong girls’ personal narratives based upon their accessibilities to influential Hmong women. The growth data measures the impact the opportunity has on influencing the girls’ identities.

The second half of the chapter emphasizes identified themes that emerged from the collected data.

Overview of MIHI Scale and Subscales

This section addresses the questions: what is the baseline data based on the implementation of the assessment tools (e.g. Multi-Dimensional Inventory of Hmong Identity and pre-interview) and what does the data reveal about identity construction as relate to the research questions? The attempt here is to examine the baseline data to grasp
a deep level of understanding of how adolescent Hmong girls currently construct their racial and ethnic identities and/or what external variables may influence their racial and ethnic identities’ construction. The paragraphs look at the baseline data taken from MIHI by providing an overview of Centrality Scale, Public Regard Subscale, Humanist Subscale, and Oppressed Minority Subscale’s overall mean scores. See Tables 1.0-1.9.

Centrality Scale has the lowest mean score due to its reversal scores. The low mean score does not imply that adolescent Hmong girls do not perceive their race and ethnicity as a core part of their self-concept but rather the opposite. Their racial and ethnic identities do matter. When delving into the line items and pre-interview questions, the data reveals that being Hmong or Hmong American is a strong reflection of who the girls are. For these girls, sustaining one’s identities is about being grounded in the Hmong language and culture, including Hmong beliefs, practices, and value. This is evident on line items 6 and 48. See Tables 1.0, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and Appendix E.

Public Regard Subscale has an overall mean score of 12.00. The overall mean score reveals that what adolescent Hmong girls perceive others think of their race and ethnicity affects the way they construct their racial and ethnic identities. Based on the collected data, adolescent Hmong girls who are grounded in the Hmong language and culture tend to score higher on the line items. The score indicates a strong belief that Hmong are being positively perceived as an asset to the community. Adolescent Hmong girls who intensively interact with the US Midwest mainstream culture on a continuous basis tend to score lower on the line item. The line items and pre-interview questions reveal a conscious awareness of the racial and ethnic differences and privileges that exist between the two cultures. See Tables 1.0, 1.1, 1.2, 1.9 and Appendix E.
Humanist Subscale has the highest overall mean score of 16.87 as compared to other subscales. See Table 1.0. The high overall mean score indicates the acceptance of and shared commonalities with non-Hmong, particularly white culture. From the line items, some of the acceptance and commonality indicators include accepting and pursuing interracial marriages, buying consumer goods, believing we are all children of higher being, all races have limits and strengths, and sharing more commonalities with others than differences. See Tables 1.1, 1.2 and 1.7. Through further analysis, the acceptance and sharing of more commonalities with non-Hmong are actual foundational beliefs and practices, which influence the girls’ racial and ethnic identities’ construction.

Oppressed Minority Subscale has an overall mean score of 15.6. The high score indicates adolescent Hmong girls’ strong sense of solidarity with other oppressed people. See Table 1.0. This shared perception is found within the line items in terms of the need for Hmong to form coalitions with non-Hmong and the existence of racial injustice and indignities. When disaggregating the data, adolescent Hmong girls with close tie to their culture, language and people express stronger connections with other minority groups. Their autonomy, including allegiance to the Hmong and other racial groups, loyalty, and the needs of the groups, continues to shape their racial and ethnic identities.

So what do all the collected data have to do with adolescent Hmong girls regarding how they construct their racial and ethnic identities? The next couple paragraphs explain the relationships observed between the subscales and the ethnic-related behaviors in how adolescent Hmong girls construct their racial and ethnic identities.
What the Baseline Data Reveal About Identity Construction as Related to the First Research Question

This section focuses on the findings regarding how adolescent girls construct their racial and ethnic identities and what data support these findings.

The first finding is that adolescent Hmong girls construct their racial and ethnic identities based upon the intensity of engagement with the culture they use the most to navigate systems or cultures. For adolescent girls who speak the Hmong language and immerse in the Hmong traditional way of life including Hmong beliefs, practices, and value, they scored higher in the Centrality Scale than individuals who do not engage much with the Hmong language and culture. They perceive their race and ethnicity as a core part of their self-concept. This is evident in Centrality line items 6 and 48. See Tables 1.0, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and Appendix E. The learning offered by the collected data illustrates that Neeg Tshiab constructs her racial and ethnic identities on being Hmong first. Neeg Tshiab continues to develop a strong cultural pride about herself, her people, and the community. She continues to ground her racial and ethnic identities through the preservation and utilization of the Hmong language, the interaction with her Hmong friends, and the engagement of traditional practices such as “hu nplig” (calling the spirits); a practice of Shamanism. In Neeg Tshiab’s statement, she reveals the high level of influence the Hmong language and culture have in constructing her identities and addresses the urgency to preserve the Hmong language and culture that greatly influence the identities of many Hmong generations. Here is what Neeg Tshiab’s says:

*I feel you are born Hmong, you should be Hmong first and then know the American world* [referring to the US Midwest mainstream culture]. *And that if you are born Chinese, you should know about the Chinese culture, Japanese culture, etc. If you become American first, you might end up losing your culture-
that’s what’s happening to kids nowadays. They only know the American culture. They don’t know a lot about the Hmong culture. That is why our language is kind of losing its way down in the generation. Because we always speak English. We don’t know how to teach other kids how to speak Hmong or Hmong culture or the history about Hmong.

The second finding is that adolescent Hmong girls who intensively interact with the US Midwest mainstream culture on a continuous basis tend not to perceive Hmong culture and language as an essential part of their racial and ethnic identities. The line items and pre-interview questions reveal a conscious awareness of the racial and ethnic differences and privileges that exist between the two cultures for adolescent Hmong girls who are bicultural. From the data analysis, Areum’s experience navigating between the Hmong and US Midwest mainstream cultures has been difficult. Especially, encountering first hand racism from a personal, local, and immediate experience. As the only Hmong girl on the high school dance team, Areum quickly learned that regardless of the amount of dancing years and skills developed, she will be overlooked and passed on to the lower dancing level than her white peers who were also from the same dancing studio. In order to excel to a higher dancing level and obtain front formation, Areum learned she must work twice as hard than her white peers and adjust her identities accordingly in order to fit within the social context. The personal experience shaped her perceptive, her identities, and her relationship with her Hmong friends. In Areum’s narrative, she echoed the need to be seen, to be made visible, regardless of the color of her skin, language, and culture.

*I feel like I was good enough to be on varsity but I don’t know...if she [the coach] didn’t want me on the team. I actually got up on her face and proved it to her that I was good enough and that I should have been on it [the varsity team] like other girls that she [the coach] has connections with.*
It is valid that the intensity of engagement and interaction with the US Midwest mainstream culture may collide with her Hmong culture. The cultural differences and cultural dissonances between the two cultures do contribute and influence the way Areum chooses to construct her identities.

The third finding is the validity that adolescent Hmong girls construct their racial and ethnic identities based on their cognitive development; what they currently believe and perceive are true about their racial and ethnic identities. Although, Neeg Tshiab and Stacey scored consistently in most of the scale and subscales, Stacey, who is also grounded in the traditional Hmong ways of life, believes Hmong are perceived by society as ineffective, less positive, and not respected. See Table 1.8 and Table 1.9. When asked to explain further what ineffective means to her, Stacey addressed how Hmong are stereotyped as farmers.

*I’m not saying to insult Chris Xiong or anything but we should be taking [pause] participating in more other than farmers market or ua teb [gardening]...like participate in more events and start our own thing here in Eau Claire. Eau Claire is a big city where Hmong people live...and everything. If we take a stand, we can make a difference.*

The way Stacey believe how US Midwest mainstream culture perceive her and the Hmong people influences her to assimilate into US Midwest mainstream culture; thus needing to adopt a US Midwest mainstream identity. The US Midwest mainstream identity is referenced to as “Meka” or becoming “American”. The “Meka” identity consists of blending in and achieving independence and successful. The “Meka” identity is a result of media influencing Stacey’s racial ideology perception of her racial and ethnic identities and the need to assimilate to become white. The statements below illustrate the conformity of an American US Midwest identity.
Well, like the movies, the CEOs and those running big companies and owning your own building in NY or something. You know running the place, running errands, you’re going everywhere. Just traveling everywhere meeting important people. It feels so fun.

Since because of Hmong people most I know are living here now, they should adopt to others and be diverse and not concentrate on one thing [referring to just their culture]. You know being your true self. Yeah, that’s good too but you have to learn to adapt to others since we’re living in the new world now. It’s just easier to living- live in a life this way.

The collected data provide baseline information which contribute to the construction of racial and ethnic identities found within adolescent Hmong girls. Through the examination of the four subscales, line items, and personal narratives the data increase our understanding of how the environment impact cognitive development in terms of how adolescent Hmong girls construct their identities over time. The next following paragraphs examine the collected growth data and the findings based on the research design.

**What the Growth Data Reveal About Identity Construction as Related to the Second Research Question**

The growth data consists of the qualitative data collected from adolescent Hmong girls’ personal narratives and examines the impact of being exposed to Hmong women of influence on Hmong girls’ racial and ethnic identities. See Appendix G. The growth data addresses the second research question: How does exposure to Hmong women of influence impact their racial and ethnic identities? The degree of how much adolescent Hmong girls are impacted by the engagement with multiple Hmong women of influence is not quantitatively measured in the research design. Rather, it is the validity and reliability of the personal narratives found within the qualitative data that speak voluminous insights into the impact the experience has had on them. The next paragraphs
elaborate on these findings.

Being exposed to Hmong women of influence has impacted adolescent Hmong girls’ their racial and ethnic identities in several ways. One, the opportunity to access influential Hmong women provided windows and mirrors to the girls (Bishop, 1990). This opportunity transformed their identities by exposing them to other ways of being and thinking and reflected this back onto the girls. Through this reflection, the girls can see their own lives, experiences, and conditions as part of the larger human experience. The following narratives reflect how the opportunity of accessing influential Hmong women exposed the girls to other ways of being and thinking.

*Before I thought that Hmong people cannot accomplish a lot of things but since doing this project I feel like I can reach higher in my goals.* –Neeg Tshiab

*They were able to follow the rules without breaking them. They didn’t have to break the rules to reach their goals. Sometimes people, like man, all these rules can reach nothing. They would break rules to do whatever they want but these girls they choose to follow the rules and reach their goals at the same time. So they did things that their parents didn’t like but they were able to reach their goals.* –Neeg Tshiab

*I learned that you have to be very focused in school in order to succeed, not just for one career but for every career. It takes hard work and you’re not just going to get there in one step.* –Areum

Two, the opportunity to participate in this study influenced the way adolescent Hmong girls perceived themselves and the Hmong culture. The knowledge and consciousness gained of oneself, and of one’s culture, validated and affirmed the idea that Hmong is an active successful ethnic group. From civic engagement to science and

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11 Windows and mirrors is a concept developed by Rudine Sims Bishop (1990). She proposed the idea that books serve as windows, which reflect students’ experiences and conditions, and as mirrors in which students can see themselves in what is being read or discussed.
business, adolescent Hmong girls witnessed Hmong women navigating fluently between the Hmong and US Midwest mainstream cultures and observed how they were able to overcome cultural and institutional barriers. The promotion of self-esteem allowed the girls to believe in the uniqueness of their language and culture and also to value what is passed from generation to generation. This led the girls to own the responsibility of respecting, honoring and continuing the traditional beliefs, values, and practices of the Hmong culture while at the same time learning to adapt to the US Midwest mainstream culture. In the following narratives, Neeg Tshiab’s and Stacey’s comments reflect the changes that occurred after meeting influential Hmong women.

*That being independent is really important because in the Hmong culture, girls are supposed to get married at a really young age and have kids and follow the house rules and stuff. But both of them said that we should at least have an education before we get married.* –Neeg Tshiab

*It’s a whole new generation. I think we should still live by their rules but be able to do whatever we want. They [referring grandparents] know that I need to go out and get things, but they just don’t want me to stay out till 12, which I never do. I’m always home by 9:30 p.m. That’s when the bus route ends so I need to be home by 9:30.* –Stacey

Three, the knowledge and consciousness gained through the study influence the degree to which they permit the world to construct their identities while allowing their identities to still be based on their cultural background, knowledge, and experience. This capability shapes their identities by developing respect for and appreciation of generational and cultural differences while developing a responsible life in a culturally diverse society and global world. The following narrative illustrates the impact of encouraging and embracing friendships among all people and groups and by increasing their knowledge of cross-cultural communication strategies and perspective taking.
We have to adapt to each other. Because I go to an American public school but I speak Hmong and I’m an American. Even though I’m in a Hmong house, I can still speak American….Both places allow me to be me. But when I’m talking to a grandparent, I need to speak Hmong. If I’m with my American friends, I need to speak English not Hmong. –Stacey

Emerging Themes Based On Collected Data and Findings

Both baseline and growth line data reveal existing barriers and challenges for adolescent Hmong girls. Overarching themes relevant to the needs of the students can be found when looking at these barriers and challenges. These themes are overcoming institutional and cultural obstacles, pedagogical approaches to Hmong History and Culture, and re-imagining identities. The paragraphs below delve into specific themes and why the themes are essential to the construction of racial and ethnic identities.

Hmong Teens Overcoming Institutional and Cultural Obstacles. While constructing their racial and ethnic identities and learning to navigate multiple cultures, adolescent Hmong girls must strive to overcome existing barriers including colorblindness and gender inequities.

Colorblindness derives from systemic racism and exists when systems and cultures are reluctant to honor racial and ethnic differences. In the interviews, adolescent Hmong girls addressed society’s lack of knowledge and understanding of the Hmong people and their history. The lack of awareness often leads to stereotypes, biases, micro-aggression, assumptions, and racism.

Gender inequity stems from cultural gaps among generation, specifically among foreign-born parents or guardians and first or second native born generations. For some of the adolescent Hmong girls, gender inequities are apparent in the various degrees of expectations and privileges that exist between Hmong boys and girls. While expectations
vary among Hmong girls and boys, adolescent Hmong girls feel bound by the traditional beliefs and practices that negate them from accessing opportunities. For some of these girls, the perception is that they are more vulnerable and weaker than Hmong boys. Taking care of the family, siblings, and household chores are perceived as suitable roles for them. In Neeg Tshiab’s and Stacey’s narratives, they described the vastly different expectations which are placed on them and influence their identities.

_Hmong have specific rules we have to live by. I don’t really like those rules [that] set up our lives. Because we can’t do certain things that Hmong guys can do. In Hmong culture, they [Hmong parents or guardians] don’t want you to go out past 12 a.m. or they don’t want you to stay out late because you [might] do something bad. I don’t like that rule. Some people have to stay out late to do something, like there might be an emergency or they might have to do something for their family or for school. I don’t like those rules because they just assume you forgot or that you are out with a guy. You have to marry them. I don’t feel like that is a good thing to agree with because it doesn’t really make sense._ -Neeg Tshiab

_To stay in the house and wash dishes and make sure every time guests come I get them water. It’s a whole new generation. I think we should still live by their rules but be able to do whatever we want._ –Stacey

Despite these institutional and cultural barriers, adolescent Hmong girls demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and habits to overcome existing challenges. They demonstrate perseverance against cultural norms, compassion for others, respect for themselves, and an understanding of future possibilities. As the girls describe, if influential Hmong can accomplish their goals while constructing strong racial and ethnic identities, they can too. Areum’s narrative describe this new being and thinking mindset.

_Well, she [an influential Hmong woman] worked really hard and she’s from Laos….I’m from the United States and if I work hard even more, I can get farther beyond that. I could have a better job because I was born in America and I know English._

**Pedagogical Approaches to Hmong History and Culture.** In *Multicultural Education Issues and Perspectives* (2010), James A. Bank and Cherry A. McGee Banks
explain the danger of a single US mainstream curriculum. Here's what the researchers say,

*A curriculum that focuses on the experiences of mainstream Americans and largely ignores the experiences, cultures, and histories of other ethnic, racial, cultural, and language, and religious groups have negative consequences for both mainstream students and students of color. A mainstream-centric curriculum is one major way in which racism, ethnocentrism, and pernicious nationalism are reinforced and perpetuated in the schools, colleges, universities, and society at large.*

To minimize and eventually eliminate racism, ethnocentrism, and pernicious nationalism, pedagogical approaches to Hmong history, culture, and language ensures that the cultural well-being of Hmong students are valued, respected, and visible in US Midwest mainstream curriculum. In addition, the pedagogical approaches incorporate state and local standards by orienting educators’ “in-depth knowledge about ethnic cultures and experiences to integrate ethnic content, experiences, and points of view into the curriculum” (Banks, 2010). The approaches shift from teaching to learning history, culture, and local perspectives while using local community resources on a regular basis to link what they are teaching to the everyday lives of their students. When teachers combine deep knowledge about the content they teach with students’ culture, language and personal frame of reference, they create activities that are meaningful and challenging. Moreover, they validate, affirm, build, and bridge on students’ beliefs, values, and practices while conveying authentic messages of high expectations with high levels of support. When vibrant multicultural curriculum and classroom environments
promote strong racial and ethnic identities, students will continue to develop their academic talents while honoring their identities. Effective, successful teachers engage in teaching because they want to make an impact. Knowing their impact is what sets them apart from other teachers.

Based on collected data, adolescent Hmong girls expressed the need to understand the following questions: What political decisions and events led to the recurrence of Hmong emigration? Who was involved? Why these events occurred? How these events shaped the destiny of the Hmong people? Etc. Living in cultures where their identities are perceived through a deficit lens, it is essential that adolescent girls develop the knowledge necessary to construct strong racial and ethnic identities. Without the knowledge of their historical roots, culture, and language, assimilation and negation will impact adolescents’ identity construction. In Neeg Tshaib’s and Areum’s narratives, they expressed not only their frustration but also the need for Hmong history to be included in the curriculum.

Nobody knows but we helped most of the war [referring to the Secret War in the Vietnam War]. Nobody knows that so we’re looked down on. Because I heard that Hmong people helped with certain wars [referring to the Secret War in the Vietnam War]. Cuz my teacher, she said it. Hmong people helped with this war [the Secret War]. I’m like “What! They did it?” So I was surprised. It wasn’t really well known. So when I came home, I’m like “Mommy, did anybody fought in that war?” “Yeah, your great grandpa.” I’m like “wow.” I was surprised. I’m like shouldn’t I know this already when I’m at home or the history of the Hmong people. But I had to find out from school from the White people. They only know a little bit of it. They don’t know a lot. –Neeg Tshaib

…it’s good to know the history. At least you know the history and what big impact

12 For further information regarding the Secret War in Laos, see links: How Do I Begin?: A Hmong American Literary Anthology by The Hmong American Writer’s Circle; A Deadly Legacy: The CIA’s Covert Laos War; America’s Secret War in Laos Uncovered; CIA Air Operations in Laos, 1955-1974; and A Great Place to Have a War: America in Laos and the Birth of a Military CIA by Joshua Kurlantzick.
it had on Hmong people and learn from it. See how they [Hmong people] did it and what you can do. –Areum

Reimagining Racial and Ethnic Identities. The need to create my Possible Self and the need for significant Hmong role models are two critical themes that emerged from the research design. Possible Self derives from representations of the self in the past and includes representations of the self in the future and are intimately connected to each other. Possible Self is individualized, but is dependent upon social comparisons where the individual’s own thoughts, feelings, characteristics and behavior are weighted against others. What others are now, I could become (Markus & Nurius, 1986). In the post interview, Neeg Tshiab addressed

When I was growing up I see a lot of people selling their [vegetables]. You know, Hmong people, they have huge gardens and they would sell them at the farmer’s market or they’ll have their own stores. They would like..hmm…and sell stuff that they make. I thought..hmmm..that’s what I’m going to be in the next 10 years, selling food, selling stuff. Now I can grow from a seller to a lawyer from a veggie to clothes and jewelries. –Neeg Tshiab

The need for Hmong women role models is equally critical to the construction of adolescent Hmong girls’ identities. Being exposed to Hmong women, who shared similar experiences and struggles and overcame societal challenges to be successful, provided the girls windows and mirrors. Adolescent Hmong girls see themselves in these Hmong women and this emulation positively cultivates their beliefs and perceptions to construct healthier identities. It is said that one cannot be what one cannot see. In Neeg Tshiab’s, Stacey’s, and Areum’s narratives, they elaborated on their inspirations to visualize their futures.

We’re actually adapting to the American world [like] Mee Moua. Yeah, it makes me think that I can be like them someday. They’re like an idol to our race….There was a Hmong calendar that had powerful Hmong men. I didn’t see any Hmong
women. That’s probably the change that I [want to] see. That’s the same thing like the American women’s right where they didn’t have the right, so when they go it. Women do things that they want to do. – Stacey

I’m a person that gives up easily. I want to learn...stick to one goal and not give up. Because Mai Der (MD), she colored her hair and she was called a “poj liab” [referring to a gangster girl] a lot but she turned that into a positive thing and got a business going and do a lot of stuff with that. And then the Hmong Senator/Lawyer, Mee Moua, she was like able to be a lawyer. A senator is hard work but through patience, she [Mee Moua] accomplished a lot and it takes a long time to become a lawyer and so I liked how she was able to go through all the challenges to become a lawyer and so it shows that she has a lot of patience and she knows how to learn and put that on the world. I wanna like kind of be patient like that. I’m not a patient girl. I tend to give up like I can’t do things. – Neeg Tshiab

Summary of the Chapter

Mountains do not move. Though mountains may be molded through erosion, precipitation, and time, mountains do not move. From the analysis of the collected data, adolescent Hmong girls’ identities are grounded in their Hmong culture and language. Though many themes emerged, the most powerful insight is the personal transformation adolescents Hmong girls’ experienced by engaging with Hmong women of influence. Listening to the personal narratives told by the Hmong women, connecting to the challenges each of them overcame, recognizing their humanity, hopes, and dreams and instilling wisdom and courage to a new generation influence the way adolescent Hmong girls believe and perceive about themselves and the world. Regardless of the girls’ background, knowledge, and experiences, the opportunity to access Hmong women of influence provide them a profound perspective and courage to continue constructing their racial and ethnic identities. As parents and institutions, we have an obligation to ensure adolescent Hmong girls have access to such opportunities that strengthen their identities.

The next chapter concludes the research design. The conclusion addresses the
researched questions, critical considerations arising from the research, possible implications and limitations, potential research projects, and the growth of the researcher and potential research desires.
Chapter Five

Conclusion to the Research Design

Introduction

Chapter 5 concludes the research design in search of understanding the complexity of racial and ethnic identities’ construction among adolescent Hmong girls. In this chapter, the researcher addresses the following critical features: (1) knowledge gathered from the research design and other identity models; (2) implications schools might consider; (3) the Racial and Ethnic Identity Engagement Model, (4) the need to preserve Hmong culture and language; (5) limits found within the research design; and (6) potential focus areas for further studies. The purpose of highlighting the critical features is to increase awareness and set the foundation for future researches in addressing the needs of Hmong students.

Knowledge Gathered from Research Design and Other Identity Models

This is what I learned from Phinney’s and Marcia’s identity models as well as from my own research. One thing I learned is that people’s perceptions of adolescent Hmong girls matter. The findings in my research design and that of Phinney and Marcia is the concept of identity diffusion/foreclosure which occurs during the Unexamined Ethnic Identity Stage (Marcia) or the Ethnic Identity Diffusion/Foreclosure Stage (Phinney). Phinney and Marcia proposed that during the identity diffusion/foreclosure, adolescents unconsciously constructing their identities based on the perceptions and opinions of other people and have not yet explored their own feelings/attitudes about his/her identities (1992, 1966, & 1980). For this study, these adolescent Hmong girls
were not at the Unexamined Ethnic Identity Stage or the Ethnic Identity Diffusion Stage. However, based on the collected data, identity foreclosure had greatly impacted adolescent Hmong girls’ racial and ethnic identities. The diverse perceptions and beliefs, cultural differences, and cultural dissonances between the two cultures contributed and influenced the way adolescent Hmong girls believe and perceive themselves, their identities, and Hmong people. These negative cultural ideologies create stereotypes, discriminations, fears, and doubts in the minds of these young adolescent Hmong girls. To an adolescent Hmong girl who is grounded in the traditional Hmong way of life, the negative cultural ideologies she was exposed to became a part of her daily lives. Through perseverance, she believes she shall overcome the negative, deficit perceptions and beliefs about who she is. For another adolescent, assimilating into the US Midwest mainstream culture seems to be a better option. And for the adolescent who is bicultural, frustration and regret seem to exist. In Phinney’s model (1989), she describes a healthy bicultural identity consists of both the knowledge and understanding of one self and the in-group(s) (e.g. the ethnic and/or US Midwest mainstream) as well as develop a sense of belonging within the in-group(s). In one of the interviews, an adolescent expressed the regret of being Hmong. Through further coaching and prompting, she explained in her narrative.

Hmong people are like on the news for doing something bad. It’s not them [referring to all Hmong people are not bad]. People don’t put Hmong people on the news for something good most of the time but it’s usually for crimes and stuff. I don’t want White people to question the Hmong...I’m afraid to be stereotyped; thought of the same as how the criminals are thought.

The research design illustrates the importance of constructing healthy racial and ethnic identities so that adolescent Hmong girls can fluently and proficiently navigate multiple
cultures without abandoning who they are.

The second knowledge I gleaned is the difference between exploration and engagement in constructing racial and ethnic identities. In Phinney and Marcia’s ethnic models, they proposed exploration as the driving force to achieving an ethnic identity or a bicultural identity. They emphasized the need for individuals to actively explore, experiment, and undergo certain levels of crises in order to achieve awareness and belongingness of the ethnic group(s). Although exploration may be the overarching component, engagement is a process of building on and bridging upon the adolescents’ frame of reference and cultural assets. Based on the collected data, adolescent Hmong girls who were born into Hmong families that engage in Hmong beliefs, values, and practices have constructed healthy racial and ethnic identities. In the interview, adolescent Hmong girls first and foremost preferred to be identified as “Hmong or Hmong Meka [Hmong American].” The combination of strong cultural awareness and foundational knowledge and skills of one self and one’s ethnic group have strengthened their identities over time. The engagement between adolescent Hmong girls and Hmong women of influence was not only to develop their social identity based on ethnic group membership as described by Phinney but also to find themselves and their identities through the images, voices, and narratives of these Hmong women.

**So What, Now What and Other Implications for Schools**

There are many implications emerged from the research design. The following paragraphs identify essential implications which school teams may consider as they pursue in constructing equitable systems for all their students, including Hmong students.

The first implication is that school teams must ensure that the classroom
environments are caring and inclusive communities. The environment must be physically, emotionally, intellectually, and culturally identity-safe for all students, especially Hmong students. Appendix I illustrates the transitional identity movement in the last fifty years that Hmong have been in the United States. Over that time span, Hmong are rapidly transitioning away from the traditional column and moving toward the assimilation column. Adolescent Hmong girls who are raised in first generation foreign born families and those that are bicultural are holding onto their native language, culture, experiences, and assets. While needing to adapt to US Midwest mainstream culture, these cultural precepts help adolescent Hmong girls construct healthy racial and ethnic identities. In addition, finding the balance between two cultures, adolescent Hmong girls continue to construct their racial and ethnic identities by filtering, adjusting, and refining what they believe and what is most relevant in terms of who they are. It is critical that schools use affirmations and counter narratives to confront negative stereotypes and help students develop strong academic and personal identities but more importantly, schools must provide opportunities to raise students’ awareness and knowledge of social inequalities and develop students’ beliefs and skills that will create and prompt just, equitable, and safe conditions for all.

The second implication is to validate and affirm\textsuperscript{13} students’ native language,

\textsuperscript{13} Validating, affirming, building, and bridging (VABB) is a concept developed by Dr. Sharroky Hollie. Validate means to make legitimate that which the institution and mainstream has made illegitimate. Affirm means to make positive that which the institution and mainstream media has made negative. Build means to make the connections between the home culture and language with the school culture and language through instructional strategy and activity. Bridge is to give opportunities for situational appropriate cultural and linguistic behavior. (Hollie, 2012)
culture, experiences, and assets and to capitalize, develop, and build on cultural capital, language skills, and positive coping strategies for success in mainstream culture. While we know that roughly 25% of world cultures fit into an individualist ideology, the US culture included, 75% cultures are collectivist with variation from country to country (Ahearn, C., Childs-Bowen, D., Coady, M., etc., 2002; Hofstede, G., Hofstede G.J., Minkov, M., 2010; Hofstede, G., 2001). Hmong, as a collective culture, places strong emphasis on communalism, families, honor, respect, and peace. See Appendix H: Cultural Precepts. As Neeg Tshiab described in her narrative:

> *When my parents hu nplig [calling the spirit], I help them clean. I help them cook. I help them take care of the kids. All the adults, men and women help out too.*

Some examples of collective nature of the Hmong culture include: large gatherings of giving a son an elder name because he has reached that time in his life, the sacred routine of a Hmong woman eating boiled chicken with herbal medicines as a cleansing ritual, the father in a Hmong family taking charge of disciplining his children while the mother teaches her girls how to be independent future brides and even the passing down of stories of how the Hmong came to be from each generation. All of these contribute to the racial and ethnic identities of adolescent Hmong girls. The culture, language, and historical experiences of their families profoundly affect their racial and ethnic identities’ construction. It is who they are. As professional educators, we must not neglect the adolescents’ frame of reference, their native culture, and the assets they bring with them. These cultural precepts and/or assets are what ground adolescent Hmong girls’ racial and ethnic identities and should be strengthen as they enter and immersed in our educational systems.
The third implication is that schools must bridge Hmong students’ cultural precepts and experiences to build meaningful and authentic learning experiences to meet district and state curricular requirements. What emerged from the data is the urgency to preserve the Hmong culture and language. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2012) there’s a decline in preserving the Hmong language and culture. In 2006-07 approximately 55,000 English Learners who are Hmong spoke Hmong. By 2013-14 only 26,000 students spoke Hmong\(^\text{14}\). The data illustrates the significant loss of over half of English Learners who are Hmong not being able to speak their native language within an eight years’ span. The drastic decline of preserving the Hmong language contributes to the loss of racial and ethnic identities of Hmong adolescents. One of the perquisites to becoming culturally responsive is to know one’s identities. As indicated in the research, adolescent Hmong girls grounded their racial and ethnic identities in the Hmong language and traditions (Hmong New Year, food, beliefs, practices, etc.). These cultural precepts are essential to their identities. In Chapter 2 and 4, the researcher alluded to culturally responsive practices and culturally sustained curricula. As Emily Styles states, “All students deserve a curriculum which mirrors their own experience back to them-thus validating it in the public world of the school. But curriculum must also insist upon the fresh air of windows into the experience of others-who also need and deserve the public validation of the school curriculum,” (1996). The essence of preserving Hmong language and culture is critical to adolescent Hmong girls’

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\(^{14}\) The statistic reflects the number of English Learners who speak Hmong in states where Hmong is one of the state’s five most common languages. Available at [http://www.nafepa.org/resources/Documents/Conference/2016/Presentations/Gil-Libia-Presentation-03-15-16.pdf](http://www.nafepa.org/resources/Documents/Conference/2016/Presentations/Gil-Libia-Presentation-03-15-16.pdf)
identities. Through her own wisdom, Neeg Tshaib reminds us the danger and consequences of losing one’s culture:

I feel you are born Hmong you should be Hmong first and then know the American world...If you become American first, you might end up losing your culture. That’s what’s happening to kids nowadays. They only know the American culture. They don’t know a lot about the Hmong culture. That is why our language is kind of losing its way down in the generation. Because we always speak English. We don’t know how to teach other kids how to speak Hmong or Hmong culture or the history about Hmong. –Neeg Tshiab

The four implication is the need for Hmong women role models. Researchers understand the complexity and challenge of racial and ethnic identities’ construction. French, Seidman, Allen, and Aber (2006) state that adolescents’ identities depend on what the broader context of the value society has placed on one’s group membership. Adolescents in high valued groups do not need to modify or enhance their identity whereas adolescents who come from low valued groups are constantly facing a process of negotiating the meaning of one’s identity. With limited access to gain a broader worldview of oneself, adolescent Hmong girls construct their racial and ethnic identities from multiple sources including the home, the media and online, their schools, communities, and friends. What they witness and glean from the multiple sources determine what they believe to be true or false. Based on the collected data, adolescents who engage with role models that (1) share similar traits and characteristics and (2) who they want to emulate, demonstrate a higher level of knowledge and conscious about their racial and ethnic identities and the Hmong culture. Being exposed to Hmong women of influence provided the learning opportunities for adolescent Hmong girls to glean the multi-perspective of knowledge of what it means to grow up as Hmong girls and what it means to experience racism and how to overcome institutional barriers. These women of
influence also provided insight into what it means to capitalize on the rich resources in both cultures and what it means to truly know their worth and purpose in life. The validation and affirmation adolescent Hmong girls received from influential Hmong women shifted their thinking regarding what they have been taught previously. (e.g. Hmong rules for Hmong girls) It changed their perspective about their current situations, their racial and ethnic identities (both positive and negative as illustrated in the pre-interview), and their current perceptions about themselves by helping them to envision their possible future self. One of the critical elements is the affirmation of being a Hmong girl. Initial words such as “I never knew” or “I fear being stereotyped” express the transformation of their belief and perceptions to “I never knew”, “I want to”, “I should set my own goal.” These new words or statements illustrate the positive mind shift that occurred after engaging with influential Hmong women.

**Racial and Ethnic Identity Engagement Model**

Racial and ethnic identities’ construction is a continuum process of enhancing adolescents’ identities. Constructing racial and ethnic identities is a journey, not a destination. Meaning adolescents will continue to analyze, evaluate, refine, and construct healthy racial and ethnic identities over time. Lev Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory, which appeared in *The Diversity Kit; An Introductory Resource for Social Change in Education*, emphasized that individuals make sense of their world through discourse and interaction with others. When interactions and discourses occur, there’s a high transformation learning that occurs and that knowledge is not fixed and objective, but rather is fluid and subjective. Thus, knowledge is socially constructed and situated in culture. (Ahearn, C., Childs-Bowen, D., Coady, M., etc., 2002). Understanding that racial and ethnic identities’
construction is a dynamic evolutionary process, this leads me to propose the Racial and Ethnic Identity Engagement Model. The Racial and Ethnic Identity Engagement Model recognizes that racial and ethnic identities’ construction is interactive and takes into consideration the adolescents’ cultures and perspectives of who they are, their awareness, experiences, knowledge, and skills, and builds upon this knowledge level both consciously and subconsciously. Thus, the Racial and Ethnic Identity Engagement Model grounds its work in validating, affirming, building, and bridging the students’ frame of references and the cultural assets they bring to create their racial and ethnic identities. The description of the Racial and Ethnic Identity Engagement Model is detailed below. In addition, Appendix J contains the graphic and layout of the model.

The Racial and Ethnic Identity Engagement Model contains numerous layers and features. See Appendix J. The first point is to understand that there are many entry points for adolescents to continue constructing their racial and ethnic identities. The Tradition & Affect, Emerging & Emersion, Assimilation, Biculturalism, and Multiculturalism are just a few identified entry points. These entry points represent where adolescents are currently at and how they choose to identify themselves based on their cultural backgrounds, frame of references, experiences, and previous explorations. Consciously or unconsciously, the adolescents begin their journey by identifying the entry point they perceive as closely relevant to their racial and ethnic identities. Whether adolescents can identify their entry points consciously or subconsciously, (-they either have a strong knowledge, a general knowledge, or limited knowledge regarding their racial and ethnic

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15 Disclaimer: Due to the complexity of racial and ethnic identities’ construction, not all the entry points have been identified. Based on the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse adolescents, more researches are needed to identify all entry points.
identities) the entry point provides a safe space that validates, affirms, builds, and bridges the adolescents’ frame of references and ground the adolescents’ perceptions and interactions in shaping their identities.

The blue arrow represents the recursive cycle of engagement and the depth of knowledge and skills adolescents acquire throughout the continuum of racial and ethnic construction process. The depth of engagement depends on the individual adolescents’ background knowledge, identity consciousness, intrinsic motivation, personal goal(s), etc., and frequency of experiences. Though there are various forms of engagement (e.g., researching/reading articles or doing book studies, conducting site visit, listening to a guest speaker, being exposed to people from their communities, etc.), the engagement provides opportunities for adolescents to connect with people who share similar characteristics and/or people who they want to emulate. There are two layers of

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16 Skills consist of the mental, emotional, and physical abilities, as well as the application of knowledge to critically identify the unique characteristics of the Hmong/Hmong American culture and construct identities that are most relevant to the individuals. Skills will vary among adolescents based on the continuum of racial and ethnic construction.
engagement—the surface engagement and the deep engagement. The surface engagement occurs when adolescents enter new entry points in the continuum or re-identify their identities and search for new entry points in the continuum of racial and ethnic construction process. The surface engagement usually occurs during the Development Awareness and Construct Meaning Stage of Change. The deep engagement occurs when adolescents choose to work through the State of Change until they demonstrate proficiency and feel highly confident with their identities. Adolescents who demonstrate deep engagement are unconsciously skilled in constructing their racial and ethnic identities.

As I described above, the depth of engagement affects the depth of knowledge and skills. The depth of knowledge is known as the State of Change and is represented by the inner circle of the four quadrants. The four quadrants are Develop Awareness, Construct Meaning, Competency and Bridging, and Proficiency and Extending. Each piece of the quadrant signifies the growth of racial and ethnic knowledge and consciousness. Moreover, the depth of skills is known as the Stages of Individual Skill Development. The Stages of Individual Skill Development consists of Unconsciously Unskilled, Consciously Unskilled, Consciously Skill, and Unconsciously Skilled\textsuperscript{17}. The State of Change and Stages of Individual Skill Development are described in each colored column. See Appendix J.

\textsuperscript{17} The Stages of Individual Skill Development was adopted from Wisconsin Response to Intervention Leadership and Coaching Training (2017) and Gordon (1974)).
The Continuum of Racial and Ethnic Construction visualizes the broad spectrum of State of Change and Stages of Individual Skill Development among individuals. The left red spectrum visualizes adolescents who are beginning to develop awareness and are unconsciously unskilled in constructing their identities. The right dark blue to purple spectrum represents individuals that are proficient in constructing their racial and ethnic identities unconsciously.

The Racial and Ethnic Identity Engagement Model is a starting point for researchers and educators to better understand the continuum of racial and ethnic identities’ construction. There is much investigation needed to continue expanding upon this framework.

Limitations Within the Research Design

As much as the research process is implemented with fidelity so that reliable and valid information is collected and disseminated, there are limitations that exist. One of the limitations is the small size of participants engaged in the research. Because of the small cell sample, some of the findings may not be applicable to all adolescent Hmong girls in the United States. Although, the intent is to implement the research with fidelity
in order to collect valid and reliable information, to generalize that the findings apply to all adolescent Hmong girls would be foolish. All adolescent Hmong girls are unique and different. A larger pool of adolescent Hmong girls in various geographic areas and backgrounds is needed to expand the data further in order to gather valid and reliable information and examine outliers.

The second limitation relates to the small number of participants and its influence on the Multidimensional Inventory Hmong Identity (MIHI). The small number of participants impacted the MIHI calculation and line items specifically line items with reserve scores. Therefore, multiple assessment tools (e.g. Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin (KMO) may be needed to delve further into the scale and subscales and obtain a comprehensive perspective of the adolescents’ racial and ethnic identities.

The third limitation is the impact of mean scores on outliers. Focusing only on mean scores might influence and narrow the usefulness of the collected data and the research. Furthermore, the research occurred within a couple of months. The specificity of the research requires unwavering commitment over a certain period of time to hear and become knowledgeable about the adolescents and the meanings of their experiences. As much as the researcher tried to standardize the research implementation (i.e. data collection) and neutralize the analysis process, professional actions, judgments, interpretations, and even unconscious biases may influence the research process and information collected. The beliefs, practices, and behaviors of the researcher are not measured to a certain level but rather the awareness of the variables that may influence the research.
Areas for Future Research

In a multicultural world, understanding racial and ethnic identities is vastly uncharted territory. From my research, I discovered that regardless of similar demographics and residential location, the racial and ethnic identities’ construction process as vastly different and unique for each of the girls. They constructed their identities from the tradition, biculturalism, and assimilation entry point thus creating three distinctive profiles. For instance, Neeg Tshiab, who is brought up in the traditional Hmong ways of life, her identities are grounded by the Hmong culture and language. Stacey, who is also raised in the traditional Hmong ways of life, constructed her identities similar to US Midwest mainstream culture. Through Stacy’s narratives, she described herself as the only Hmong student sitting with her American friends, dating someone outside of her culture, becoming independent, and living in New York City with a business mind focus. On the other hand, Areum, constructed her identities through a bicultural lens where she is learning to navigate successfully between her native culture and the US Midwest mainstream culture. The three vastly different profiles illustrate the uncharted territory that needs further exploration in order to understand the comprehensive process of racial and ethnic identities’ construction. The hope of this research is to pave the way for further investigation and discovery. Though this research contains insightful information in understanding how adolescent Hmong girls construct their racial and identities, the research does not touch on concepts that may influence racial and ethnic identities’ construction. Several of these concepts emerged during the interviewing and analysis processes and are integral in the way they influenced the girls’ perception of themselves and also how the world perceives them. These concepts have
the potential to be examined and expanded further so that understanding racial and ethnic identities may increase. Here are multiple concepts identified from the research process:

- Racial Ideologies and the impact on Hmong students’ academic achievements
- Intersectionality: Understanding intersectionality influence on Hmong racial and ethnic identities
- Role Models: The urgency for Hmong role models in shaping the racial and ethnic identities in young Hmong adolescents
- Cultural Memory Loss: Examining Hmong history, culture, and identities over time
- Addressing Misconceptions About Hmong People: Examining cultural perceptions, cultural misconceptions, and what I can do about it
- Historical Immigration Trauma: Focus on immigration trauma influences on Hmong students
- Cultural Precepts: Do traditional cultural precepts build stronger racial and ethnic identities?
- Gender Inequities: Privileges among Hmong boys and girls
- Cultural Perceptions: How assimilation influences individuals’ perceptions of their cultures
- Hmong Achievement Gaps: Examining Hmong students’ achievement gaps and the danger of being identified as Asians
- Cross Cultural Trust: Examining the reciprocity of cultural trust among Hmong adolescents
Summary of the Chapter

This research has brought me much appreciation and conciliation to the challenges that occurred throughout my life. As I reflected back to the time I was identified as an orphan and negated by the cultures I love, the discrimination, marginalization, and biases I experienced influenced how I constructed my racial and ethnic identities. While growing up to prove my worth, I unconsciously abandoned my own culture in order to fit within the US Mainstream culture. While leading the research design, I had the opportunity to witness how adolescent Hmong girls construct their racial and ethnic identities and the positive transformation that occurred between adolescent Hmong girls and Hmong women of influence. This experience helped me gain further insights in understanding the beauty and complexity of human interactions that can shape people’s beliefs about themselves and others.

Researching the complexity of racial and ethnic identities’ construction in adolescent Hmong girls was invigorating and intriguing. Invigorating in terms of what the research design process has collected and concluded about the continuum of racial and ethnic identities through exploration and engagement with influential Hmong women. The three distinctive entry points of racial and ethnic identities’ construction among three adolescent Hmong girls were most invigorating. The way each of them construct their identities over time is specific and unique to their beliefs, backgrounds, and experiences; thus developing three vastly different profiles. Not one of them are the same. This leads me to question what other entry points are yet to explore? And if the research design had a larger pool of adolescent Hmong girls, would most majority of them fall within the three profiles?
Given the space and time, adolescent Hmong girls illustrate how they continue to construct their individual racial and ethnic identities. What is most intriguing is the relevance and connection of the girls’ insights and understanding of who they are, where they have been, to where they need to be, and what they aspire to become. As they have alluded in the research, it is not the outside world that determines them but rather how they determine themselves and their future. These adolescent Hmong girls demonstrate a great sense of determination, curiosity, and hope for their future not only for themselves but for their families, their people, and their communities.
LIST OF TABLES: Quantitative Data Collected from Multi-Dimensional Inventory of Hmong Identity

Table 1.0 Overall Mean Scores Within All Scales & Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centrality</th>
<th>Private Regard</th>
<th>Public Regard</th>
<th>Assimilation</th>
<th>Humanist</th>
<th>Minority</th>
<th>Nationalist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>12.16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15.55</td>
<td>16.87</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.1 Overall Mean Scores Within a Scale or Subscale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1®</th>
<th>Q6</th>
<th>Q9</th>
<th>Q13®</th>
<th>Q19</th>
<th>Q33</th>
<th>Q48</th>
<th>Q51®</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-4.333</td>
<td>5.666</td>
<td>3.333</td>
<td>2.666</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Private Regard Subscale: Overall Mean Scores Within a Subscale

Public Regard Subscale: Overall Mean Scores Within a Subscale
Assimilation Subscale: Overall Mean Scores Within A Particular Subscale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>4.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18</td>
<td>4.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q37</td>
<td>6.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q39</td>
<td>5.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q40</td>
<td>5.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q41</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q43</td>
<td>3.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q44</td>
<td>4.666</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Humanist Subscale: Overall Mean Scores Within a Particular Subscale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q23</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q26</td>
<td>6.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q27</td>
<td>5.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q28</td>
<td>5.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q29</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q30</td>
<td>6.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q31</td>
<td>6.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q35</td>
<td>6.666</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Oppressed Minority Subscale: Overall Mean Scores Within a Particular Subscale

Nationalist Subscale: Overall Mean Scores Within a Particular Subscale
Table 1.2 Individual’s Mean Scores Within a Scale or Subscale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Neeg Tshiab</th>
<th>Stacey</th>
<th>Areum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centrality Scale</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Regard Subscale</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Public Regard Subscale:
- **Neeg Tshiab**: 4.16
- **Stacey**: 4.16
- **Areum**: 3.66

### Assimilation Subscale:
- **Neeg Tshiab**: 5.88
- **Stacey**: 5.11
- **Areum**: 4.55
Humanist Subscale: Individual's Mean Score Within a Subscale

- Neeg Tshiab: 6.12
- Stacey: 5.25
- Areum: 5.5

Oppressed Minority Subscale: Individual's Mean Score Within a Subscale

- Neeg Tshiab: 5.8
- Stacey: 5.5
- Areum: 4.3
Nationalist Subscale: Individual's Mean Score Within a Subscale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neeg Tshib</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacey</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areum</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.3 Centrality Scale: A measure of the extent to which race is a core part of the individual’s self-concept (1R, 6, 13R, 19, 33, 48, 51R)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centrality Scale: Individual's Mean Score Within a Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="chart.png" alt="Bar chart showing mean scores for Neeg Tshiab, Stacey, and Areum" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Similarity

**Observation 19:**
- NT agrees that she has a strong sense of belonging with the Hmong people.
- S strongly agrees that she does have a sense of belonging to the Hmong.
- A neutrally agrees that she has a strong sense of belonging to the Hmong people.

**Observation 33:**
- NT/S/A all have a strong attachment to other Hmong people.

**Observation 48:**
- NT/S/A all strongly agree that being Hmong is a strong reflection of who they are.

### Difference

**Observation 1R:**
- NT & A neutrally agree that being Hmong *has very little* to do with how they feel about themselves emotionally and psychologically.
- S score slightly lower at a 3 (neutral) but closer to disagree; being Hmong *does* influence how she feels about herself.

**Observation 6:**
- A *neutrally* perceives that Hmong is an important part of her self-image. Being Hmong is not a major influence of her self-image.
- NT/S *strongly agree* that being Hmong is an important part of their self-image.

**Observation 9:**
- A *does not* feel that her destiny is tied to the destiny of the Hmong people.
- NT/S destinies are tied to the destiny of their Hmong people.

**Observation 13R:**
- S disagrees in which she perceives that being Hmong does impact/influence who she is.
- NT/A *strongly agree* that being Hmong
does not impact/influence who they are.

Observation 51R: (social interaction)
- A perceives that being Hmong does impact her social relationships with other people.
- NT/S agree that being Hmong does not impact their social relationships

Summary
- Centrality has the lowest mean score (5.87) as compare to other subscales.
- All adolescent Hmong girls perceive being Hmong as an important reflection of their self-concept regardless of the high and/or low levels of exposure or engagements with the Hmong culture, Hmong people, and/or language.
- Adolescent Hmong girls that are exposed to the Hmong traditional ways of life and are older in age have higher Centrality means than other Hmong adolescent girls.

IDEOLOGY SCALE: A person’s beliefs regarding how he/she should interact with his/her own and other groups in society.

Table 1.4 Nationalist Subscale: The importance of one’s own racial descent (2, 3, 11, 12, 14, 16, 21, 22, 25)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarity</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation 2:</td>
<td>Observation 11:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- NT/S/A all agree it is important for Hmong people and their children to have access to Hmong art, music and literature.</td>
<td>- NT/A agree that Hmong would be better off if Hmong adopted Hmong values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 3:</td>
<td>- S disagrees that Hmong have to adopt Hmong values in order to consider themselves better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT/S/A all agree that it is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
acceptable for Hmong to marry interracially.

Observation 21:
- NT/S both agree and/or neutrally agree that learning about Hmong history is critical to their racial identity.

Observation 22:
- NT/S/A recognize that there are racial differences between Hmong and Whites.

Observation 12:
- NT neutrally agrees that Hmong students should attend schools organized and run by Hmong administrators and teachers.
- A/S strongly disagree.

Observation 14:
- NT neutrally agrees that Hmong should have their political force.
- A/S strongly disagree.

Observation 16:
- NT/S neutrally agree that Hmong should support Hmong businesses.
- A strongly disagrees that Hmong should buy from Hmong businesses.

Observation 25:
- NT/S disagree that White people can never be trusted.
- A neutrally agree that White people can never be trusted.

Summary:
- All adolescent Hmong girls perceive Hmong history, culture, and language as an important part of their racial and ethnic identities.
- All adolescents perceive a thorough knowledge of Hmong history is highly important for Hmong’s identities and successes.

Table 1.5 Oppressed Minority Subscale: The emphasizes of solidarity and communalities across many oppressed groups (20, 34, 36, 8, 42, 45, 47, 49, 50, 38)

![Oppressed Minority Subscale: Individual's Mean Score Within a Subscale](image)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarity</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation 20:</td>
<td>Observation 8:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● All participants agree that the same forces which led to the oppression</td>
<td>● All participants score a little different in terms of how each interpret the accomplishments and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Hmong have also led to the oppression of other groups (including AA</td>
<td>successes of Hmong people. S scores higher than NT. NT scores higher than A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and IA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 34:</td>
<td>Observation 42:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● All participants agree that the struggle for Hmong liberation in</td>
<td>● All participants’ scores are different. NT perceives the Hmong’s experience with racism is similar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America is related to the struggles of other oppressed groups.</td>
<td>to other minority groups. S neutrally agrees that Hmong experience similar racism. A slightly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 36:</td>
<td>disagrees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● All agree that Hmong (considered an oppressed group) should learn</td>
<td>Observation 45:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about the oppression of other groups.</td>
<td>● NT/S strongly agree that there are other people who experience racial injustice and indignities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 47:</td>
<td>similar to Hmong Americans. A slightly disagrees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● All agree that Hmong will be more successful if they form coalitions</td>
<td>Observation 50:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with other minority/privileged groups.</td>
<td>● A strongly disagrees that the dominant society devalues anything not White male oriented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 49:</td>
<td>NT/S strongly agree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● All agree on becoming friends with people who are also impacted by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>racism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 38:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● All agree that Hmong people should treat other oppressed people as</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary**

- Minority is one of the subscales with the highest mean score.
- All adolescent Hmong girls perceive building coalitions with other oppressed groups is critical to the success of Hmong people.
- Adolescent Hmong girls understand that racial injustice and indignities exist.
Table 1.6 Assimilation Subscale: The view that integrating one’s own ethnic group into the rest of society is important (10, 18, 37, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 46)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarity</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observation 37</strong>:&lt;br&gt;● All participants agree that since America is predominantly white, it is important that Hmong go to White schools so they can gain experiences interacting with Whites.</td>
<td><strong>Observation 10</strong>:&lt;br&gt;● S/A slightly and/or neutrally disagree that Hmong who espouse separatism are not racist like White people who espouse separatism. NT agrees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observation 39</strong>:&lt;br&gt;● S/A neutrally agree that Hmong should be full members of the American political system. NT strongly agrees.</td>
<td><strong>Observation 18</strong>:&lt;br&gt;● A disagrees that Hmong are not progressing in the mainstream of America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observation 40</strong>:&lt;br&gt;● All agree that Hmong will work with the system to achieve their political and economic goals.</td>
<td><strong>Observation 41</strong>:&lt;br&gt;● NT/S agree (higher end of agree) that Hmong are progressing toward the mainstream of America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observation 41</strong>:&lt;br&gt;● All agree that Hmong should integrate all institutions which are segregated.</td>
<td><strong>Observation 44</strong>:&lt;br&gt;● NT/A disagree that Hmong should not view themselves as Americans first. S strongly agrees that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observation 43</strong>:&lt;br&gt;● All agree that Hmong should interact socially with White people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hmong should view themselves as Americans first.

**Summary**
- Assimilation is one of the subscales with the highest mean score (15.55).
- All adolescent Hmong girls perceive Hmong interactions with the mainstream culture as highly important to their successes.
- They believe Hmong should strive to integrate all other institutions, races and ethnicities which are segregated and oppressed.
- Adolescents who are most assimilated into the rest of society have the lowest mean score as compared to the older adolescent Hmong girls.

Table 1.7 Humanist Subscale: The commonalities among humans regardless of ethnicity (23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 35)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarity</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation 26:</td>
<td>Observation 23:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- All strongly agree that Hmong should have the choice to marry interracially.</td>
<td>- NT/A neutrally agree that Hmong values should not be consistent with human values. S disagrees that Hmong values should not be consistent with human values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 27:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- All agree that Hmong and Whites have more commonalities than differences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 28:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- All agree that Hmong should not consider race when buying art/selecting a book to read.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 29:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- All agree that Hmong would be better off if they were more concerned with the problems facing all people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 30:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarity</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation 26:</td>
<td>Observation 23:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- All strongly agree that Hmong should have the choice to marry interracially.</td>
<td>- NT/A neutrally agree that Hmong values should not be consistent with human values. S disagrees that Hmong values should not be consistent with human values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 27:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- All agree that Hmong and Whites have more commonalities than differences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 28:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- All agree that Hmong should not consider race when buying art/selecting a book to read.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 29:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- All agree that Hmong would be better off if they were more concerned with the problems facing all people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 30:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
● All agree that being individual is more important than identifying oneself as Hmong.

Observation 31:
● All agree that we are all children of a higher being; therefore, we should love people of all races.

Observation 35:
● All agree that regardless of their race, all have strengths and limitations.

Summary
● Humanist has the highest mean score (16.87) as compared to other subscales.
● Interracial marriages, buying consumer goods, children of higher being and all races have limits and strengths.
● All adolescent Hmong girls perceive race as socially constructed and that there is only one race.

REGARD SCALE: The affective and evaluative judgements of one’s own ethnicity

Table 1.8 Private Regard Subscale: The extent to which one feels positively or negatively about his/her own ethnic group group (4, 7, 8, 24R, 54, 55)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarity</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 8:</td>
<td>Observation 4:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● All neutrally agree that Hmong have made some advancements/accomplishments. A’s score is lower than the other two participants.</td>
<td>● NT/S strongly agree that they feel good about the Hmong people. A neutrally agrees but does not feel good about the Hmong people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 54:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● All agree that they are proud to be Hmong.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 55:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● All agree that the Hmong community has</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
made valuable contributions to the society. A neutrally agrees but score is lower than NT/S.

Observation 7:
- NT/S strongly agree that they are happy they are Hmong. A neutrally agrees.

Observation 24R:
- NT/A neutrally agree that they regret being Hmong. S disagrees stating that she does not regret being Hmong.

Summary
- All adolescent Hmong girls perceive their racial and ethnic identities positively.
- All adolescent Hmong girls perceive Hmong to have made some sort of contributions to their communities.
- Adolescent Hmong girls that are exposed to the Hmong traditional ways of life and are older in age perceive Hmong more positively than the other adolescent Hmong girls.

Table 1.9 Public Regard Subscale: The extent to which an individual believes that others evaluate his/her ethnic group positively or negatively (5, 15, 17, 52, 53, 56)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarity</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation 5: &lt;li&gt;All agree that Hmong are considered good by others.&lt;/li&gt;</td>
<td>Observation 15: &lt;li&gt;NT/S disagree that others do not respect Hmong. A slightly agrees.&lt;/li&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observation 17:
- NT/A disagree with the statement and perceive that Hmong are considered as effective as other racial groups. S strongly agrees that other people do perceive Hmong to be ineffective.

Observation 52:
- A perceives Hmong as being respected by the broader society. NT/S neutrally agree that Hmong are not respected by the broader society.

Observation 53:
- NT strongly agrees that other groups view Hmong in a positive manner. S/A slightly agree.

Observation 56:
- NT strongly agrees that society view Hmong as an asset. S/A neutrally agree but not to the extent of strongly agree.

Summary
- All adolescent Hmong girls perceive Hmong as being evaluated positively by other subgroups and are assets to in their communities.
- Adolescent Hmong girls with the highest Centrality mean score also have the highest Public Regard mean scores.
## Descriptive Summary of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chosen pseudonym name is a Hmong name: Neeg Tshiab</th>
<th>Age: 17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Language: Hmong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Career Aspiration: Junior, joins Multi-Cultural Club, close friends are Hmong, long-term English Learner (K-11), Pre-K teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Background: Oldest daughter, 2nd child of 7 children, a caretaker of the family including raising younger siblings, cooking, cleaning, raised by both foreign born Hmong parents, raised in a traditional Hmong culture, Shamanism is the main practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for selecting a pseudonym name: Neeg Tshiab chose a Hmong name because this is the translation of her real name in English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chosen pseudonym name is an American name: Stacey</th>
<th>Age: 18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Language: Hmong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Career Aspiration: Junior, joins Multi-Cultural Club, joined a seasonal soccer team, friends are a mixed of racial groups (Hmong and White), long-term English Learner (K-11), retained in kindergarten, aspire to pursue business or marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Background: Raised by foreign-born grandparents, parents are absent, first sibling, oldest daughter, assist grandparents with farmer’s market, raised in a traditional Hmong culture, Shamanism is the main practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for selecting a pseudonym name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacey has a Hmong name but chose an American name because she never had a name in English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chosen pseudonym name is a Korean name: Areum</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age: 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Language: English *can understand and speak Hmong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Career Aspiration: Sophomore, joined varsity dance team, joined Multi-Cultural club for one year and felt disengaged, all White friends, aspire to become a psychologist/private investigator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Background: Raised by foreign and native born parents, first child of 4 children, first daughter, raised bicultural, English is the main language spoken in the home, Christianity is the main religion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for selecting a pseudonym name: Areum chose a Korean name because of her interest and love for K-Pop culture, food, language, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix B

## Cultural Proficiency Continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REACTIVE</th>
<th>PROACTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance for Mandated Equity</td>
<td>Transformation for Desired Equity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Destructiveness ➔ Incapacity ➔ Blindness ➔ Pre-competence ➔ Competence ➔ Proficiency

- □ Focuses on “them” being problems
- □ Tolerates, excludes, separates
- □ Diversity is a problem to be solved
- □ Prevent, mitigate, avoid cultural dissonance and conflict
- □ Stakeholders expect or help others assimilate
- □ Information added to existing policies and procedures

- ◎ Focuses on “us” and “our practices”
- ◎ Esteems, respects, includes
- ◎ Diversity and inclusion are goals to be attained
- ◎ Manage, leverage, facilitate conflict
- ◎ Stakeholders adapt to meet needs of others
- ◎ Existing policies, procedures, practices examined and adapted to changing environment

*Adapted from the National Center for Cultural Competence*
Appendix C

Academic Achievement Data
## Appendix D

### Multidimensional Inventory of Hmong Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Overall, being Hmong has very little to do with how I feel about myself.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>It is important for Hmong people to surround their children with Hmong art, music, and literature.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hmong people should not marry interracially.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I feel good about Hmong people.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Overall, Hmong are considered good by others.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>In general, being Hmong is an important part of my self-image.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I am happy that I am Hmong.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I feel that Hmong have made major accomplishments and advancements.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>My destiny is tied to the destiny of other Hmong people.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hmong who espouse separatism are as racist as White people who also espouse separatism.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Hmong would be better off</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Hmong students are better off going to schools that are controlled and organized by Hmong.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Being Hmong is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Hmong people must organize themselves into a separate Hmong political force.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>In general, others respect Hmong people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Whenever possible, Hmong should buy from other Hmong businesses.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Most people consider Hmong, on the average, to be more ineffective than other racial groups.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>A sign of progress is that Hmong are in the mainstream of America more than ever before.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>I have a strong sense of belonging to Hmong people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>The same forces which have led to the oppression of Hmong have also led to the oppression of other groups.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>A thorough knowledge of Hmong history is very important for Hmong today.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Hmong and Whites can never live in true harmony because of racial differences.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Hmong values should not be inconsistent with human</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I often regret that I am Hmong.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. White people can never be trusted where Hmong are concerned.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Hmong should have the choice to marry interracially.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Hmong and Whites have more commonalities than differences.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Hmong people should not consider race when buying art or selecting a book to read.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Hmong would be better off if they were more concerned with the problems facing all people than just focusing on Hmong issues.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Being an individual is more important than identifying oneself as Hmong.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. We are all children of a higher being; therefore, we should love people of all races.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Hmong should judge Whites as individuals and not as members of the White race.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. I have a strong attachment to other Hmong people.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. The struggle for Hmong liberation in America should be closely related to the struggle of other oppressed groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. People regardless of their race have strengths and limitations.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Hmong should learn about the oppression of other groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Because America is predominantly white, it is important that Hmong go to White schools so they can gain experiences interacting with Whites.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Hmong people should treat other oppressed people as allies.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Hmong people should strive to be full members of the American political system.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Hmong should try to work with the system to achieve their political and economic goals.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Hmong should strive to integrate all institutions which are segregated.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. The racism Hmong have experienced is similar to that of other minority groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Hmong should feel free to interact socially with White people.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Hmong should view themselves as being Americans first and foremost.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. There are other people who experience racial injustice and indignities similar to Hmong Americans</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. The plight of Hmong in</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>America will improve only when Hmong are in important positions within the system.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.</td>
<td>Hmong will be more successful in achieving their goals if they form coalitions with other oppressed groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>Being Hmong is an important reflection of who I am.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>Hmong should try to become friends with people from other oppressed groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>The dominant society devalues anything not White male oriented.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.</td>
<td>Being Hmong is not a major factor in my social relationships.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.</td>
<td>Hmong are not respected by the broader society.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.</td>
<td>In general, other groups view Hmong in a positive manner.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.</td>
<td>I am proud to be Hmong.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55.</td>
<td>I feel that the Hmong community has made valuable contributions to this society.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56.</td>
<td>Society views Hmong people as an asset.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (Sellers et al., 1997)
Appendix E

Pre-Interview Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant’s Name:</th>
<th>Birthplace:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level:</td>
<td>Career Aspiration:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generational Status:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family &amp; Community Background</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When did your family arrive in the United States?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What educational opportunities did your parents or guardians have access to?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your parents’/guardians’ occupation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many family members are in your family? How many siblings do you have? Are you the oldest, middle, or youngest?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe the city you live? What makes you feel isolated? Is there anything you would like to have more access to?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you and your family discuss racism? What about interracial relationship? What does your family think about you dating someone outside of your race and/or ethnicity?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who encourages and motivates you to achieve high level of academic success?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does your family identify themselves racially? Ethnically?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Factors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you describe the culture and climate of your current school?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe the culture and climate of your current school?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What extra-curricular or clubs are you engaged in at school?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who are your friends? How would you describe your friends? How do your friends treat you that make you feel valuable and respected?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What have racial and ethnic identities impacted your educational experience?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you feel when people stereotype you? How do you respond to the individual that stereotypes you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why do you believe they stereotype you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At school, who encourages and supports you to do well academically? Why did you identify and select that individual?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do your teachers and peers perceive, treat, and respond to you in the classroom?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel misunderstood at times by your administrators, counselors, teachers, and peers? What happens that make you feel misunderstood by your peers? Why do you feel you are often misunderstood by your administrators, counselors, teachers, and peers? Why do you feel you are often misunderstood by your administrators, counselors, teachers, and peers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| What are some traditional or cultural practices your family and relatives engage in? |  |
| How does your family connect with the general community and/or the Hmong community? What are some of those connections? |  |

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### Social Cultural Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does “fitting-in” mean to you? How does the term apply to you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What makes you feel pressure to fit into the dominant culture?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you behave when you are with your friends in the dominant culture? In your native culture? What cause you to behave in a certain way?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you identify yourself most of the time, American or America? How does the term mean to you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would you prefer to identify as, Hmong America or Hmong American? How does the term apply to you in terms of your values, beliefs, and practices?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Individual Factor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe your racial and ethnic identities as? Do the racial and ethnic identities change depend on the context?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do your family members, relatives, peers, teachers, etc., perceive your racial and ethnic identities? Is being Hmong influence who you are as a person? Why or why not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would you most prefer, Asian American, Hmong American, or Hmong? Why is it critical that you identify yourself this way?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe Asian, Hmong American, and/or Hmong?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What opportunities do you engage in that confirm you are a Hmong American or Hmong girl or Asian America?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What makes you feel proud or doesn’t feel proud to be Hmong or Hmong American?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Adapted from Kim, Jean. (1981), Seller, etc. (2013), & Wong, Siu. (2011).*
Appendix F

Hmong Women of Influence Interview Guide

Date of Interview: 
Interviewer: 
Interviewee:

Disclaimer: The template is a guide for the participants to interview their Hmong women of influence. Participants are encouraged to modify the template and ask questions that are more relevant to them.

Where were you born? In what country? In what city or province? 
What was your family’s journey to America like?
How old were you when you immigrated to the United States?
What states and cities did you reside when your family first arrived in the United States?
Why did your family settle there?
What jobs did your parents/guardians take on when they first arrived in the United States?
How did your family find support in the Hmong community?
What Hmong traditions did your family hold on to?
Why are these traditions important to you and/or your family?
How were you and your family discriminated while you were growing up?
How did you and your family handle the discrimination situations?
What was your high school experience like?
What high school extra-curricular were you engaged in?
Why did you engage in those extra-curricular?
What was your favorite high school subject?
What subjects prepared you for college and career readiness?
How did you determine what career path you wanted to pursue?
Who most influenced you in terms of your personal, educational, and professional inspirations?
What educational institutions did you attend?
Why did you choose those specific institutions?
What are the most important personal character traits you think a Hmong girl should have?
What are the most valuable lessons you learned growing up as a Hmong woman that you are willing to share with me?
Appendix G

Post Interview Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant’s Name:</th>
<th>Birthplace:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level:</td>
<td>Career Aspiration:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generational Status:</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After being exposed to a Hmong woman of influence, how has your perspective changed about who you are as a Hmong adolescent girl? Or as the oldest Hmong daughter?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After engaging with a Hmong woman of influence, what did you learn about yourself that you didn’t know before?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What inspires you as a Hmong girl after talking to a Hmong woman of influence?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are you most proud of now as a Hmong adolescent girl?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you envision yourself doing in the future? What are your hopes and dreams now?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did you learn about the racial and ethnic struggles she (Hmong woman of influence) encountered? How are the struggles or challenges similar or different from yours?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did she overcome societal/cultural barriers? What did she do differently in order to be successful as a Hmong woman?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How has your perceptive about White people changed by engaging with a Hmong woman of influence? Has it or has it not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some of her successes as a Hmong woman? What are some of her failures as a Hmong woman?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How has your perspective changed about being Hmong? About the Hmong people? About the Hmong culture?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you feel about her experiences with the Hmong culture? How is her experience growing up as a Hmong girl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>similar or different from yours?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What Hmong rules do you believe you still need to live by? Have those rules changed after engaging with a Hmong woman of influence? Why or why not?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is your Hmong woman of influence’s perspective about marriage? Or interracial marriage?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In what ways has this experience of engaging with a Hmong woman of influence impacted you?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix H

### Cultural Precepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTONOMY</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal freedom, autonomy, self-determination, individual needs come</td>
<td>Allegiance, loyalty, honor to family, group needs come first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTITUDES TOWARD TIME</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High value on punctuality, planning, schedules</td>
<td>Flexible plans and commitments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAMILY TIES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear family</td>
<td>Extended family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career Preparation</td>
<td>Citizen Preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Responsibility</td>
<td>School's Responsibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mono-lingual</td>
<td>Multi-lingual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One speaker at a time</td>
<td>Overlapping speakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear story-telling</td>
<td>Circular story-telling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Obtained from Trompenaar and Hampden-Turner, Seven Dimensions of Culture*
### APPENDIX I

The Essence of Hmong Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRADITION</th>
<th>MODERN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Separation ➔ Marginalization ➔ Integration ➔ Assimilation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elders and clan leaders may or may not play a significant role, and the decision-making processes are up to the individual and family</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Elders and clan leaders play a significant role in the communities and in decision-making processes</td>
<td>□ Elders are respected and sought out to offer their teachings and advice when it is relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Elders are respected, speak first, offer their teachings or advice to the younger generations</td>
<td>□ Hmong retain and reclaim traditional language and cultural practices but adapting mainstream cultures, practices, and language are essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Hmong retain and reclaim traditional language and cultural practices</td>
<td>□ Marriages occur within and outside of the ethnic group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Marriages occur within the Hmong ethnic group</td>
<td>□ There is a shared responsibility to immediate family and then clanship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ There is a collective family, clanship, and community tie and shared responsibility</td>
<td>□ Hmong should demonstrate some historical knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Hmong possess historical knowledge and wisdom</td>
<td>□ Hmong possess a strong multi-cultural pride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Hmong possess historical perspective and have a strong connection to the past</td>
<td>□ Hmong possess the knowledge, skills, and habits to be bicultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Hmong have strong survival skills and resiliency in the face of multiple challenges</td>
<td>□ Traditional spiritual practices and mainstream faiths exist depending on the individual’s beliefs and values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Hmong possess strong ethnic pride</td>
<td>□ Hmong men and women are served depending on the social settings, practices, and status of the social settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Traditional spirituality and practice are integrated into day-to-day living</td>
<td>□ A handshake can be seen by either a Hmong man or woman as a sign of respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Hmong demonstrate polite etiquette, respect, and love by sharing food with visitors</td>
<td>□ Hmong men and woman have access to resources and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ In social settings where food is served, Hmong men and elders are served first</td>
<td>□ Hmong convey truths or difficult messages through direct or explicit instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ A handshake is seen by Hmong men as a sign of respect</td>
<td>□ Hmong actively engage in social and political movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Hmong convey truths or difficult messages through riddles</td>
<td><strong>Elders and clan leaders are not significant or relevant</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Storytelling is a method of passing on traditional teachings and personal stories</td>
<td>□ The decision-making processes are up to the individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Hmong cultural, beliefs, practices, language, and values have little influence on the individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Successes, achievements, status, and material possessions are based on the individual’s effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Communication is direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Immediate family comes first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Practices such as ceremonies, prayers, and religious protocols depend on personal beliefs and preferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ There is equality in social relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Time is an essence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Disclaimer:** These key features may not apply to every Hmong individual. Each individual is the result of unique life experiences. Each individual’s life experiences define his or her personal worldview. Culture provides the framework for that worldview.
APPENDIX J

Racial and Ethnic Identity Engagement Model

[Diagram of Racial and Ethnic Identity Engagement Model]

Continuum of Racial & Ethnic Construction

State of Change | Develop Awareness | Construct Meaning | Competency & Bridging | Proficiency & Extending
--- | --- | --- | --- | ---
Stages of Individual Skill Development (Gordon, 1974)
Unconsciously Unskilled | | Consciously Unskilled | | Unconsciously Skilled
Dept of Engagement, Knowledge, & Skills
- Recognize
- Identity (purpose)
- Question
- Recall
- Recite
- Tell
- Memorize
- List
- Define
- Identity
- Construct
- Investigate & Assess
- Make Observations
- Compare & Contrast
- Interpret
- Cause & Effect
- Draw conclusions
- Gain awareness
- Strategic thinking
- Investigate
- Critique
- Formulate
- Interpret
- Hypothesize
- Apply & Connect
- Relate
- Comprehend
- Confident
- Onus responsibility
- Extend thinking
- Analyze
- Critique
- Evaluate
- Synthesize
- Apply Concepts
- Make connections
- Refine identities
- Highly confident
- Flexible
- Adaptable

Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is ___________ and I am a graduate student completing a graduate degree at Hamline University, St. Paul, Minnesota. As part of my graduate requirement, I will be conducting a research on Hmong teen identity. The purpose of this letter is to ask your permission for your child to take part in the research. The study I am conducting is a public scholarship and the abstract and final product will be cataloged in Hamline’s Bush Library Digital Commons, a searchable electronic repository and that it may be published or used in other ways.

Despite the fact that Hmong has resettled in the United States in the last forty years, Hmong children continue to be underserved and underperformed in state assessments. This has led me to investigate how Hmong teens, specifically Hmong girls, construct their identities within the Hmong and White dominate cultures and how they see their potential self when they are exposed to Hmong women of influence. This study occurs gradually through a three step process:

1. Participants will take a Multi-Dimensional Inventory of Hmong Identity
2. Participants will engage in a pre-interview with the researcher
3. Participants will interview Hmong women of influence
4. Participants will engage in a post interview with the researcher

There is little to no risk for your child to participate. All results will be confidential and anonymous. I will not record information about individual students, such as their names, nor report identifying information or characteristics in the capstone. Participation is voluntary and you may decide at any time and without negative consequences that information about your child will not be included in the capstone.

I have received approval from my study from the School of Education at Hamline University. The capstone will be catalogued in Hamline’s Bush Library Digital Commons, a searchable electronic repository. My results might also be included in an article for publication in a professional journal or in a report at a professional conference. In all cases, your child’s identity and participation in this study will be confidential.

If you agree that your child may participate, keep this page. Fill out the duplicate agreement to participate on page two and return to me by mail or copy the form in an email to me no later than ______________. If you have any questions, please email or call me.

Sincerely,
Informed Consent to Participate in Qualitative Interviews

*Keep this full page for your records.*

I have received your letter about the study you plan to conduct. I understand there is little to no risk involved for my child, that her confidentiality will be protected, and that I may withdraw or my child may withdraw from the study at any time.

_________________________ _________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature Date
I have received your letter about the study you plan to conduct. I understand there is little to no risk involved for my child, that her confidentiality will be protected, and that I may withdraw or my child may withdraw from the study at any time.

______________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature

______________________________
Date
Research Copy
Nyob zoo Niamtxiv losyog Tus Saibxyuas,

Kuv yog ______________ thiab kuv yog ib tug tabtom kawm hauv qib siab nyob rau Hamline University, St. Paul, Minnesota. Rawrli kuv txoj kev kawm, kuv yuavtsum tshawbfawb txog tsoom ntxhais hluas Hmoob lawv tuskheej. Lub ntsiablus ntawm tsab ntawv no yog thov koy tsocai rau koy tus menyuum los muaj feem rau ntawm qhov kev tshawbfawb no. Qhov kev kawm uas kuv tabtom ua no yog ib qho kev tshawbfawb rau pejxeem thiab kev qhia thiab qhov tshawb tau yuav raug ceev tseg nyob rau hauv lub Hamline's Bush Library Digital Commons, ib qho chaw cia tau tshawbfawb thiab tejzaum yuav raug luam tawm lossis siv mua rau lwm txoj kev.

Txawm yog tias Hmoob twb tuaj nyob rau Tebchaws Meskas no tau plaubcaug tawm lub xyoo lawm los, Hmoob tej menyuum tseem pheej raug rau tsis txaus thiab ta rau tsis ту oz txaus rawsli xeev txoj kev sibtbw kawm. Qhov no tau rau rau kuv xav los sojntsuum txog cov hluas Hmoob, tshwjxeex li cov ntxhais, tias lawv pom lawv zoo licas nyob rau hauv haiv Hmoob thiab cov tawwdawb uas muaj kablis kevcai ntau dua thiab lawv ho pom lawv tuskheej muaj feem licas thau lawv ntisib tsoom pojniam Hmoob txawj ntse uas uas muaj feem txhawb tau laww. Qhov kev kawm no yuav muaj ua peb ntus:

1. Cov koomtes yuav tau teb cov lus sojntsuum txog lawv tuskheej
2. Cov koomtes yuav raug thomnam nug ib tug luajzus
3. Cov koomtes yuav thomnam nug tsoom tsoom pojniam Hmoob txawjntseg
4. Cov koomtes yuav raug thomnam nug ib tug luajzus

Nws tsuas muaj meme losyog tsis muaj tseem tseem dabtsis rau koy tus menyuum txog qhov kev koomtes no. Txhua yam tshawb tau yuav ceev tsis pub leejtwg paub thiab tsis qhia laww tej npe. Kuv yuav tsis khaws laww tej npe losyog ib yam dabtsi ntawm lawv txhua tus tseg, xwbli tej npe, losyog lwmyam txog laww rau qhov kev kawm no. Txoj kev koomtes no tsuas yog kev tuajyeem ua xwb thiab tsishais thauumtwg losxij yog koy tus menyuum tsis kam koomtes los yeej tsis uacas.

Kuv tau raug tsocai txog txoj kev kawm no losntawm lub tsev kawmntawv Hamline University. Qhov kev tshawbfawb no yuav raug ceev tseg rau hauv Hamline lub Bush Libarary Digital Commons, ib qho chaw cia tau tshawbfawb. Tejzaum kuv qhov kev tshawb tau yuav raug sau tawm rau hauv ib qho xoxxom lossis ib qho kev tshabxo tawm nyob rau hauv lub roojshablaj cov neeg ua haujlwm. Tag txhua yam no, koy tus menyuum txoj kev koomtes rau qhov kev kawm no yuav tsis pub leejtwg paub txog laww tuskheej. Yog koy txaus siab tias cia koy tus menyuum koomtes, koy khaws nplooj ntawv no. Teb rau tog txaus siab rau kev koomtes nyob rau nplooj ob thiab xa rovqab tuaj rau kuv losyog muab luam thiab xa ua email tuaj rau kuv tsis txhob lig tshaj li lub ______________. Yog koy ho muaj lus nug dabtsi, sau email losyog hu kuv.

Pheejxeex,
Khaws nplooj no tseg rau koj.

Kuv txais tau koj tsab ntawv txog qhov kev kawm uas koj yuav sojntsuam lawm. Kuv totaub tias nws tsis muaj teebmeem dabtsi rau kuv tus menyuam txawm yog muaj los tsuasyog meme xwb, thia yuav tivthaiv nws tsis pub leejtwg paub, thia kuv yuav rho lossis kuv tus menyuam yuav rho nws tawm thaumtwg los tau.

_________________________  __________________
Niamtxiv/Tus Saibxyua Suamnpe  Hnub

Tus Koomtes daim
Kuv txais tau koj tsab ntawv txog qhov kev kawm uas koj yuav sojntsuam lawm. Kuv totaub tias nws tsis muaj teebmeem dabtsi rau kuv tus menyuam txawm yog muaj los tsuasyog meme xwb, thiab yuav tivthaiv nws tsis pub leejtwg paub, thiab kuv yuav rho lossis kuv tus menyuam yuav rho nws tawm thaumtwg los tau.

______________________________  _______________________
 Niamtxiv/Tus Saibxyua Suamnpe    Hnub

Tus Tshawbfawb daim
References


Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. 2013. Available http://dpi.wi.gov/excforall/data


