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Xiong, Jennifer

Obstacles Hmong students face in going on to higher education.

# SUBMISSION OF FINAL RESEARCH REPORT

University of Wisconsin-Stout  
The Graduate College

The accompanying research report was submitted to the Graduate College, University of Wisconsin-Stout, as partial completion of the requirements for the degree, M.S. Ed.S. (Circle one) in Guidance and Counseling K-12.

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TITLE OF REPORT Obstacles Among Students  
Face In Going On to Higher  
Education

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OBSTACLES HMONG STUDENTS FACE IN GOING ON TO HIGHER  
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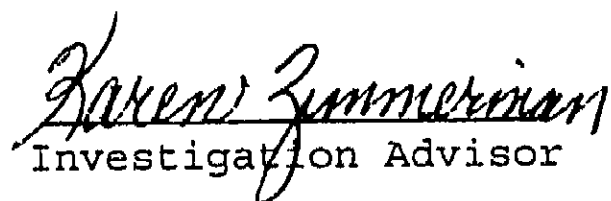
by  
Jennifer Xiong

A Research Paper

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The Graduate College  
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Abstract

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Obstacles Hmong Students Face in Going on to Higher Education  
Title

<u>Guidance and Counseling (K-12)</u>	<u>Dr. Karen Zimmerman</u>	<u>August 1999</u>
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This study explored obstacles to higher education for Hmong high school students. The objectives of study were to:

1. Describe the attitudes Hmong students have towards setting career goals.
2. Identify behaviors Hmong students experience as it relates to their aspirations and expectations.
3. Describe perceptions Hmong students have concerning obstacles to their future career options

A survey based on the work of Debbie Myers (1998) was modified to meet the objectives of this study. The survey was given in classes where there were a large number of Hmong

students at North High School in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

The instrument is composed of four parts. Section one requests information from students relating to career preparation. Items such as sex, age, career goals, post-high school plans, expected employment, academic grades, and persons who influenced them in their academic decisions were asked.

Section II focused on attitudes towards goal setting orientation. A Likert scale was used to measure responses.

Section III focused on behaviors of educational experiences as it relates to aspirations and expectations. A Likert was used to measure the responses.

Section IV focused on perceptions students perceive to be obstacles toward future career options.

Section V focused primarily on participants who were married. Students were to mark on a scale from 1 to 3, one as being a minor obstacle, two as being a minor obstacle, and three as being a major obstacle.

For all of sections I, II, III, IV, and V means, frequencies, and percentages were calculated. T-test and ANOVA were calculated. Neuman-Keuls Comparison Tests were also used when appropriate.

Evidence of career goal setting did not appear until school. At that time, most students were considering several options for their future careers. Most of these students were planning on attending a 4 year college/university. Twenty five

percent of students indicated wanting to attend a technical college.

These students were found to hold very positive attitudes towards jobs and future careers. They thought very highly of themselves. The majority of these students wanted a professional career which required a four year degree. Ones who were enrolled in courses to meet career goals were more definite about their career.

Respondents thought that school courses helped them make career choices. Students who planned their career in elementary or middle school strongly believed in this statement. It shows that students who were more definite about their career goals spent time with a role model and also were ones who learned how to set goals in school.

Among high school students felt that lack of money was the biggest obstacle to higher education. Lacking the time to study was also a very big obstacle for these students. Based on gender, males perceived lack of money, poor study skills/habits, and demand of sports, activities, and school clubs to be greater obstacles than females.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction:

Imagine that you are a Hmong high school student just about to graduate. You really want to attend a post-secondary institution but there are certain factors that prevent you from doing so. You or your parents do not have the money to support your education. You need to go on to higher education to get a good job to support your family. What would you do in this situation?

People often complain about the lack of time when the real problem is the lack of direction. There are seven different kinds of goals: physical, financial, spiritual, career, family, mental, and social. At times, goals can be negative. It can be negative if you do not accomplish what you are set to do. If your goals is unrealistically big, it can negative too. You have to set goals that can be reached. Third, it can be negative if it is outside your area of interest. Goals can be negative if you set it to please someone else. Goals must be set to meet your needs. Sometimes goals that are too big are set to have an excuse for failure. This person is expecting failure and knows

that he/she will not be blamed for something that is impossible to reach. People who get to the top use their talents, dedication, and hard work.

In the career exploration program, students get a chance to practice these skills in real-life situations. These life experiences may both be simulated and direct. There is too much that is involved with information rather than the experience, producing youths who are knowledge rich and experience poor. For too long, the community has been ignored or forgotten, students should take advantage of the vast community resources which play a big part in youth education. A formalized emphasis on career exploration should begin in the middle school and continue until high school although some form takes place between kindergarten and adulthood. Comprehensive exploration of various roles or occupations leads to successful placement in high school-in both coursework and community experience-and after graduation. Education through experience and community participation are two powerful concepts embodied in career exploration.

In implementing career plans, students may find that they may need to take the initiative to acquire the skills needed to accomplish their goals. The role of the school is to assist

the students in any way possible to accomplish their goal. Help may come from community resources, assisting with courses and curriculum selection, allowing credit for career planning, or provide small or large group counseling.

Even though the amount of money available to college students has increase dramatically in the last 10 years, and even though an increasing percentage of our high school graduates-from all races and all income levels-now goes to college, it still remains true that lack of sufficient financial support remains one of the major barriers to higher education in the United States (Doermann, 1971, p.130). Students who should attend college are diverted from doing so because they lack the money. These are the people who would benefit from an education. Students who really want to attend college incur large debts to do so and invest in too many hours in a job. They opportunity to select a good college and the quality and continuity of their training suffer.

Hmong children who came to the United States did not have any previous formal education. Before coming to the United States, families were required to attend school at the refuge

camps for six months. Education in the United States was the first real education most children received.

Hmong children often experience more problems than other children. They are often faced with language barriers. "Both academic and social problems can arise if a child's primary language is a nonstandard form and it makes it much more difficult if standard speech is unfamiliar" (Hammer and Turner, 1990, p.452).

#### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study is to identify some of the barriers Hmong students face in going on to higher education as measured by the Post High School Plans Survey.

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Describe the attitudes Hmong students have towards setting career goals.
2. Identify behaviors Hmong students experience as it relates to their aspirations and expectations.

3. Describe perceptions Hmong students have concerning obstacles to their future career options.

## Chapter 2

### Review of Literature

A comprehensive review of this research subject area includes discussion of the following five areas: Hmong and education, school-to-work transition, career goals, career behaviors, and obstacles. These five areas will be discussed in greater detail below.

#### Hmong and Education

Before the 1850's, formal education was limited to only males in the Hmong culture. In addition, the Hmong people did not have a written language until the mid 1950's. Even after they did have a written language, it was hard for some to attend

school in Laos. They had more important things to do such as farming to feed their family. Farming was considered a job for them. They lived in hutches in a farm like area where they raised pigs, cattle, and chickens (Thowpaou et. al, 1988, p.34). Females were not permitted to go to school, according to their tradition. They were supposed to stay home to cook, clean, and make supper for their family. If the daughters did not go to work in the fields, they had to stay home and watch younger siblings.

Education in Laos was only found in the Buddhist temple. Parents who wanted their children to receive an education had to send their sons to the temple. Education at the temple was supported by the villagers of Laos. Furthermore, education was only for the rich. If you were not rich, you could not send your sons on to school. Compared to the public funded education of the United States, education in Laos was privately funded.

Hmong children who came to the United States did not have any previous formal education. Before coming to the United States, families were required to attend school at the refuge camps for six months. Education in the United States was the first real education most children received.



Hmong children often experience more problems than other children. They are often faced with language barriers. "Both academic and social problems can arise if a child's primary language is a nonstandard form and it makes it much more difficult if standard speech is unfamiliar" (Hammer and Turner, 1990, p.452). In school, if they have questions, they seldom raise their hand to ask the teacher. They usually wait and ask the teacher individually after class. They are afraid of being teased or made fun of because of their language. If Hmong students have been teased, they will most likely rebel and learning will be even more difficult for them. Most Hmong children are passive. They are taught not to show their feelings. Feelings often was not discussed. Often times, problems are kept within themselves and help is not requested. "Part of the problem is that children do not understand their teachers or each other. They speak different languages. Sometimes students are afraid to take their problems to their teachers" (Guskin, 1986, p.31)

Hmong children who are in the United States longer are more like mainstream society. These Hmong children are already assimilated into the culture. Most of the time, Hmong people who

have been in this country a long time are able to help newcomers to the United States. They often help out with translation where needed.

Translation help was often given by older children who knew both English and Hmong very well. Older children became a liaison between their parents and American society. Children were the parents' main source of support. Most Hmong children mature at an earlier age and often act like adults because of the many roles they had to play. Children have so many responsibilities that sometimes they are unable to socialize with their friends.

As much as parents want to help their children with their education, it is hard to when they do not know the English language. Hmong parents realize how important education is to their children's future. Parents often encourage their children to go on to higher education. They brought their children to the land of opportunity and want their child to get a good education so they can get a good job. Parents have been through hard labor and they know how hard it is to make a living. Hmong parents always consider education as a key to the future of their education (Thowpaou, Downing, Lewis, & Yang, 1998, p. 34).

It is hard for Hmong parents to support their children's education and know what is going on in school because of the language barrier. Parents know that teachers will do their best to give their children a good education. They often do not keep in touch with teachers unless there is a real problem. They let their children learn by themselves. As much as parents want to help their children, it seems impossible if they lack English speaking skills. Parents whose English skills are strong often keep in touch with teachers and attend parent-teacher conferences. Parents contact teachers regularly to see how their children are doing and what they can do to help. "High achievers saw personal will and familial support as factor responsible for the accomplishment that set them apart from their low achieving peers. Most blamed students themselves for not having interest or will power invested in the learning process, while others singled out the parents of schoolmates for not doing their part in setting limits or providing direction and encouragement" (Zetlin, 1998, p.155).

Hmong parents want students to see schooling as opening new vistas, not closing down the things that signify self. The first introductory learning may be setting an underlying tone which

tells children that their abilities, knowledge, and self-reliance are not recognized or valued. The first experiences children face in school may be what their future steps are like. Acknowledging students as self-responsible learners is a way to highlight and value students. Believing in people is a very important step in increasing productivity. It is found that families who provided high expectations, related consistently with nurturing, and highlighted freedom for the child to set and complete tasks provided an effective milieu for healthy adults (Ellsworth, 1997, p. 18).

The findings in this research would be very beneficial to other professionals such as teachers or counselors who work with the Hmong population. Teachers or counselors would better serve the Hmong population if they had a better understanding of the Hmong people and barriers they encounter in life. This is a problem that still exist in the United States today.

#### School-to-Work

The School-to-Work Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-239) enables communities to develop programs that fit their needs within intentionally general frameworks established at state and federal

levels. All teachers are responsible for the economic futures of all children. The education children receive from kindergarten through high school will prepare them with the needed skills and knowledge to succeed in job training or post-secondary education.

A recent US Department of Education Report (1994) indicated that 9% of the jobs created in the United States between 1992 and 2000 will require post-secondary education. The Department of Labor (1994) statistics show that by the year 2000, only 15% of all jobs will be unskilled, 20% will require a bachelors degree or higher, and more than 65% of all jobs will require specific skill demanding specialized education; more than a high school degree but less than a four year degree. According to the results of national tracking surveys, 50% of high school graduates leave high school with definite plans to attend a four year college or university, 25% enter technical education programs, and the remaining 25% enter the workforce (Brustein and Mahler, 1995). School-to-work programs provides a continuous system of career guidance, development, and assessment. A high school diploma alone will be of little value towards entry into the job market in the future (America Association of Higher Education, 1994). Most students will combine work and post-

secondary after high school because work and education are not linear. Restructured schools should take on the characteristics of high performance work organizations in which teamwork, problem-solving, and continuous improvement are routinely practiced (Paris, 1995, p.2). Change requires leadership at all levels of education. Local community partnerships are instituting a wide variety of school-to-work strategies, projects, and activities. All of these changes takes time. The Leadership Model for Planning and Implementing Change for School-to Work transition identifies six strategies for communities to use for improving the transition from school-to-work.

1. Develop an applied and integrated curriculum.
2. Implement classroom-based developmental career guidance.
3. Develop work-based learning opportunities.
4. Create articulation between K-12 and post-secondary education.
5. Work in partnership with business, industry, labor, parents, and the community.
6. Provide professional development activities.

Work-based learning is an essential part of school-to-work transition because it provides a dimension of reality that

schools alone have difficulty providing for students. Not all work-based learning experience provided to students in high school need to be paid. Work-based learning includes youth apprenticeship, paid work experience, cooperative education, job shadowing, business and industry mentoring, simulated work tasks at school or through vocational student organizations, school-based enterprises, and community service. Students have an opportunity to see how what they learn in school is used in the world of work. It gives them the opportunity to develop their communication and problem solving skills. They are in contact with adults who act as mentors and positive role models. Through their work experience, students learn what careers they wish to pursue.

### Career Goals

A goal is an aim or a purpose. It is a plan. It is something you expect to do. Boersma (1995) states that goal setting occurs when students practice the process over an extended period of time.

Unless you have a definite, precise, clear set goal, you are not going to realize the maximum potential that lies within you.

You will never make it as a wandering generality. You must be a meaning specific (Ziglar, 1984, p.147). People who do not succeed in life do not plan anything. There are four basic reasons why:

1. They have never been sold.
2. They do not know how.
3. They fear they won't reach the goals they set and will be embarrassed.
4. Poor self-image.

These people do not think they deserve good things in life. They see no use in writing it down since you do not deserve to have it. People often complain about the lack of time when the real problem is the lack of direction. Sharon Edwin (1995) states that the strongest forces of motivation for students were primarily parent expectation, instructor expectation, and letter grade. Though highly capable of organizing their thoughts and achieving goals, students fail to actually achieve the goals. They often found it difficult to stay focused and actually achieve at their level. Edwins (1995), also stated that there is a need for assisting young students to learn organizational skills and goal setting for themselves. There are seven



different kinds of goals: physical, financial, spiritual, career, family, mental, and social. At times, goals can be negative. It can be negative if you do not accomplish what you are set to do. If your goals is unrealistically big, it can be negative too. You have to set goals that can be reached. Third, it can be negative if it is outside your area of interest. Goals can be negative if you set it to please someone else. Goals must be set to meet your needs. Sometimes goals that are too big are set to have an excuse for failure. This person is expecting failure and knows that he/she will not be blamed for something that is impossible to reach. People who get to the top use their talents, dedication, and hard work.

First of all, goals should be big. It takes a big goal to create the excitement necessary for the accomplishment. When you are at your best and do your best, the result will be satisfying and rewarding. It will make you feel better because you know that you did your best to reach your goal. The way you see life will depend on how you determine what you will get out of it. The important thing is how you see yourself and your occupation, not what you do. You must see your goals as something big and important before you can make it big.

Secondly, goals must be long-range. No one is as interested in your success as you are. There are a lot of people that may seem to stand in your way all the time. In reality, you are the biggest problem and you are the only one who can permanently stop yourself. Without long-range goals, circumstances beyond your control can be frustrating. You go as far as you can see and when you get there, you will always be able to see farther. If you wait until all the lights are green before you leave home, you will never get started on your trip to the top (Ziglar, 1984, p.163).

Third, goals must be daily. You must have goals daily not to be qualified as a dreamer. If we expect change and improve our circumstances then we need to improve and change ourselves. Our daily objectives are the best indicator of character. One must be dedicated and determined in what they are set to do.

Last of all, goals must be specific. If you want to be effective, your goals must be specific.

### Career Behavior

For prospective college students, there is usually the question of whether or not to go, where to go, and how to go. They are usually not sure if they are going to succeed.

In a study done on current related program occupations and necessity of post secondary education, the vast majority of individuals employed in occupations related to their programs felt they could not have obtained their present job without education beyond high school. Community colleges and vocational-technical schools are seen by their students as providing a valuable training experience which has influenced their futures. Students who completed an educational program, a very high percentage are employed in occupations related to their programs. Even those who did not complete the program are frequently in closely related occupations. Female enrollment in languages, biology, family studies, guidance, arts, dramatic arts, music, and business exceeded male enrollment. Male enrollment exceeded female in areas of science, all areas of mathematics, computer science and technological studies.

Khan and Alvi (1984) tested over 500 Ontario male and female secondary students on their knowledge on career development.

They found that females in comparison to males had greater knowledge in areas of self-evaluation and development skills, career decision making skills, and work effectiveness skills (Guttman, 1991, p.5). Over 40 percent of females were undecided about their occupational choice. They found that female student's choice did not become significantly decisive as they moved from grade 9 to 12. Forty-four percent of 9<sup>th</sup> grade females, 51 percent of 10<sup>th</sup> grade females, and 40 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> grade females were undecided. Of those who were decisive, only half indicated an expectation to reach their occupational goals. Richardson (1974) accounts for this discrepancy between career maturity and indecisiveness as a limitation of the research paradigms that do not take into account the impact of marriage and sexist barriers on career choice. In a study done by Glaze, over 55 percent of girls indicated they had a poor knowledge of occupations. Only nine percent stated they had a very good knowledge. Glaze also found that only half had access to role models of career women. Girls did not explore very many occupations. They narrow the range of interest between the age of 13 and 16, and more narrowly limit their range of choices between 17 and 18. They tend to narrow

their choices as they anticipate the conflicts of combining career and marriage. Some of the ways that students used for informational searches was 1) talk to workers in chosen occupation, 2) read pamphlets, 3) talk to parents, 4) talk to guidance counselor, and 5) obtain information from guidance center (Guttman, 1991, p.5). A few reported utilizing computer-assisted programs. The majority of females reported they consulted parents (57 percent) and counselors (55 percent) prior to making career choice decisions.

Females were found to have lower salary expectations than males. Half of females in comparison to 31 percent of males expected to earn under \$10,000. Only 11 percent in comparison to 24 percent of males, expect to make over \$20,000. Females engage in very little activity in career planing and they only plan for the immediate future. Over 40 percent of students were undecided as to how long they would work on their first job. Only 14 percent expected their first job to be permanent while 21 percent expected to work for a year or more. Twenty-three percent expected to work less than a year.

Today most theorists assume that people are interest in both a career and a marriage. Marital aspirations were negatively

correlated with education and occupational aspirations. Some girls were found to have traditional rather than non-traditional careers in order to more easily accommodate their marriage and career roles. Most females planned to marry and have children, half indicated they planned to remain at work after marriage, and less than half were considering leaving the work force after the birth of the first child.

Males usually have counselors of their gender but females don't usually have access to female counselors. They do not always receive appropriate career information and specific career programs. There needs to be full-time counselors at middle schools to insure they receive appropriate academic counseling. The majority of females prefer a female counselor in discussing personal problems and in discussing career interests. School counselors often demonstrate gender-specific attitudes and behaviors in career counseling. As counselors, we need to teach career behavioral skills in career preparation, career development, career awareness and exploration, career decision-making, career planning, and job placement. Using comprehensive curriculum approach specifying the career needs of students at each age level is a good way to start to help these students.

We need to change attitudes towards work, reduce sex-role stereotyping, increase our knowledge of occupations, have greater vocational self-awareness, and increase interest in non-traditional work. We need to have role models in positions as speakers or resource persons that point out positive effects of career development. One thing that needs to be pointed out in career guidance programming is career and marriage planning because most schools provide minimal assistance in long-term planning (Guttman, 1991, p.8).

### Obstacles

According to the High Hope, Long Odds study (Orfield and Paul, 1994), there are four kinds of obstacles parents and young people face. These obstacles are informational, pertinence, economical, and financial.

The first obstacle is informational. Students do not have the information and guidance they need. They then make the most important decision, the choice of a high school study program with very little thought and often too late.

The second obstacle is pertinence. The traditional high school program, college-prep, vocational and general education

may not be pertinent to the jobs of the twenty-first century. Many students will go directly into the workforce after high school. Many students are unaware of specific academic requirements for specific post secondary majors. From middle school through high school, career goals are prone to change but aspirations are consistently high. Students are prime decision-makers about which school program to enroll in no matter what age they are. Most high school students and parents do not really talk about post-high school plans until these youngsters are well into high school.

The third obstacle is economical or commercial. Some young people hold on to dreams that can not possibly come true or unrealistic.

The fourth kind of obstacle is financial. Finance is a major barrier for many students.

According to Orfield and Paul (1994), they are both confident that if parents are better informed about their educational choices and the importance of those choices, their concerns could be channeled earlier and more effectively towards helping achieve their children's aspirations. It is very important to help children find pathways that keep their career



and education options open. Orfield and Paul (1994) state that students need to know of high school programs related to adult opportunities and courses to take to keep their options open.

Even though the amount of money available to college students has increase dramatically in the last 10 years, and even though an increasing percentage of our high school graduates-from all races and all income levels-now goes to college, it still remains true that lack of sufficient financial support remains one of the major barriers to higher education in the United States (Doermann, 1971, p.130). Students who should attend college are diverted from doing so because they lack the money. These are the people who would benefit from an education. Students who really want to attend college incur large debts to do so and invest in too many hours in a job. They would benefit from the opportunity to select a good college and the quality and continuity of their training suffer.

There are more high school graduates today than five or ten years ago. Also more students submit college applications that show good grades and aptitude tests. Family income has risen so that they are able to pay for higher tuition. Tuition fees have kept pace with the rise in family income. High school counselors

would say that student financial aid for entering freshman should be committed when the student is involved in high school. It is impossible to know if the student who did not receive the aid would still go to college. Without knowing ahead of time, counselors should not avoid giving aid to needy students who would go on to college. Poor and minority students seldom experience a higher track curriculum that is associated with advantaged students. Low track programs are found in areas where there are higher percentages of racial minority students. "Peer influences on student academic norms, available resources, the professional quality of teachers and administrators and the presences of such school characteristics as shared goals, high teacher expectations for student performance and strong levels of parent involvement are all likely to influence achievement" (Keating and Oakes, 1988, p.4). Students in concentrations of poverty are more likely to perform poorly in school than those with similar socioeconomic status who attend school with lower rates of student poverty. Minorities have less resources and support systems outside of the school to compensate for deficiencies.

Schools now offer more opportunities for girls to participate in a variety of programs. Traditional role expectations continues to constrain students from opportunities. Family disruption and divorce, family mobility, and disconnection from school, models of dropping out from school are all factors that contribute to school success. "Minority students whose parents were better educated and had higher incomes were likely to perform more successfully than those whose parents were relatively poor and uneducated" (Aldolphus, 1984, p.114).

A study asked baccalaureate completers what facilitated their completion. Respondents were most likely to mention the encouragement and support of their family members and their own educational goals and interests. Close to two-thirds cited that poor educational preparation was another major obstacle and also parents are unable to help their children with schoolwork or who do not become involved in their children's schooling.

Study habits is closely associated with undergraduate grades and persistence. Students who took college preparatory classes in high school with well-developed skills are more likely to do well academically. Colleges should strengthen their efforts to help underprepared minority students by improving their study

habits and develop their basic skills by offering tutoring, developmental courses, and academic counseling. It will not only benefit the individual but also help institutions by reducing attrition rates. As a result of poorer secondary preparation, minority students who do go on to college will less likely complete the baccalaureate than white undergraduates. Counselors should help these students to enroll in college preparatory courses when they are still in high school. They should also make them understand the importance of education and their future careers.

### Summary

Before the 1850's education was limited to only Hmong males. The Hmong did not have a written language until the 1950's.

The Hmong were people who lived in the village with their clans. In the past, some Hmong could not attend school in Laos because they were not able to afford the cost. Schools back then was only for the rich people to attend. It was not a land of equal opportunity like the United States. Females were not allowed to attend school because they had to stay home to cook

and clean and watch younger siblings. They were required to go out to the farms and help their parents farm.

Even when they did come to this country, it was still hard for them because of the language barrier. When their children did attend school, they were unable to help their children. They could not help them with their homework. For prospective college students, there is usually the question of whether or not to go, where to go, and how to go. They are usually not sure if they are going to succeed. According to Orfield and Paul (1994), they are both confident that if parents are better informed about their educational choices and the importance of those choices, their concerns could be channeled earlier and more effectively towards helping achieve their children's aspirations. It is very important to help children find pathways that keep their career and education options open.

The School-to-Work Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-239) enables communities to develop programs that fit their needs within intentionally general frameworks established at state and federal levels. All teachers are responsible for the economic futures of all children

## Chapter III

### Methodology

This chapter describes the subject under study and how they were selected for inclusion in this study. The instrument being used to collect information will be discussed as content, validity, and reliability. Data collection and analysis procedures will be discussed.

#### Subjects

This study was conducted at Eau Claire North High School in Wisconsin. The majority of Hmong students in the Eau Claire School District attend high school at North. The participants of this study were juniors and seniors of Eau Claire North High School, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Eau Claire is located in west-central Wisconsin. It has a population of approximately 60,000. It is approximately 70 miles from the Minnesota border.

The high school consists of grades 9-12 with an enrollment of approximately 1668 students. Of these students, approximately 65 Hmong students are enrolled in the junior and senior classes. The average graduating class consists of 434 students.

### Procedure

The research technique I used was a survey. A survey based on the work of Debbie Myers (1998) was modified to meet the objectives of this study. The survey was given in classes where there were a large number of Hmong students.

This research survey began Fall, 1998 and projected to conclude on August, 1999. Pilot testing of the survey was done with 10 students at North High School in Spring, 1999.

### Instrumentation

The survey instrument for this research project was developed by Debbie Myers (1998) with some modifications made by the author (see Appendix A). The instrument is composed of four parts. Section one requests information from students relating to career preparation. Items such as sex, age, career goals, post-high school plans, expected employment, academic grades, and persons who influenced them in their academic decisions were asked.

Section II focused on attitudes towards goal setting orientation. A Likert scale was used to measure responses. The statements include how goals are developed.

Section III focused on behaviors of educational experiences as it relates to aspirations and expectations. A Likert was used to measure the responses. Statements include educational experiences related to student aspirations and expectation.

Section IV focused on perceptions students perceive to be obstacles toward future career options. A list of phrases such as a lack in college prep courses, lack of motivation, and too much socialization with friends were asked. Students were to mark on a scale from 1 to 3. One as being a minor obstacle, two as being not an obstacle, and three as being a major obstacle towards future career options.

Section V focused primarily on participants who were married. A list of phrases such as a lack in financial support and lack in physical support such as help with housework and child care responsibilities. Students were to mark on a scale from 1 to 3, one as being a minor obstacle, two as being a minor obstacle, and three as being a major obstacle.



### Administration

The survey was given to students during activity period during school. The author distributed and administered the surveys to Junior and Senior students during the last two weeks of April of the 1998-1999 school year. A total of 50 students completed the survey.

### Data Analysis

For section I, background information, frequency counts, percentages, and means was be collected for items 11-19. Section II, "attitudes toward career goal setting orientation", section III, "behaviors of educational experiences as it relates to aspirations and expectations", and section IV, "perceptions to obstacles to future career options", the mean score and frequency was calculated for all items.

A t-test was calculated for comparison of scores of male vs. females and years in high school (juniors vs. seniors) for items 11-19, influence, items 21-32, attitudes toward career goal setting, items 33-44, behavior of educational experiences, and items 45-68, obstacles. A t-test was calculated on when they started planning career goals, item number 8, items 11-19, items

21-32, items 33-44, and items 45-68. An one-way ANOVA was calculated on items number 6, career goals in relation to items 11-19, section II, III, IV, V. A Neuman-Keuls comparison test identified where the differences occurred.

### Limitations

Participants of this study were limited to Hmong junior and senior students attending North High School in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. The study can not be a representative of the Hmong population. Any conclusions are only generalized to North High School.

Respondents were limited to the response format provided.

## Chapter IV

### Results and Discussion

In this chapter, the results and discussion of a survey given to juniors and seniors at the Eau Claire North High School in Wisconsin will be reviewed. The first section of this discussion describes findings on background information (tables 1-11), attitudes towards setting career goals (table 12), behaviors of educational experiences (table 13), perceptions of obstacles (table 14), and married status obstacles (table 15).

#### General Background

The purpose of the general information items in Section I is to obtain demographic information such as age, gender, year in school, marital status, marital status of parents, career goals, post high school plans, grades in high school, most influential person, and area of employment after high school.

Table 1: Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
16	2	4.1
17	20	40.8
18	22	44.9
19	5	10.2
	1	missing

The age of the respondents were divided into four categories. The majority of the respondents (n=22) were 18 years old. Twenty of the respondents were 17 years old, five of the respondents were 19 years old, two respondents or 4.1 percent which was 16 years old, and there was one which had missing data.

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	26	52.0
Female	24	48.0

The respondents in this study was almost balanced with 26 respondents being male (52.0 percent) and 24 respondents being female (48.0 percent).

Table 3: Year in School

Year in School	Frequency	Percentage
Junior	28	56.0
Senior	22	44.0

The majority of the participants in this study were juniors (n=28). Seniors (n=22) that participated in the study were 44 percent.

Table 4: Marital Status of Respondent

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	43	86.0
Married	7	14.0

Respondents were asked to indicate their marital status, 86.0% of the respondents were single (n=43), and 7 respondents or 14.0 percent of the respondents were married.

Table 5: Marital Status of My Parents

Marital Status of Parents	Frequency	Percentage
Married	43	86.0
Divorce	3	6.0
Separated	4	8.0

In the marital status of their parent's category, 43 respondents (86.0%) said their parents were married. Three (6.0%) said their parents were divorced and four (8.0%) said their parents were separated.

Table 6: Career Goals

Career Goals	Frequency	Percentage
Definite	15	30.0
Considering Several Options	29	58.0
None-No Idea	6	12.0

Table 6 indicates if the respondents goals were definite, if they were considering several options, or if they had no career goals at all. Twenty-nine respondents (58.0%) reported that they were considering several options and 15 respondents (30.0%) had definite goals set.

Table 7: Post-High School Plans

Plan	Frequency	Percentage
Got to work	3	6.0
Vocational or		

Technical College	11	22.0
Join the Military	4	8.0
Four Year College	28	56.0
Other	2	4.0
Multiple Response	2	4.0

Table 7 indicated what the respondents post high-school plans were. Over half of the respondents (56.0%) planned to attend a four year university, 11 respondents (22.0%) planned to attend vocational or technical college, and three (6.0%) planned on going to work full-time.

Table 8: Grade Started Career Planning

Grade	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary School	5	10.0
Middle school	16	32.0
High School	29	58.0

Table 8 shows when each respondent started planning their career goals. Twenty-nine (58.0%) stated that they started planning their career goals in high school. Sixteen respondents (32%) said they started to set career goals in middle school, and five reported on setting goals when they were in the elementary years.

Table 9: Area of Expected Employment

Area of Employment	Frequency	Percentage
Professional Career	27	54.0
Sales and Retail	1	2.0
Business Owner/Manager	6	12.0
Factory Worker	1	2.0
Skilled Laborer	3	6.0
Clerical	1	2.0
Not Planning to work	1	2.0
Other	7	14.0
Multiple Response	3	6.0

Table nine reports on the types of jobs respondents expect to be employed in after they graduate from high school. Over half of the respondents (54.0%) said they would like to obtain a professional career after high school. Seven respondents reported wanting employment in a field not listed above. Six of the respondents (12.0%) reported wanting to own their own business.

Table 10: High School Grades

Grades	Frequency	Percentage
Mostly A's	8	16.0
Half A's and Half B's	20	40.0



Mostly B's	6	12.0
Half B's and Half C's	12	24.0
Mostly C's	1	2.0
Half C's and Half D's	3	6.0

Table 10 focuses on academic achievement of the respondents in high school. Twenty respondents (40%) reported that they received half A's and half B's. Twelve respondents (24%) reported having received half B's and half C's. Out of fifty respondents, eight (16%) reported having mostly A's in high school.

Table 11: Most Influential Person

Most Influential person	Mean	S.D.	Rank Order
Parents	2.80	.513	1
Teachers	2.408	.537	2
Brothers/Sisters	2.375	.672	3
School Counselors	2.313	.689	4
Friends	2.306	.683	5
Uncles/Relatives	2.298	.689	6
Girlfriend/Boyfriend	1.918	.672	7
Husband/Wife	1.811	.845	8

Employers	1.681	.629	9
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Table 11 shows who influenced the respondents the most regarding getting more educational training. Parents, with a mean of 2.680 and standard deviation of .513, were shown to be the most influential in helping the respondents decide between work or education after high school. Teachers, with a mean of 2.408 and standard deviation .537) were shown to be the next group of people who were most influential in their lives.

#### Attitudes

Section II of the survey sought to identify the attitudes towards career goal setting orientation. A five point likert scale was used to gather the data. The scale responses ranged from "Strongly Agree," which was scored as a 5, to "Strongly Disagree," which was scored as a 1.

Table 12: Attitudes Towards Setting Career Goals

Attitude	Mean	S.D.	Rank Order
I want to be successful in my career/job.	4.520	.814	1
I will have a better life than my parents.	4.440	.675	2
I have ambitions to achieve something good.	4.260	.922	3

I think about my career or educational goals often.	4.220	.840	4
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My goals are realistic	4.200	.833	5
My goals help motivate me to achieve.	4.120	.799	6
I am enrolled in courses to meet my career goals.	3.980	.892	7
Career and educational goals are my own.	3.959	.999	8
I have sorted out my goals.	3.880	.918	9
My goals are challenging.	3.840	1.057	10
My goals are detailed, putting in dates.	3.440	1.033	11
I would rather learn on the job.	3.340	1.154	12

Section II, a Likert scale was used to measure attitudes toward career goals. Responses used were strongly agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). Table 12 shows the means, standard deviations, and rank orders of each of the attitude statement. This table is arranged by the means score. Respondents strongly agreed with the statement "I want to be successful in my career/job which had a mean score of 4.520 and standard deviation .814. The respondents responded that they would have a better life than their parents, mean 4.440 and standard deviation .675. Respondents also agreed that they had ambitions to achieve something good with a mean of 4.269 and standard deviation of .922. Other statements with a

mean above 4.0 included "My goals are realistic" (X= 4.200) and "My goals help motivate me to achieve" (X=4.120).

### Behaviors

Section III of the survey sought to identify the behaviors of educational experiences as it relates to their aspirations and expectations. A five point likert scale was used to gather the data. The scale responses ranged from "Strongly Agree," which was scored as a 5, to "Strongly Disagree," which was scored as a 1.

Table 13: Behaviors of Educational Experiences

Behavior	Mean	S.D.	Rank Order
Talking to adults about their career is valuable.	4.020	.820	1
School courses helped me make career choices.	3.980	.854	2
I learned about how to set goals in school.	3.857	.816	3
I have completed a college admission form/visited a campus.	3.792	1.220	4
I can picture myself ten years from now in a particular job.	3.740	1.084	5
I have spent time with a mentor/role model that helped me decided what career paths are available.	3.680	1.039	6
I frequently discuss post-	3.673	.899	7

secondary education with my parents.			
A way to learn about career/job opportunities is through family and friends.	3.660	.745	8
I have parents who set goals regularly.	3.490	.938	9
I frequently discuss my plans for a career/job with my parents.	3.480	1.015	10
I was given adequate amount of time and information from the guidance counselor to help me select career paths.	3.360	.851	11
Education is useless unless it pays off in ones career.	2.755	1.128	12

Table 13, identifies behaviors of educational experiences where a 5 point Likert scale was also used with 5=strongly agree, 3=uncertain, and 1=strongly disagree. These statements were ranked according to the mean score.

Statements that respondents mostly agreed with were "talking to adults about their career is valuable" with a mean of 4.020 and standard deviation of .820, "school courses help me make career choices" with a mean of 3.980 and a standard deviation of .854, and "I learn to set goals in school" with a mean of 3.857 and standard deviation of .816.

The one statement which they disagreed with is "education is useless unless it pays off in ones career," which resulted in a mean of 2.755 and a standard deviation of 1.128.

### Obstacles

Section IV of the survey sought to identify perceptions of obstacles to their future career options. A five point likert scale was used to gather the data. The scale responses ranged from Strongly Agree, which was scored as a 5, to Strongly Disagree, which was scored as a 1.

Table 14: Perception of Obstacles

Obstacles	Mean	S.D.	Rank Order
Lack of money.	2.100	.614	1
Lack of time to study.	2.000	.571	2
Lack college preparatory courses.	1.960	.727	3
Lack certain courses needed.	1.900	.707	4
Need to care for younger siblings.	1.880	.773	5
Lack of direction/goals.	1.878	.807	6
Poor study habits/skills.	1.857	.645	7
Lack college placement tests.	1.840	.792	8
Poor School Preparation.	1.796	.645	9
Demands of after school job.	1.780	.764	10
Too much social life.	1.750	.668	11

Lack of vocational program.	1.740	.723	12
Lack of self-confidence.	1.735	.758	13
Demands of sports/activities/school club.	1.729	.676	14
Lack of motivation.	1.714	.736	15
Prejudice at school.	1.700	.735	16
Need to do home care.	1.700	.763	16
Lack of interest in college.	1.700	.789	16
Lack of parental support.	1.688	.748	17
Influence of friend.	1.680	.683	18
Lack of ability.	1.673	.774	19
Drugs, gangs, disruptions.	1.653	.779	20
Not quiet at home.	1.551	.614	21
TV/Video games.	1.531	.649	22

Table 14 describes perceptions of obstacles respondents perceived. This section of the survey also used a Likert scale with 3=not an obstacle, 2=minor obstacle, 1=major obstacle. The biggest obstacles these students perceived toward higher education was lack of money, mean of 2.100 and standard deviation of .614, and lack of time to study with a mean of 2.000 and standard deviation of .571.

These students did not seem to agree with the items, "not quiet at home," which had a mean of 1.551 and standard deviation



.614 and "t.v./video games," with a mean of 1.531 and standard deviation of .649.

Table 15: Married Status Obstacles

Obstacles	Mean	S.D.	Rank order
Lack of emotional support from spouse.	2.167	.983	1
Too much family responsibilities.	2.167	.983	1
Lack of spouse helping with the children .	2.000	.894	3
Lack of financial support from the spouse	2.000	.894	3
Lack of household support from the spouse.	1.667	.816	5
Lack of emotional support from in-laws.	1.667	.816	5

The married respondents strongly agreed with the following obstacles, "lack of emotional support from their spouse" and that they had "too much family responsibilities". These two statements had a mean score of 2.167 and standard deviation of .983. They also agree with the two statements, "lack of help with the children" and "lack of financial support from the spouse". These two statements have a mean score of 2.000 and standard deviation of .894.

Test Results

Table 16: Significance Differences by Gender on T-test

Most Influential Person

Category	Male (n=26)	Female (n=24)	T Value	Probability
<u>Most Influential Person</u>	X= 2.077	X= 1.739	1.80	.079
girlfriend/boyfriend	S.D.= .744	S.D.= .541		
<u>Behaviors</u>				
I can picture myself ten years from now in a particular job/career.	X=4.000 S.D.= .849	X= 3.458 S.D.= 1.250	1.80	.077
<u>Obstacles</u>				
Lack of money.	X= 2.269 S.D.= .533	X= 1.917 S.D.= .654	2.10	.041*
Poor study habits/skills	X= 2.039 S.D.= .599	X= 1.652 S.D.= .647	2.17	.035*
Demand of sports/activities/school clubs.	X= 1.962 S.D.= .662	X= 1.455 S.D.= .596	2.77	.008**

\* Significant at .05 level

\*\* Significant at .01 level

A t-test was used to calculate differences based on gender.

Of the 12 questions of attitudes toward setting career goals, none was found to have significant different responses between males and females.

Of the nine questions on the most influential person in helping one decide to work or gain more education after high school, one trend was found between males and females at the .079 level. The most influential person was a boyfriend or girlfriend (males  $X=2.615$ , females  $X=1.739$ ).

Of the 12 questions on behaviors of educational experiences, one trend was found at the .077 level. "I can picture myself ten years from now in a particular career/job," (males  $X=4.000$ , females  $X=3.458$ ). Males were found to score higher on this question.

Of the 24 questions on perceptions of obstacles to future career options, two significant differences were found at the .05 level based on gender. "Lack of money," (males  $X=2.269$ , females  $X=1.917$ ) and "poor study habits/skills," (males  $X=2.039$ , females  $X=1.652$ ). One highly significant difference was found at the .01 level, "demands of sports, activities, or school clubs." On this obstacle, male score higher than females (males  $X=1.962$ , females  $X=1.455$ ).

Table 17: Significant Difference by year in high school on T test

Category	Junior n=27	Senior n=22	T Value	Probability

<u>Most Influential Person</u> girlfriend/boyfriend	X= 2.074 S.D.= .730	X=1.727 S.D.= .550	1.84	.072
<u>Attitudes</u>				
I have sorted out my goals.	X= 3.679 S.D.= 1.02	X=4.136 S.D.=.710	-1.79	.080
I will have a better life than my parents.	X= 4.286 S.D.= .763	X= 4.636 S.D.=.492	-1.97	.055
<u>Behavior</u>				
A practical way to learn about career/job opportunities is through family and friends.	X= 3.464 S.D.= .838	X= 3.909 S.D.=.526	-2.29	.027*
<u>Obstacles</u>				
Lack of money.	X= 2.286 S.D.= .535	X= 1.863 S.D.=.640	2.54	.014*
Poor school preparation.	X= 1.963 S.D.= .706	X=1.590 S.D.=.503	2.08	.043*
Lack college prep courses.	X= 2.250 S.D.= .645	X= 1.590 S.D.=.666	3.53	.001***
Lack college placement tests.	X= 2.107 S.D.= .737	X= 1.500 S.D.=.740	2.89	.006**
Lack motivation.	X= 1.889 S.D.= .801	X= 1.500 S.D.=.598	1.89	.065
Lack vocational program.	X= 1.893 S.D.= .737	X= 1.546 S.D.=.671	1.72	.092
Lack of direction/goals.	X= 2.111 S.D.= .847	X= 1.591 S.D.=.666	2.35	.023*
Lack of interest in college.	X= 1.964 S.D.= .793	X= 1.364 S.D.=.658	2.86	.006**
drugs, gangs,	X= 1.889	X= 1.364	2.47	.017*

disruption.	S.D.= .847	S.D.=.581		
Not quiet at home.	X= 1.704 S.D.= .669	X= 1.364 S.D.=.492	1.99	.053
TV/Video games.	X= 1.704 S.D.= .669	X= 1.318 S.D.=.568	2.15	.037*

\* Significant at the .05 level

\*\* Significant at the .01 level

\*\*\* Significant at the .001 level

A T-Test was used to calculate any difference based on the year of high school the student on the most influential person, attitudes, behaviors, and obstacles. Of the nine questions on the most influential person in helping one decide to work or gain more education after high school, one person was found to be different between junior and senior students. "The most influential person: girlfriend or boyfriend," juniors (X= 2.074) had a stronger response than seniors (X= 1.727).

Of the 12 questions on attitudes towards setting career goals, juniors tended to believe to a greater extent that, "I have sorted out my goals (juniors X=3.679, seniors X=4.136)," and "I will have a better life than my parents (juniors X=4.286, seniors X=4.636).

Of the 12 questions in behaviors of educational experiences, one behavioral statement was found to have a significant

difference at the .05 level between grade levels. "A practical way to learn about career/job opportunities is through family and friends," (juniors  $X=3.464$ , seniors  $X=3.909$ ).

Of the 24 questions on perceptions to obstacles, five obstacles were found to have significant difference at the .05 level. "Lack of money" (Juniors  $X=2.286$ , Seniors  $X=1.864$ ), "poor school preparation" (juniors  $X=1.963$ , seniors  $X=1.591$ ), "Lack of direction/goals" (juniors  $X=2.111$ , seniors  $X=1.591$ ), "drugs, gangs, and disruption" (juniors  $X=1.889$ , seniors  $X=1.364$ ), and "TV/Video games" (juniors  $X=1.704$ , seniors  $X=1.318$ ). Two obstacles were found to be at the .01 level of significance between grade levels. "Lack college placement tests" (juniors  $X=2.250$ , seniors  $1.500$ ) and "lack of interest in college" (juniors  $X=1.964$ , seniors  $X=1.364$ ). One of the obstacles reached the .001 level of significance between the two grade levels. On "Lack college prep courses" (juniors  $X=2.250$ , seniors  $X=1.591$ ). Juniors tend to agree more strongly with this statement.

Table 18: Significant Difference by Grade Level on when Started to Plan Career

Item	Elementary/ Middle School (n=21)	High School (n=29)	T value	Probability
<u>Attitude</u>  I have enrolled in courses to help meet my career/job goals.	X= 4.333 S.D.= .577	X= 3.724 S.D.= .996	2.72	.009**
My goals are detailed; putting in dates so achievement can be measured.	X= 3.810 S.D.= .680	X= 3.172 S.D.= 1.167	2.43	.019*
I will have a better life than my parents.	X=4.143 S.D.= .727	X= 4.655 S.D.= .553	-2.83	.007**
behavior				
I learned about how to set goals in school.	X= 4.191 S.D.= .602	X= 3.607 S.D.= .875	2.62	.012*
I have spent time with a mentor/role model that helped me decide what career paths were available to me.	X= 3.952 S.D.= .669	X= 3.483 S.D.= 1.214	1.75	.087
Obstacles				
Poor study habits/skills	X= 1.667 S.D.= .483	X= 2.000 S.D.= .720	-1.83	.073
Lack of time to study.	X= 1.810 S.D.= .512	X= 2.138 S.D.= .581	-2.07	.044*
Influence of friends.	X= 1.429 S.D.= .507	X= 1.862 S.D.= .743	-2.31	.025*

\*Significant at the .05 level

\*\*Significant at the .01 level

A t-test was used to calculate a difference based on what grade they started to plan their career. Of the nine questions on the most influential person, none was found to have significant difference in the grade they started to plan their career.

Of the 12 statements on attitudes toward setting career goals, two significant differences were found at the .01 level. On the item "I have enrolled in courses to help meet my career job/goals" (elementary/middle school  $X=4.333$ , high school  $X=3.724$ ) those who planned early scored significantly higher. Respondents who strongly set their goals in their elementary or middle school years strongly believed the statement "I will have better life than my parents" more so than did those who started planning in high school (elementary/middle school  $X=4.143$ , high school  $X=4.655$ ). There was one statement that was found to be at a significance level of .05. "My goals are detailed; putting in dates so that achievement can be measured," was again higher for those students who planned earlier (elementary/middle school  $X=3.810$ , high school  $X=3.172$ ).

Of all the 12 items on behavior of educational experiences, only one item had a significance difference level of .05. "I



learned about how to set goals in school" was higher for those who planned earlier (elementary/middle school  $X=4.191$ , high school  $X=3.607$ ). In the statement, "I have spent time with a mentor/role model that helped me decide what career paths were available to me (elementary/middle school  $X=3.952$ , high school  $X=3.483$ )," a trend was found with those planning in elementary or middle school scoring higher on this item.

For the section on perception of obstacles to future career options, two out of the 24 obstacles were significantly different at the .05 level on both the items, "Lack of time to study" (elementary/middle school  $X=1.810$ , high school  $X=2.138$ ), and "Influence of friends (elementary/middle school  $X=1.429$ , high school  $X=1.862$ ), those who planned earlier scored significantly higher. There was a trend for people who planned their careers early than those who started planning in high school with the ones who started to plan their career in elementary/middle school indicating study habits/skill were less of an obstacle (elementary/middle school  $X=1.667$ , high school  $X=2.000$ ).

Table 19: ANOVA with the Newman-Kuels Multiple Range Test on Significant Differences on Attitudes, Behaviors, and Obstacles Based on Career Goals

	Definite Xa N=15	Options Xb N=29	None Xc N=6	F Value	Probability
<b><u>Attitudes Towards Career Goals</u></b>					
21. I have enrolled in courses to help meet my career/job goals	4.533b/c	3.828a	3.333a	5.856	.0054**
29. My career goals are detailed; putting in dates so that achievement can be measured.	4.133b	3.069a	3.500	6.419	.0034**
30. I have sorted out my goals according to how important they are to me.	4.200b	3.552a/c	4.667c	5.981	.0049**
<b><u>Behaviors of educational Experiences</u></b>					
33. A practical way to learn about career/job opportunities is through family and friends.	3.467c	3.621c	4.333a/b	3.271	.0468*
36. School courses have helped me make career choices.	4.286b	3.724a/c	4.500b	3.684	.0328*
38. I can picture myself ten years from now in a particular job/career.	4.333b/c	3.724c	2.333a/b	9.967	.0002**
39. I frequently discuss my plans for a career/job with my parents.	4.000b	3.172a	3.667	3.789	.0298*
<b><u>Obstacles</u></b>					
66. Prejudice at school.	1.267b/c	1.862a	2.000a	4.324	.0199*

\*significant at .05 level

\*\*significant at .01 level

a= definite      b=options      c=none

To test the hypothesis that the student's career goals made a difference in the career attitude, behavior, and obstacles, an ANOVA was conducted. Students were asked to define their career goals as either definite (know what one wants to do), considering several options, or none (no idea). There was three significant difference in attitudes toward career goals, four in behaviors of educational experiences, and one in perception of obstacles.

Table 19 shows that there three significant difference in attitude based on career goals. It shows that ones who were enrolled in courses to meet career goals were more definite about their career ( $X=4.533$ ). "My career goals are detailed; putting it in dates that can be measured ( $X=4.133$ , F value= 6.419)." "I have sorted out my goals according to how important they are to me ( $X=4.200$ , F value= 5.981). "I frequently discuss my plans for a job/career with my parents" ( $X=4.000$ , F value= 3.789). "A good way to learn about a job/career us through family and friends" ( $X= 3.467$ , F value= 3.271 .

Table 19 also shows that there was four significant differences in behavior based on their career goals. The behavior statement "I can picture myself ten years from now in a particular career/job." This statement ( $F=9.967$ ) and has a significant difference at the .01 level. "School courses helped me make career choices" ( $X= 4.286$ ,  $F=3.684$ ) with a significant difference at the .05 level.

This table also shows that there was only one significant difference, "prejudice at school" ( $X=1.267$ ,  $F$  value is 4.324). It was significant at the .01 level.

### Discussion

Zig Ziglar (1984) believes students can not plan for their future until they know what they want, where to they want to go, and how to get there. In this study, 58.0 percent of students had not started to plan their career goals until high school. Thirty percent of the students said they had definite goals, 58% were considering several options, and 12% had no idea. According to the results of national tracking surveys, 50% of high school graduates leave high school with definite plans to attend a four year college or university, 25% enter technical education

programs, and the remaining 25% enter the workforce (Brustein and Mahler, 1995). This study shows that these Hmong high school students are not planning their future career options until very late.

Over half of the students in this study (56%) planned to attend a four year college or university and 22% stated they wanted to attend a technical or vocational college. Goals need to be generated by the student themselves and supported by parents, teachers, friends, and counselors. Boersma (1995) states that goal setting occurs when students practice the process over an extended period of time. Unless students have a definite, precise, clear set goals they are not going to realize the maximum potential that lies within them.

A recent US Department of Education Report (1994) indicated that 9% of the jobs created in the United States between 1992 and 2000 will require post-secondary education. The Department of Labor (1994) statistics showed that by the year 2000, only 15% of all jobs will be unskilled, 20% will require a bachelors degree or higher, and more than 65% of all jobs will require specific skill demanding specialized education; more than a high school degree but less than a four year degree.

These students were found to hold very positive attitudes towards jobs and future careers. They thought very highly of themselves. The majority of these students wanted to attend college and earn a high paying job. The majority of the students agreed with the statement, "I want to be successful in my career/job", "I will have a better life than my parents", "I have ambitions to achieve something good", "I think about my career or educational goals often", and "My goals are realistic". The majority of these students (54%) wanted a professional career which required a four year degree. Forty percent of these students also had above average grades in high school (half A's and half B's). It shows that ones who were enrolled in courses to meet career goals were more definite about their career (X=4.533): "My career goals are detailed; putting it in dates that can be measured" (X=4.133); "I have sorted out my goals according to how important they are to me" (X=4.200); "I frequently discuss my plans for a job/career with my parents" (X=4.000). "A good way to learn about a job/career is through family and friends" (X= 3.467). Parents were seen to be the most influential person in these students lives. Teachers, counselors, and siblings were also very influential.

According to the study of Debbie Meyers (1998), many high school students seemed to want to attend college and had confidence in themselves. They strongly agreed with the statements, "You want to be successful in your career", "You have ambitions to achieve something good or great with your life", and "Your goals are realistic". These were students that saw themselves above average but had not taken college preparatory courses and were aware of their poor study habits.

Respondents appeared to strongly agree with the following behavioral statements: "Talking to adults about their career is valuable": "School courses helped me make career choices": "I learned how to set goals in school": and "I have completed a college admission form or visited a campus".

Of all the 12 questions on behavior of educational experiences, only one item had a significance difference at the .05 level. This item was "I learned about how to set goals in school" (elementary/middle school  $X=4.191$ , high school  $3.607$ ). In the statement, "I have spent time with a mentor/role model that helped me decide what career paths were available to me" (elementary/middle school  $X=3.952$ , high school  $X=3.483$ ), students

who said they started to plan their career when they were in elementary or middle school strongly believed in this statement. It shows that students who were definite about their career goals spent time with a role model and also were ones who learned how to set goals in school.

According to Debbie Meyers study (1998), respondents strongly agreed with the statements, "You have completed a college admissions form and/or visited a campus", "Talking to adults about their career/job is valuable", and "You can picture yourself ten years from now in a particular job/career". Based on career goals, two items were related, "Can picture yourself ten years from now" and "Completed a college admission form".

There was a difference in people who planned their careers early than those who started planning in high school in terms of obstacles perceived. The students who started to plan their career in elementary/middle school had better study habits/skills (elementary/middle school  $X=1.667$ , high school  $X=2.000$ ).

These Hmong high school students felt that lack of money was the biggest obstacle to higher education. Lacking the time to study was also a very big obstacle for these students. Based on gender, males perceived lack of money, poor study skill/habits,



and demand of sports, activities, and school clubs to be greater obstacles than females. There was a difference based on career goals, "Prejudice at school".

Even though the amount of money available to college students has increased dramatically in the last 10 years, and even though an increasing percentage of high school graduates from all races and all income levels now go to college, it still remains true that lack of sufficient financial support remains as one of the major barriers to higher education in the United States (Doermann, 1971, p.130). Students who could benefit from a college education are diverted from doing so because they lack the money. Students who really want to attend college incur large debts to do so and often invest too many hours in a job while in college. They lack the opportunity to select a good college and the quality and continuity of their education suffer.

Study habits were closely associated with undergraduate grades and persistence. Students who took college preparatory classes in high school with well-developed study skills are more likely to do well academically. Colleges should strengthen their efforts to help under-prepared minority students to develop their study habits and basic skills by offering tutoring, developmental

courses, and academic counseling. It will not only benefit the individual but also help institutions by reducing attrition rates. As a result of poorer secondary preparation, minority students who do go on to college are less likely to complete the baccalaureate than white undergraduates.

"Peer influences on student academic norms, available resources, the professional quality of teachers and administrators and the presences of such school characteristics as shared goals, high teacher expectations for student performance and strong levels of parent involvement are all likely to influence achievement" (Keating and Oakes, 1988, p.4).

Based on Debbie Meyers study (1998), high school students seemed to perceive "Lack of money" to be the major obstacle to their future career options. "Poor study habits" was the next obstacle followed by "lack of motivation" and "too much social life". Based on gender, males were more influenced by TV/Video games, friends, lack of vocational programs, and lack of preparation or school.

Married Hmong students strongly agreed with the statements, "Lack of emotional support from spouse", "Too much family responsibilities", "Lack of spouse helping with the children",

and "Lack of financial support from the spouse". It seems that most married Hmong students did not receive very much help from their spouses whether it was with the children or the housework.

## Chapter V

### Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This final chapter contains a review of the study of obstacles towards higher education. The chapter summarizes the statement of the problems, and data analysis. The conclusions based on the findings, recommendations for future research, and educational implications are also included in this chapter.

#### Summary

The purpose of the study was to identify some of the barriers Hmong students faced in going on to higher education as measured by the Post High School Plans Survey.

The objectives of this study were to:

1. Describe the attitudes Hmong students have towards setting career goals.
2. Identify behaviors Hmong students experience as it relates to their aspirations and expectations.
3. Describe perceptions Hmong students have concerning obstacles to their future career options.

This study was conducted at Eau Claire North High School in Wisconsin. The majority of Hmong students in the Eau Claire School District attended high school at North. The participants of this study were juniors and seniors of Eau Claire North High School, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Eau Claire is located in west-central Wisconsin. It has a population of approximately 60,000. It is approximately 70 miles from the Minnesota border. The high school consists of grades 9-12 with an enrollment of approximately 1668 students. Of these students, approximately 65 Hmong students were enrolled in the junior and senior classes. The average graduating class consisted of 434 students.

Section II focused on attitudes towards goal setting orientation. A Likert scale was used to measure responses. The statements include how goals are developed.

Section III focused on behaviors of educational experiences as it relates to aspirations and expectations. A Likert was used to measure the responses. Statements include educational experiences related to student aspirations and expectation.

Section IV focused on perceptions students perceive to be obstacles toward future career options. A list of phrases such as a lack in college prep courses, lack of motivation, and too

much socialization with friends were asked. Students were to mark on a scale from 1 to 3. One as being a minor obstacle, two as being not an obstacle, and three as being a major obstacle towards future career options.

Section V focused primarily on participants who were married. A list of phrases such as a lack in financial support and lack in physical support such as help with housework and child care responsibilities. Students were to mark on a scale from 1 to 3, one as being a minor obstacle, two as being a minor obstacle, and three as being a major obstacle.

For section I, background information, frequency counts, percentages, and means was be collected for items 11-19. Section II, "attitudes toward career goal setting orientation", section III, "behaviors of educational experiences as it relates to aspirations and expectations", and section IV, "perceptions to obstacles to future career options", the mean score and frequency was calculated for all items. A t-test was calculated for comparison of scores of male vs. females and years in high school (juniors vs. seniors) for items 11-19, influence, items 21-32, attitudes toward career goal setting, items 33-44, behavior of educational experiences, and items 45-68, obstacles. A t-test

was calculated on when they started planning career goals, item number 8, items 11-19, items 21-32, items 33-44, and items 45-68. An one-way ANOVA was calculated on items number 6, career goals in relation to items 11-19, section II, III, IV, V.

The age of the respondents were divided into four categories. The majority of the respondents were 18 years old (n=20) and were 17 years old (n=22).

The respondents in this study was almost balanced with 26 respondents being male (52.0 percent) and 24 respondents being female (48.0 percent). The majority of the participants in this study were juniors (n=28).

Respondents were asked to indicate their marital status, 86.0% of the respondents were single (n=43), and 7 respondents or 14.0 percent of the respondents were married.

In the marital status of their parents category, 43 respondents (86.0%) said their parents were married. Three (6.0%) said their parents were divorced and four (8.0%) said their parents were separated.

On the question that asked respondents about their career plan goals, 29 respondents (58.0%) reported that they were considering several options and 15 respondents (30.0%) had

definite goals set. Over half of the respondents (56.0%) planned to attend a four year university, 11 respondents (22.0%) planned to attend vocational or technical college, and three (6.0%) planned on going to work full-time.

Twenty-nine respondents (58.0%) stated that they started planning their career goals in high school. Sixteen respondents (32%) said they started to set career goals in middle school, and five reported on setting goals when they were in the elementary years.

Respondents were to report on the types of jobs respondents expect to be employed in after they graduate from high school. Over half of the respondents (54.0%) said they would like to obtain a professional career after high school.

On academic achievement of the respondents in high school, 20 respondents (40%) reported that they received half A's and half B's. Twelve respondents (24%) reported having received half B's and half C's. Out of 50 respondents, eight (16%) reported having mostly A's in high school.

On the question of who influenced the respondents the most regarding getting more educational training, parents ( $X = 2.680$ ) were shown to be the most influential in helping the respondents



decide between work or education after high school. Teachers were shown to be the next group of people who were most influential in their lives.

Section II, a Likert scale was used to measure attitudes toward career goals. Responses used were strongly agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). Respondents strongly agreed with the statement "I want to be successful in my career/job which had a mean score of 4.520. The respondents agreed that they would have a better life than their parents ( $X=4.440$ ). Respondents also agreed that they had ambitions to achieve something good with a mean of 4.269. Other statements with a mean above 4.0 included "My goals are realistic" ( $X= 4.200$ ) and "My goals help motivate me to achieve" ( $X=4.120$ ).

Section III of the survey sought to identify the behaviors statements that respondents mostly agreed. Respondents strongly agreed that "talking to adults about their career is valuable" ( $X=4.020$ ), "school courses help me make career choices" ( $X=3.980$ ), and "I learn to set goals in school" ( $X= 3.857$ ).

The one statement which they disagreed with was "education is useless unless it pays off in ones career," which resulted in a mean of 2.755.

The biggest obstacles these students perceived toward higher education was lack of money ( $X=2.100$ ), and lack of time to study ( $X=2.000$ ). These students did not perceive items, "not quiet at home," ( $X=1.551$ ) and "t.v./video games," ( $X= 1.531$ ).

The married respondents strongly agreed with the following obstacles, "lack of emotional support from their spouse" and that they had "too much family responsibilities". These two statements had a mean score of 2.167. They also agreed with the two statements, "lack of help with the children" and "lack of financial support from the spouse". These two statements have a mean score of 2.000.

A t-test was used to calculate differences based on gender. Of the 12 questions of attitudes toward setting career goals, none was found to have significant different responses between males and females.

Of the nine questions on the most influential person in helping one decide to work or gain more education after high school, one trend was found between males and females at the .079

level. The most influential person was a boyfriend or girlfriend (males  $X=2.615$ , females  $X=1.739$ ).

Of the 12 questions on behaviors of educational experiences, one trend was found at the .077 level. This trend was on the item "I can picture myself ten years from now in a particular career/job," (males  $X=4.000$ , females  $X=3.458$ ).

Of the 24 questions on perceptions of obstacles to future career options, two significant differences were found at the .05 level based on gender: "Lack of money," (males  $X=2.269$ , females  $X=1.917$ ) and "poor study habits/skills," (males  $X=2.039$ , females  $X=1.652$ ). One highly significant difference was found at the .01 level, "demands of sports, activities, or school clubs." On this obstacle, male score significantly higher than females (males  $X=1.962$ , females  $X=1.455$ ).

A T-Test was used to calculate any difference based on the year of high school. Of the nine questions on the most influential person in helping one decide to work or gain more education after high school, one trend was found. "The most influential person: girlfriend or boyfriend," juniors ( $X=2.074$ ) had a stronger response than seniors ( $X=1.727$ ).

Of the 12 questions on attitudes towards setting career goals, juniors tended to believe to a greater extent that, "I have sorted out my goals" (juniors  $X=3.679$ , seniors  $X=4.136$ ), and "I will have a better life than my parents" (juniors  $X=4.286$ , seniors  $X=4.636$ ).

Of the 12 questions in behaviors of educational experiences, one was found to have a significant difference at the .05 level. The item "A practical way to learn about career/job opportunities is through family and friends," found that juniors  $X=3.464$  scored higher than seniors  $X=3.909$ .

Of the 24 questions on perceptions to obstacles, five was found to have significant difference at the .05 level. "Lack of money" (Juniors  $X=2.286$ , Seniors  $X=1.864$ ), "poor school preparation" (juniors  $X=1.963$ , seniors  $X=1.591$ ), "Lack of direction/goals" (juniors  $X=2.111$ , seniors  $X=1.591$ ), "drugs, gangs, and disruption" (juniors  $X=1.889$ , seniors  $X=1.364$ ), and "TV/Video games" (juniors  $X=1.704$ , seniors  $X=1.318$ ). Two obstacles were found to be at the .01 level of significance. These two obstacles were "Lack college placement tests" (juniors  $X=2.250$ , seniors  $X=1.500$ ) and "lack of interest in college" (juniors  $X=1.964$ , seniors  $X=1.364$ ). One of the obstacles can up

.001 level of significance. "Lack college prep courses" (juniors  $X=2.250$ , seniors  $X=1.591$ ). Juniors agreed more strongly with this statement.

A t-test was used to calculate a difference based on what grade they started to plan their career. Of the nine questions on the most influential person, none was found to have significant difference in the grade they started to plan their career.

Of the 12 questions on attitudes toward setting career goals, two was found to be significantly different at the .01 level: "I have enrolled in courses to help meet my career job/goals" (elementary/middle school  $X=4.333$ , high school  $X=3.724$ ) and "I will have better life than my parents" (elementary/middle school  $X=4.143$ , high school  $X=4.655$ ). There was one statement that was found to be significant at .05 level: "My goals are detailed; putting in dates so that achievement can be measured (elementary/middle school  $X=3.810$ , high school  $X=3.172$ ).

Of all the 12 questions on behavior of educational experiences, only one had a significance difference at the .05 level: "I learned about how to set goals in school"

(elementary/middle school  $X=4.191$ , high school  $3.607$ ). In the statement, "I have spent time with a mentor/role model that helped me decide what career paths were available to me (elementary/middle school  $X=3.952$ , high school  $X=3.483$ )," ones who said they started to plan their career when they were in elementary or middle school strongly believed in this statement.

For the section on perception of obstacles to future career options, two out of the 24 questions were at the .05 level of significance: "Lack of time to study" (elementary/middle school  $X=1.810$ , high school  $X=2.138$ ) and "Influence of friends (elementary/middle school  $X=1.429$ , high school  $X=1.862$ ). There was a difference in people who planned their careers early than those who started planning in high school. The ones who started to plan their career in elementary/middle school had better study habits/skill (elementary/middle school  $X=1.667$ , high school  $X=2.000$ ).

Students who were enrolled in courses to meet career goals were more definite about their career ( $X=4.533$ ). Students who were more definite on their career goals agreed more strongly that "My career goals are detailed; putting it in dates that can be measured" ( $X=4.133$ ). "I have sorted out my goals according to

how important they are to me" ( $X=4.200$ ). "I frequently discuss my plans for a job/career with my parents" ( $X=4.000$ ); and "A good way to learn about a job/career us through family and friends" ( $X= 3.467, F \text{ value}= 3.271$  .

The behavior statement "I can picture myself ten years from now in a particular career/job." had a significant difference at the .01 level. "School courses helped me make career choices" ( $X= 4.286, F=3.684$ ) with a significant difference at the .05 level. There was only one significant difference, "prejudice at school" ( $X=1.267, F \text{ value is } 4.324$ ). It was significant at the .01 level.

### Conclusions

Any conclusions in this research study is only generalizable to North High School.

Research Objective 1: Determine the attitudes Hmong high school students have toward goal setting. Career goal setting for these Hmong junior and senior students was very low. Most of their career goal setting did not start until high school. About 30% of the students started to set their goals in middle school. Over half of the students planned on attending a four year

college with one-fourth of the students planning on attending a technical college. Over half of the Hmong students indicated they wanted to be employed in a professional career.

Research Objective 2: Identify behaviors Hmong students experience as it relates to their aspirations and expectations. These Hmong students believed that talking to adults about their career was valuable to them. They also felt that school courses helped them make their career choices.

Research Objective 3: Describe perceptions Hmong high school students have concerning obstacles to their future career options. Students indicated that money seemed to be the major obstacle from going to college. These students also indicated the lack of time to study as another major obstacle.

### Educational Implications

School, parents, and the community needs to work with youth to help them plan their future, set realistic goals, and eliminate any potential obstacles towards career and educational goals.

Students should have an idea of what their career goals are early in high school. They also need to set their goals early in



their educational lives. Parents and other important people in these students lives need to support these students on their goals and achievements. Counselors and teachers need to reach out to students and help them become aware of available educational programs. Counselors should to call these students in to their offices and just talk about jobs and careers in the workforce.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

Studies should continue to investigate perceptions of Hmong high school student's obstacles of higher education.

1. Repeat the study of Hmong students with a larger sample from several Wisconsin School Districts.
2. A question should be asked about the education level of the student's parents.
3. In question number 9, state how many years of education one needs in order to obtain that particular job.

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Appendix A

## POST HIGH SCHOOL PLANS SURVEY

This questionnaire is part of a study designed to describe how high school senior's goal setting orientation relates to their careers preparation.  
**DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THE SURVEY.**  
Please answer all the following questions to the best of your knowledge.

### SECTION I: General Information

1. Your age:           a. \_\_\_\_ years old
  
2. Sex:                a. \_\_\_\_ male  
                          b. \_\_\_\_ female
  
3. Year in school:   a. \_\_\_\_ junior  
                          b. \_\_\_\_ senior
  
4. Your marital status   a. \_\_\_\_ single  
                          b. \_\_\_\_ married  
                          c. \_\_\_\_ divorce  
                          d. \_\_\_\_ separated
  
5. Status of my parents:  
                          a. \_\_\_\_ married  
                          b. \_\_\_\_ divorce  
                          c. \_\_\_\_ separated
  
6. My career goals are:  
                          a. \_\_\_\_ definite--I know what I want to do.  
                          b. \_\_\_\_ considering several options or career possibilities  
                          c. \_\_\_\_ none--no idea
  
7. My post high-school plans are to:  
                          a. \_\_\_\_ go to work--no college plans  
                          b. \_\_\_\_ attend Vocational or Technical college  
                          c. \_\_\_\_ join the military  
                          d. \_\_\_\_ attend a 4 year college  
                          e. \_\_\_\_ other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. At what grade did you start to plan your career goals and post high school plans?  
a. \_\_\_\_ elementary school   b. \_\_\_\_ middle school   c. \_\_\_\_ high school
  
9. I expect to be employed in which of the following area (after schooling):

Choosing only one.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ Professional career requiring at least a 4 year college degree such as a teacher, social worker, lawyer, nurse, etc.
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ Sales and retail
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ Services such as food service, hair and nail care, child care worker, nursing home worker, etc.
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ Business Owner or Manager
- e. \_\_\_\_\_ Factory worker--unskilled
- f. \_\_\_\_\_ Skilled labor requiring training such as a mechanic, machine tooler, plumber, etc.
- g. \_\_\_\_\_ Farming
- h. \_\_\_\_\_ Clerical such as a secretary, administrative assistant, etc.
- i. \_\_\_\_\_ Not planning to work
- j. \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_  
(please describe)

10. Who is most influential in helping you decide to work or gain more education after high school?

	no influence	some influence	very influential
11. girlfriend/boyfriend	1	2	3
12. parents	1	2	3
13. school counselors	1	2	3
14. friends	1	2	3
15. teacher	1	2	3
16. employers	1	2	3
17. uncles and other relatives	1	2	3
18. brother and sister	1	2	3
19. husband/wife	1	2	3

20. Which of the following best describes your high school grades up to now?  
Check one.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ mostly A's
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ about half A's and half B's
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ mostly B's
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ about half B's and Half C's
- e. \_\_\_\_\_ mostly C's
- f. \_\_\_\_\_ about half C's and half D's
- g. \_\_\_\_\_ mostly D's
- h. \_\_\_\_\_ mostly F's

**SECTION II. Attitudes towards setting career goals**

Select the response category that best represents your reaction to each statement. If you strongly agree circle (5). If you disagree circle (1).

Consider each statement carefully. There are no right answers. The best response is your personal opinion. Remember to respond to all statements.

	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
21. I have enrolled in courses to help meet your career/job goals.	1	2	3	4	5
22. My goals are challenging (high but attainable).	1	2	3	4	5
23. I want to be successful in my career/job.	1	2	3	4	5
24. My goals are realistic.	1	2	3	4	5
25. My career and educational goals my own (parents or others have not set these goals for me).	1	2	3	4	5
26. I have ambitions to achieve something good or great with my life.	1	2	3	4	5
27. I think about my career/educational goals often.	1	2	3	4	5
28. I would rather learn on the job than at school.	1	2	3	4	5
29. My goals are detailed; putting in dates so that achievement can be measured.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I have sorted out my goals according to how important they are to me.	1	2	3	4	5
31. My goals help motivate me to achieve.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I expect that you will have a better life than my parents.	1	2	3	4	5



**SECTION III: Behaviors of educational experiences as it relates to your aspirations and expectations.**

Circle the category that best represents your reaction to each statement. If you strongly agree circle (5). If you disagree circle (1). If you are in between circle (4),(3), or (2).

Consider each statement carefully, There are no right answers. The best response is your personal opinion. Remember to respond to all the statements.

	strongly dis agree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
33. A practical way to learn about career/job opportunities is through family and friends.	1	2	3	4	5
34. Talking to adults about their career/jobs is valuable.	1	2	3	4	5
35. Education is useless unless it pays off in one's career/job.	1	2	3	4	5
36. School courses have helped me make career choices.	1	2	3	4	5
37. I was given an adequate amount of time and information from the guidance counselor to help me select career paths.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I can picture myself ten years from now in a particular career/job.	1	2	3	4	5
39. I frequently discuss my plans for a careers/job with my parents.	1	2	3	4	5
40. I have parents who set goals regularly.	1	2	3	4	5
41. I frequently discuss post secondary education with my family.	1	2	3	4	5
42. I learned about how to set goals in school.	1	2	3	4	5
43. I have completed a college admission form and/or visited a campus.	1	2	3	4	5
44. I have spent time with a mentor/role model that helped me decided what career paths were available to you.	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTIONS: IV: Perceptions of obstacles to your future career options**  
 Select and circle the response category that best represents your reaction to each statement. The statements are your perceptions of obstacles to your career future.

	not an obstacle	minor obstacle	major obstacle
45. Lack of money	1	2	3
46. Poor study habits/skills	1	2	3
47. Lack of time to study	1	2	3
48. Poor school preparation	1	2	3
49. Lack certain courses needed	1	2	3
50. Lack college-prep courses	1	2	3
51. Lack college placement tests	1	2	3
52. Lack self-confidence	1	2	3
53. Lack motivation	1	2	3
54. Lack vocational program	1	2	3
55. Lack parental support	1	2	3
56. Demands of after school job	1	2	3
57. Lack of direction/goals	1	2	3
58. Lack of ability	1	2	3
59. Too much social life	1	2	3
60. Lack of interest in college	1	2	3
61. Drugs, gangs, disruption	1	2	3
62. Influence of friends	1	2	3
63. Not quiet at home	1	2	3
64. TV/Video games	1	2	3
65. Demands of sports/activities/school clubs	1	2	3
66. Prejudice at school	1	2	3
67. Need to care for younger siblings	1	2	3
68. Need to do home care(cooking/cleaning)	1	2	3

Section V. If you are married, please fill out the rest of the survey.

	major obstacle	minor obstacle	not an obstacle
69. Lack of financial support from spouse	1	2	3
70. Lack of emotional support from spouse	1	2	3
71. Lack of emotional support from in-laws	1	2	3
72. Lack of household support from spouse	1	2	3
73. Lack of spouse helping with the children	1	2	3
74. Too many family responsibilities-no time for school work	1	2	3

March 8, 1999

Dear Parents/Guardians:

My name is Jennifer Xiong. I am a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, majoring in Guidance and Counseling K-12.

I am conducting a study for my graduate thesis paper. The purpose of this study is to assess the potential barriers preventing Hmong students from getting a post-secondary education. I am asking your permission to include your adolescent in this study.

This survey questionnaire contains various statements on attitudes towards setting career goals and behaviors of educational experiences. The survey questionnaires are based on individual or personal opinion. The information gathered will be kept strictly confidential. Any reports of the findings will not contain your child's name or any other identifying information. Your child may choose to withdraw from this survey or choose not to participate without coercion or prejudice.

I have read and understood the above description, including potential risks, benefits, and rights my child has as a participant.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, please call me at (715) 832-5627, or my advisor, Karen Zimmerman at (715) 232-2530.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Xiong

March 8, 1999

Nyob Zoo txog cov niam cov txiv:

Ntawm no kuv lub npe hu ua Jennifer Xiong, Kuv kawm ntawv nyob rau tom University of Wisconsin-Stout.

Kuv sau tsab ntawv no tuaj qhia rau koj paub hais tias kuv xav nqa ib co ntawv survey tuaj rau koj tus tub los yog tus ntxhais pab teb. Nyob rau hauv daim ntawv survey no yuav noog ntau yam xws li kev kawm ntaub kawm ntawv ntawm cov tub ntxhais hluas nyob rau hauv high school. Tsis tag li ntawv xwb yuav noog txog vim li cas lawv thiaj li tsis mus kawm ntawv qib siab xws li tsis muaj nyiaj los yog tsis tau qhab nia zoo.

Cov lus uas koj tus menyuam tau teb ntawd yuav tsis muab rau lwm tus pom thiab yuav tsis pub rau lwm tus paub txog. Tsis tas li ntawd, peh yuav tsis pub lawv sau lawv lub npe rau. Yog tias thaum twg koj tus menyuam tsis xav teb daim ntawv lawm los yeej tsis muaj teeb meem li.

Yog tias koj muaj lus noog txog daim ntawv no, koj hu tuaj rau kuv los tau, xov tooj yog (715) 832-5627, los yog kuv tus nai khu, Karen Zimmerman (715) 232-2530.

Sau Npe,

Jennifer Xiong

Microfilmed  
24 : 1  
At the University  
of Wisconsin-Stout  
Micrographics Lab

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of Wisconsin-Stout  
Micrographics Lab